RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
2021-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT

Adopted August 24, 2022



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RESOLUTION NO. 22-08-24-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING AN ADDENDUM TO THE GENERAL PLAN FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, AND ADOPTING THE UPDATE TO THE RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA GENERAL PLAN HOUSING ELEMENT FOR THE PLANNING PERIOD 2021-2029, AND ADOPTING THE UPDATE TO THE GENERAL PLAN SAFETY ELEMENT, AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO. 22-02-09-01

WHEREAS, California Government Code Sections 65300 et seq. require cities to adopt and maintain a comprehensive long-term General Plan that contains certain elements and includes long-term goals, policies and programs; and

WHEREAS, the California Government Code requires that cities review and update their Housing Elements every eight (8) years, according to a schedule set forth by the State Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD"); and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita adopted the 2013-2021 General Plan Housing Element ("5th Cycle Housing Element") on September 25, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita adopted the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Update on March 11, 2020 comprehensively updating the Land Use, Conservation/Open Space, Economic Development, Noise, and Safety Elements; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Update (State Clearinghouse No. 2018041075) on March 11, 2020 ("General Plan FEIR"); and

WHEREAS, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita has been assigned an allocation of 680 new housing units as its share of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment ("RHNA") in Southern California for the 6th Cycle Housing Element covering the 2021-2029 period; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with State law, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita has prepared a Draft Housing Element for the 6th Cycle covering the 2021-2029 period in accordance with California Government Code Sections 65580-65589.8; and

WHEREAS, the City sought to proactively engage the public in the Housing Element Update by providing a variety of public engagement opportunities including a community interest list, a dedicated webpage, community surveys, focus groups, presentations at Planning Commission meetings on February 3, 2021, June 2, 2021,

October 6, 2021, and January 18, 2022, and at City Council meetings on January 13, 2021, August 11, 2021, and October 27, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the City posted the Draft Housing Element Update for a 30-day public review and comment period from September 30 to October 29, 2021; and

WHEREAS, all public comments received during the public comment period and since the inception of the project were submitted to the California Department of Housing and Community Development; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Government Code Section 65583, the Housing Element (2021-2029) complies with the duty to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Element (2021-2029) complies with the requirements of State law and conforms to the purposes, intent and provisions of all the Elements of the City's General Plan; and

WHEREAS, on October 22, 2021, pursuant to Government Code section 65585(b)(1), the City submitted the draft 2021-2029 Housing Element to HCD; and

WHEREAS, HCD must review and provide comments on the Public Draft Housing Element within 60 days and the City must consider those comments; and

WHEREAS, the City received comments from HCD on December 21, 2021 finding that certain changes must be made to the Draft Housing Element Update so that HCD may find it in compliance with State Housing law; and

WHEREAS, the City is required to update its General Plan Safety Element upon the next revision of the Housing Element in accordance with Government Code Section 65302(g)(5); and

WHEREAS, the City has prepared the required update to the General Plan Safety Element and presented it to the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection; and

WHEREAS, on December 9, 2021, the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection found that the Draft Safety Element Update meets the applicable requirements of State law; and

WHEREAS, on January 18, 2022, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing and considered information presented by the public, City staff, and the City's Housing Element Consultant and unanimously adopted a resolution recommending that the City Council adopt the Addendum to the General Plan FEIR to satisfy the requirements of the CEQA, adopt the updated Housing Element covering the period 2021-2029, and the updated Safety Element; and

WHEREAS, on February 9, 2022, the City Council held a duly notice public hearing and approved Resolution No. 22-02-09-01, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element, Safety Element Update, and an Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Update (State Clearinghouse No. 2018041075) ("General Plan FEIR"); and

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2022, the City transmitted the adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element to HCD; and

WHEREAS, the City received comments from HCD on April 11, 2022 finding that certain changes must be made to the adopted Housing Element so that HCD may find it in compliance with State Housing law; and

WHEREAS, the City has revised the adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element to address the findings in the April 11, 2022 letter from HCD; and

WHEREAS, the City posted the revised 2021-2029 Housing Element for the mandatory seven day review period in accordance with Government Code Section 65585(b)(1) from June 9 to 16, 2022 and again from July 15 to 22, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the City continues to collect and consider public comments; and

WHEREAS, the City submitted the revised 2021-2029 Housing Element to HCD on June 16, 2022 and again on July 22, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the City received a letter from HCD on July 26, 2022 finding that, as revised, the 2021-2029 Housing Element meets the statutory requirements described in HCD's December 21, 2021 and April 11, 2022 letters and will comply with State Housing Element law once adopted, submitted to, and approved by HCD in accordance with Government code Section 65585; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Government Code Section 65583, the 2021-2029 Housing Element complies with the duty to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing; and

WHEREAS, the 2021-2029 Housing Element complies with the requirements of State law and conforms to the purposes, intent and provisions of all the Elements of the City's General Plan; and

WHEREAS, on August 3, 2022, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing and considered information presented by the public, City staff, and the City's Housing Element Consultant and adopted by a vote of 4-0 (one commissioner absent) a resolution recommending that the City Council adopt the Addendum to the General Plan FEIR to satisfy the requirements of the CEQA, adopt the updated Housing Element covering the period 2021-2029, and the updated Safety Element, and rescind City Council Resolution 22-02-09-01; and

WHEREAS, a public notice of the public hearing was posted on August 12, 2022 at City Hall, Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) Station No. 45, Trabuco Canyon Water District Headquarters, and on the City's website, and a public notice of the public hearing was published in the *Coto de Caza News* on August 12, 2022; and

WHEREAS, based on substantial evidence provided in Appendix A to the Housing Element, the City Council finds that the existing uses on the sites identified to accommodate the City's RHNA do not impede additional residential development during the period covered by the housing element; and,

WHEREAS, the City has determined that the Housing and Safety Element Update would not result in any new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant environmental impacts and has therefore prepared an Addendum to the General Plan FEIR pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21166 and CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164 (the "Addendum to the General Plan FEIR "); and

WHEREAS, the City Council has considered information presented by City staff, the City's Housing Element Consultant, the public, and other interested parties at a duly noticed public hearing held on August 24, 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA, DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Based upon evidence in the record, the City Council makes the following findings in support of the Housing and Safety Element Update:

1. California State law requires that each city adopt a general plan to describe its long-term goals and its policies and programs to achieve those goals. The Housing Element is a required element that must be updated every eight (8) years, according to a schedule set forth by the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

2. The City's current General Plan Housing Element, adopted in 2013, reflects the environmental conditions, demographics, growth projections, and legal requirements of that time. The City has prepared a draft update to the General Plan Housing Element to incorporate current conditions, reaffirm community goals, and meet the requirements of State law for the 6th Housing Element cycle covering the Planning Period 2021-2029.

3. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita has been assigned an allocation of 680 new housing units as its share of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment ("RHNA") for Southern California. The Housing Element Update includes a residential sites inventory to meet this requirement.

4. Government Code Section 65302(g)(5) requires that upon the next update of the Housing Element after January 1, 2020, the Safety Element shall be reviewed and updated as necessary to identify residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency exits. The Draft Safety Element has been updated to contain the required analysis.

5. In accordance with Government Code Section 65352, the City referred the Draft Housing and Safety Element Update to the required agencies and entities, and provided each with the time required by statute in which to comment.

6. On August 24, 2022, the City Council of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita held a duly-noticed public hearing on the Housing and Safety Element Update and associated Addendum to the General Plan FEIR during which the City Council considered written and oral information and testimony presented by City staff, the Housing Element consultant, and other interested parties.

SECTION 2. Pursuant to Section 9.08.060(e) of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code, the City Council makes the following findings:

1. The Proposed General Plan Update is consistent with all other goals, policies, programs, and land uses of applicable elements of the General Plan;

The 6th Cycle Housing Element Update includes updated goals and policies to meet the requirements of State law, including the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). To satisfy the City's RHNA requirements, the Housing Element Update identifies 15 infill parcels in the Business Park and General Commercial zones. The sites identified are consistent with the existing goals, policies, programs, and land uses of the 2020 General Plan Update, including the utilization of mixed-use infill development as outlined and planned for within the Land Use Element. Furthermore, the updated Housing Element satisfies the need for future housing growth in the City while balancing other growth considerations, such as the location of jobs, transit, hazard areas, and ecologically sensitive areas as identified in the Conservation/Open Space, Economic Development, Noise, Safety, and Circulation Elements. The Housing Element Update also includes policies and programs that reflect the need to create more affordable housing opportunities that affirmatively further fair housing. In summary, the Housing Element Update supports the identification of areas of opportunity for future housing development, while ensuring new housing will fit within the existing framework of goals, policies, programs, and land uses of the 2020 General Plan Update. As portions of the General Plan are amended in the future, the 2020 General Plan (including the Housing Element Update) will be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that internal consistency is maintained.

The Safety Element Update includes minor changes to the 2020 Safety Element to comply with recent State legislation. Specifically, two new policies and two amended

policies are provided to support existing goals. The changes provide additional direction and detail which is compatible and consistent with the existing framework of goals, policies, programs, and land uses of the 2020 General Plan Update.

2. The Proposed General Plan amendment will not adversely affect surrounding properties or the surrounding environment;

The Housing Element Update facilitates densities that are balanced by architectural context, high-quality design, and transit and pedestrian mobility. As proposed, the Housing Element Update policies and programs are focused on promoting mixed-use and workforce housing within close proximity to existing public spaces, transit stops, retail centers, and employment centers. The Housing Element Update also supports residential design that fosters livable and sustainable communities within the framework of the City's existing built environment, while preserving natural open space areas. Although the Housing Element Update facilitates the development of housing, specific future residential development projects are subject to the development standards and permit processes of the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code (RSMZC) and land use policies of the 2020 General Plan. While the Housing Element Update will have no significant effect on the environment as proposed, specific analysis of the potential impacts of future residential development projects on the environment and surrounding properties will be performed when development plans for future residential development projects are prepared and submitted to the City for review. Accordingly, the proposed Housing Element Update will not adversely affect the surrounding properties or the surrounding environment.

The Safety Element Update includes changes to the 2020 Safety Element to comply with recent State legislation. Specifically, two new policies and two amended policies are provided to support existing goals. The changes provide additional direction and detail which will further protect the community from wildfire related hazards. Accordingly, the Safety Element Update will not adversely affect surrounding properties or the surrounding environment.

3. The proposed General Plan Amendment promotes public health, safety, and general welfare and serves the goals and purposes of this Title [Title 9 Planning and Zoning of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code];

The Housing Element Update contains a variety of resources that are available for the development, rehabilitation, and preservation of existing and new housing stock in the City for the purposes of promoting the public health, safety, and general welfare. Specifically, the Housing Element Update identifies housing programs that assist low- and moderate-income residents, disadvantaged groups, and those with special housing needs. Furthermore, the Housing Element Update provides policy direction regarding land use decisions for existing and future developments that may be located in hazard areas, such as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. In addition, regulations established in the RSMZC implement public health, safety and general welfare objectives of the 2020

General Plan. Therefore, the proposed Housing Element Update will promote public health and safety and facilitates the goals and purposes of the RSMZC to the betterment of the general welfare of the public.

The Safety Element Update includes changes to the 2020 Safety Element to comply with recent State legislation. Specifically, two new policies and two amended policies are provided to support existing goals. The changes provide additional direction and detail which will further protect the community from wildfire related hazards. Accordingly, the Safety Element Update promotes public health, safety, and general welfare and serves the goals and purposes of the RSMZC.

4. The proposed Amendment will not conflict with the provisions of this Title [Title 9 Planning and Zoning of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code (RSMMC)], including the City's subdivision regulations.

The proposed Housing Element and Safety Element Update is consistent with the provisions currently established in the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan and Zoning Code as stated under Findings 1 through 3. Furthermore, the proposed General Plan Amendment does not affect the City's subdivision regulations. Additionally, any future residential development projects will be required to comply with the City's subdivision regulations in effect at the time of project submittal as allowed under State law. Therefore, the proposed Housing Element and Safety Element Update will not conflict with any regulations of the RSMZC, including the City's subdivision regulations.

SECTION 3. The City Council has reviewed and considered the information contained in the General Plan FEIR, including the impacts and mitigation measures identified therein (Exhibit 1) and the Addendum to the General Plan Final EIR (Exhibit 2). The Addendum to the General Plan Final EIR reflects the City's independent judgement and analysis. Pursuant to "CEQA" and the City's local CEQA Guidelines, the City Council has determined that no additional environmental review is required. (Public Resources Code Section 21166; CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162, 15164.) The City Council hereby adopts the Addendum to the General Plan FEIR. The City Council directs staff to post the appropriate notices.

SECTION 4. The City Council hereby adopts the Housing Element (2021-2029 attached to this resolution as Exhibit 3 and Safety Element Update attached to this resolution as Exhibit 4. These elements, together with the General Plan Update (adopted on March 11, 2020) and the General Plan Circulation Element (adopted on January 8, 2014), all of which are incorporated herein by this reference, shall constitute the General Plan for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita.

SECTION 5. In the event the Housing Element and/or Safety Element Update is inconsistent with the provisions of any other resolution, policy, or practice adopted by the City Council prior to the effective date of this resolution, the provisions of this resolution

and the Housing Element and/or Safety Element Update shall control and shall take precedence.

SECTION 6. Resolution No. 22-02-09-01 is hereby rescinded.

SECTION 7. This resolution shall take effect on the 31st day following adoption.

SECTION 8. The City Council hereby authorizes and directs the Development Services Director to make minor modifications to the Housing Element Update adopted herein to address subsequent comments provided by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) that are necessary to obtain state certification, provided such modifications are minor and do not constitute a substantial modification, subject to the approval of the City Manager and City Attorney.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 24TH DAY OF AUGUST 2022.

ANNE D. FIGUEROA, MAYOR

CERTIFICATE OF ATTESTATION AND ORIGINALITY

I, Amy Diaz, City Clerk of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, California, hereby attest to and certify that the foregoing resolution is the original resolution adopted by the Rancho Santa Margarita City Council at its regular meeting held on the 24th day of August 2022, by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Beall, Gamble, McGirr, Mayor Pro Tempore Holloway and Mayor Figueroa (5)

NOES: None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

ABSENT: None (0)

AMY DIAZ, CITY CLERK

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
2021-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT

Adopted August 24, 2022

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2021-2029 Housing Element Organization

Part 1: Housing Plan

Part 1 of the 2021-2029 Housing Element is the City's "Housing Plan" which includes the goals, policies, and programs the City will implement to address constraints and needs. The City's overarching objective is to ensure that decent, safe housing is available to all current and future residents at a cost that is within the reach of the diverse economic segments which comprise Rancho Santa Margarita.

Part 2: Background Report

Part 2 of the 2021-2029 Housing Element is the "Background Report" which identifies the nature and extent of Rancho Santa Margarita's housing needs, including those of special populations, potential housing resources (land and funds), potential constraints to housing production, and energy conservation opportunities. By examining the City's housing, resources, and constraints, the City can then determine a plan of action for providing adequate housing, as presented in Part 1: Housing Plan. In addition to identifying housing needs, the Background Report also presents information regarding the setting in which these needs occur. This information is instrumental in providing a better understanding of the community, which in turn is essential for the planning of future housing needs.

Appendix A: Housing Sites Inventory

The Housing Element must include an inventory of land suitable and available for residential development to meet the City's regional housing need by income level.

Appendix B: Public Engagement Summary

As part of the Housing Element Update process, the City hosted numerous opportunities for the community and key stakeholders to provide feedback on existing housing conditions, housing priorities, priority areas for new residential growth, and topics related to fair housing. Public participation played an important role in the refinement of the City's housing goals and policies and in the development of new housing programs, as included in Part 1: Housing Plan. The public's input also helped to validate and expand upon the contextual information included in Part 2: Background Report. The City's efforts to engage the community in a meaningful and comprehensive way are summarized in Appendix B.

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PART 1:
HOUSING PLAN

Adopted August 24, 2022

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1. Introduction

This section presents the City's Housing Plan, including goals, policies, and programs the City will implement to address constraints and needs for the 2021-2029 planning period. The Housing Plan focuses on:

1. Housing diversity and opportunities;
2. Maintenance and preservation of housing and neighborhoods;
3. Housing assistance; and
4. Fair housing.

Quantified Objectives for new construction, rehabilitation and conservation are also identified for this planning period.

2. Goals and Policies

This Housing Plan (Part 1) reflects the City's experience during the past eight years (as summarized in Part 2, the Housing Element Background Report) and sets forth the goals, policies, and programs to address the identified housing needs and issues for the 2021–2029 planning period. Quantified Objectives for new construction, rehabilitation and conservation are also identified for this planning period.

The goals and policies that guide the City's housing programs and activities are as follows:

2A. Housing Diversity and Opportunities

Persons and households of varying ages, types, income levels and lifestyles have different housing needs and preferences that change over time. Maintaining diversity in types of housing allows all persons, regardless of family type or income, to have the opportunity to find housing suitable to their needs.

Goal 1: Plan for a range of housing opportunities to adequately meet the existing and projected needs of the entire community.

Policy 1.1: Allow for a variety of housing types and prices throughout the City to increase housing choice and ensure that households of all types and income levels have the opportunity to find suitable housing.

Policy 1.2: Maintain adequate capacity to accommodate the City's unmet Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for all income categories throughout the planning period.

Policy 1.3: Encourage a geographic dispersal of units affordable to all income levels throughout the City.

Policy 1.4: Ensure that new residential development and modifications to existing development continue to honor the master plan's vision of the community in an objective manner.

Policy 1.5: Reduce actual and potential constraints to the development, maintenance, and improvement of housing.

Policy 1.6: Support the concept of "aging in place" by maintaining a range of housing that allows people to remain in the community as their housing needs change.

Policy 1.7: Ensure that new housing developments provide their share of adequate parks and recreational facilities to meet community needs.

Policy 1.8: In accordance with State Housing Law, allow by-right approval for housing developments proposed for non-vacant sites included in one previous housing element inventory and vacant sites included in two previous housing element inventories, provided that the proposed housing development consists of at least 20 percent lower income and affordable housing units.

2B. Maintenance and Preservation of Housing and Neighborhoods

Housing and neighborhood condition is an important indicator of the quality of life in a community. As the community ages, Rancho Santa Margarita may be confronted with issues of deteriorating housing, public improvements and community facilities. The existing high-quality, well-planned development and neighborhoods need to be maintained and preserved. Multi-faceted strategies will be used to address the needs of the community as it ages.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve existing neighborhoods and housing stock.

Policy 2.1: Work with Homeowner Associations and community foundations to promote the maintenance of the housing stock to enhance the quality-of-life in established neighborhoods and promote community identity and pride.

Policy 2.2: Maintain the quality of ownership and rental housing by enforcing compliance with housing and property maintenance standards.

Policy 2.3: Through public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts, rehabilitate substandard housing where needed.

Policy 2.4: Support public education programs that promote property maintenance.

2C. Housing Assistance

Certain segments of the population may have more difficulty in finding decent, affordable housing due to special circumstances. These "special needs" groups include lower-income households, the elderly, disabled persons, large families, single-parent households, persons at-risk of homelessness, and the homeless. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita works to provide a variety of affordable housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community.

Goal 3: Use public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts to ensure that all segments of the community have access to safe and decent housing that meets their special needs.

Policy 3.1: Participate in programs assisting in the production and conservation of decent, safe, and attractive housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households and other special needs groups.

Policy 3.2: Encourage the provision of housing for homeless persons through the use of State and federal programs and through public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts.

Policy 3.3: Support collaborative partnerships of nonprofit organizations, affordable housing developers, major employers, and for-profit developers to conserve affordable housing.

Policy 3.4: Encourage housing design standards that promote the accessibility of housing for persons with special needs.

Policy 3.5: Accommodate persons with disabilities who seek reasonable waiver or modification of land use controls and/or development standards pursuant to procedures and criteria set forth in the Rancho Santa Margarita's Zoning Code (RSMZC).

Policy 3.6: Ensure that units produced for lower- and moderate-income households are made available to those groups and maintained as affordable units.

2D. Fair Housing

In order to make provisions for the housing needs of all segments of the community, the City must affirmatively further fair housing and ensure that equal and fair housing opportunities are available to all residents.

Goal 4: Affirmatively further fair housing, providing equal housing opportunity for all residents.

Policy 4.1: Encourage and support the enforcement of laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination in lending practices and insurance practices to purchase, sell, rent, and lease property.

Policy 4.2: Support fair housing efforts to ensure that all income segments of the community have unrestricted access to appropriate housing.

Policy 4.3: Assist in affirmatively furthering and enforcing fair housing laws by providing support to organizations that provide outreach and education regarding fair housing rights, receive and investigate fair housing allegations, monitor compliance with fair housing laws, and refer possible violations to enforcing agencies.

3. Housing Programs

Rancho Santa Margarita offers a variety of housing opportunities to meet the needs of the community. This section of the Housing Plan addresses the issues identified in the Background Report (Part 2) of this Housing Element and provides a strategy to achieve the City's housing goals. The housing programs are discussed in detail below.

3A. Provide Adequate Housing Sites

A key element in satisfying the housing needs of all segments of the community is the provision of adequate sites for housing. This is an important function of both the General Plan and zoning.

Program 1. Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)/Shortfall Program: The Land Use Element of the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan and the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Zoning Code (RSMZC) designate land within the City for a range of residential densities. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita received a RHNA of 680 units for the 2021-2029 6th Cycle Housing Element planning period. The City has identified the projected development of up to 40 accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a credit towards meeting a portion of the City's State-mandated RHNA. After accounting for ADUs, the City has a remaining RHNA of 640 units, including 302 lower income units (extremely/very low and low), 114 moderate income units, and 224 above moderate income units.

The City must identify adequate sites with appropriate density and development standards to accommodate this RHNA. Without adjustments to the City's land use policy and zoning standards, the City would not be able to fully accommodate the remaining RHNA. As part of this Housing Element update, the City has identified candidate sites to be designated with either a Workforce Housing Overlay or Mixed-Use Housing land use/zoning designation. A summary of RHNA strategies is shown in Table HP-1 and further described in Section 5A of the Background Report (Part 2) of this Housing Element. Detailed information on the candidate sites is provided in Appendix A.

Table HP-1: RHNA Sites Strategy

	Extremely/ Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
RHNA	209	120	125	226	680
Credits (ADUs)	10	17	11	2	40
Workforce Housing Overlay	107	62	62	113	344
Mixed-Use Housing	95	57	57	111	320
Total	**212**	**136**	**130**	**226**	**704**
Surplus[1]	**3**	**16**	**5**	**0**	**24**
Percentage of Total Sites that are Surplus	**1.5%**	**13%**	**4%**	**0%**	**3.5%**

1. HCD recommends buffer in the housing element inventory of at least 15 to 30 percent capacity more than required, especially to accommodate the lower income RHNA. A modest surplus also allows various sites identified in the Housing Element to identify at different income levels than those anticipated, while still maintaining an adequate supply of available sites.

The RHNA Sites Strategy shown in Table HP-1 provides the capacity to accommodate at least 704 new units at all income levels, exceeding the total RHNA allocation for Rancho Santa Margarita by 24 units, or 3.5%. This small buffer is necessary to address the No Net Loss (SB 166, codified in Government Code Section 65863) requirement of maintaining an inventory of sites adequate to accommodate the City's RHNA throughout the planning period, as development occurs on the selected sites that may result in fewer units (or units at different income levels) than assumed in this inventory. The candidate sites can accommodate the RHNA for all income levels through year 2029. The City will continue to maintain an inventory of available sites for residential development and will continue to make it available on the City's website; it will also be provided to prospective residential developers upon request.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- As part of the annual General Plan Implementation Report, the City will monitor and report on progress made toward meeting the 2021-2029 RHNA allocation at all income levels.
- Continue to maintain an inventory of sites suitable for residential development affordable at all income levels and provide that information online and to interested developers.

- Within three years of Housing Element adoption, and no later than October 2024, amend the RSMZC to establish the Workforce Housing Overlay and amend the General Plan and RSMZC to establish the Mixed-Use Housing land use/zoning designation in order to designate adequate candidate sites with the objective of meeting the City's remaining RHNA of 640 units. The land uses/zoning designations will allow up to 35 du/ac with development standards that facilitate achieving maximum densities. All candidate sites are anticipated to accommodate a portion of the City's remaining lower-income RHNA of 302 units. Pursuant to State Housing Element statutes (Govt Code section 65583.2(h) and (i)), sites identified for rezoning to address the City's lower income RHNA shortfall shall meet the following requirements:
    - Permit owner-occupied and rental multi-family uses by-right for projects with 20% or more units affordable to lower income households
    - Permit a minimum density of 20 units per acre
    - Allow a minimum of 16 units per site
    - Accommodate at least 50 percent of the lower income need on sites designated for residential use only
    - Allow 100 percent residential use and require residential use to occupy at least 50 percent of the floor area in a mixed-use project
- Support applications by qualified housing developers to pursue local, State and federal funds for the rehabilitation and/or construction of housing targeted for persons with disabilities, including persons with developmental disabilities, provided the proposed project is consistent with the City's General Plan.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 2. Adequate Sites Monitoring (SB 166 – No Net Loss): To ensure that the net future housing capacity is maintained to accommodate the City's RHNA, the City will create an updated inventory of adequate housing sites for each income category. This inventory will detail the amount, type, size and location of vacant land (if any), and recyclable properties and parcels that are candidates for consolidation to assist developers in identifying land suitable for residential development. In addition, the City will continuously monitor the sites inventory and the number of net units constructed in each income category. If the inventory indicates a shortage of adequate sites to accommodate the remaining RHNA, the City will identify alternative sites so that there is no net loss of residential capacity pursuant to Government Code Section 65863.

To facilitate annual evaluation, the City will implement a formal ongoing project-by-project procedure pursuant to Government Code Section 65863 which will evaluate identified capacity in the sites inventory relative to projects or other actions potentially reducing density and identify additional sites as necessary. This procedure and annual evaluation will address non-residential or mixed-use zoned land to determine whether these sites are being developed for uses other than for housing. If a shortfall in sites capacity occurs, the City will identify replacement sites within six months.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- By the end of 2022, develop a formal ongoing procedure to evaluate capacity and identify additional sites as necessary.
- Continue to perform project-by-project evaluation to determine if adequate capacity remains for the remaining RHNA.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 3. Accessory Dwelling Units: Pursuant to State law, accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are an important option for attainable housing. The City plans to meet a modest portion of the 2021-2029 RHNA through the provision of ADUs (40 units, or 5.8%).

The City will continue to apply RSMZC regulations that allow ADUs and JADUs by-right in all residential zones, in accordance with State law. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita will amend the ordinance as necessary based on future changes to State law and will work with HCD to ensure continued compliance with State law. The City will also continue to monitor the extent of ADU production to ensure that the Housing Element goals can be met. To facilitate ADU development, the City will consider the following:

- Provide technical and resource guides online.
- Pursue State funding available to assist lower- and moderate-income homeowners in the construction of ADUs.
- Conduct increased outreach and education on ADU options and requirements targeted to TCAC opportunity areas of high and highest resource.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Update the City's current ADU Ordinance to comply with State law by December 2022.
- Conduct a midcycle review of ADU assumptions included in the Housing Element; if the review finds that ADU production is not consistent with the projections included in the Housing Element,

modify this program within one year to further incentivize and stimulate ADU production so that the City's ADU projections can be realized

- Promote ADU opportunities to interested residents.

- Achieve 40 ADUs over eight years. By 2025, assess the City's progress in ADU construction and if the City is not meeting its construction goal, evaluate incentives as appropriate.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 4. Public Property Conversion to Housing Program: In accordance with the requirements of Government Code Section 54230 et. seq., the City has included Program 4 to address State requirements related to City-owned land. The City has not currently identified any City-owned land as surplus land, as defined by the California Government Code. Should, in the future, any City-owned land be determined to be "surplus", the City will maintain a list of such surplus City-owned lands, including identification of address, APN, General Plan land use designation, zoning, current use, parcel size, and status (surplus land or exempt surplus land), in accordance with State Housing Law. In accordance with State Housing Law, should surplus land be identified in the future, the City will work with non-profits and public agencies to evaluate the feasibility of transferring surplus City-owned lands not committed to other City purposes for development of affordable housing by the private sector. The inventory will be updated annually in conjunction with the Annual Progress Report ("APR") (Program 1). Any disposition of future surplus lands shall be conducted consistent with the requirements of Government Code Section 54220 et. seq.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Maintain an adequate inventory of surplus lands, if any.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

3B. Provide, Maintain, and Improve Affordable and Special Needs Housing

Programs to achieve this goal address two issue areas:

1. Provision and conservation of affordable housing for all economic segments of the community and special needs groups; and

2. Maintenance and preservation of the City's housing stock and neighborhoods.

Program 5. Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Assistance: The City of Rancho Santa Margarita cooperates with the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA), which administers the Section 8 Voucher Program. The Housing Assistance Payments Program assists low income, elderly and disabled households by paying the difference between 30% of an eligible household's income and the actual/market rent. This program addresses the needs of overpayment and overcrowding of very-low- and extremely-low-income households through the provision of adequately sized apartments at affordable rents. According to the Orange County Housing Authority, in 2020, a total of 138 Housing Vouchers were provided to Rancho Santa Margarita residents including 34 disabled individuals, 61 seniors, 9 homeless and Vets (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing or VASH), and 11 Continuum of Care (homeless) vouchers.

The City facilitates use of the Section 8 program within its jurisdiction by advertising OCHA Section 8 programs on the City's website and newsletters.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- The City will cooperate with OCHA to continue to assist 138 households annually, and expand assistance by 5%, particularly to families with children.
- Meet with one multifamily apartment manager located in an area of high cost burden and/or high or highest opportunity areas annually to explain the Voucher Program and expand local choices.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department and OCHA

Funding Source: Section 8 funds

Program 6. Homeless Services: The City participates in the County's Continuum of Care to assist homeless persons to transition towards self-sufficiency. Through the Continuum of Care Program, the City offers emergency and supportive services to individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless.

According to the City's Consolidated Plan, homelessness is not a significant issue in the City, but services and shelter for victims of domestic violence and assistance to prevent homelessness were identified as needs. The City continues to utilize a portion of its CDBG public service grant resources to support local agencies that address these needs.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Continue to coordinate with the County of Orange and homeless service providers on an annual basis (March of each year) to ensure that homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness are referred to shelters and appropriate social service agencies.
- Continue to partner with the City's homeless liaison, Mercy House, to provide services and resources.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: CDBG funds and Permanent Local Housing Assistance (PLHA) grant funding.

Program 7. Code Enforcement: The Code Enforcement Program is operated through the City's Development Services Department. Code Enforcement staff cooperates with the various Homeowner Associations in the City to respond to complaints related to substandard housing, property maintenance, overgrown vegetation, trash and debris, improper occupancy, and other nuisance and municipal code violations and complaints.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- The City's Code Enforcement staff will continue to work with Homeowner Associations to enforce the City's property maintenance standards and the City's building and zoning codes.
- On a quarterly basis, review code enforcement records to identify areas that need special attention in the subsequent quarter and target these areas of higher need for focused future enforcement.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 8. OCHA Special Needs Groups Rental Assistance Programs: The County administers rental assistance programs targeting special needs groups, including families whose children are at risk of being placed in out-of-home care, disabled persons, homeless and veterans. These programs serve extremely-low-income persons and include the following:

- **Family Unification Program** which provides Section 8 assistance to families whose children are at risk of being placed in out-of-home care or delayed in returning from care because of the families' inadequate housing.
- **Shelter Plus Care Program** which provides rent subsidies to homeless persons with disabilities.
- **Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program** which provides permanent housing subsidies and case management services to homeless veterans with mental and addictive disorders.
- **Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities Program** which provides incremental Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers for non-elderly disabled families.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- The City will continue to facilitate the use of the Section 8 (see Program 5) and other Housing Authority programs throughout its jurisdiction by advertising programs semiannually (double the current advertising schedule) on the City's website and in its newsletter to reach a communitywide audience.
- Conduct biennial targeted education to landlords and tenants in the area of the City with the highest proportions of persons with disabilities, as shown on Figure H-12.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 9. First Time Homebuyer Assistance: With limited public resources, the City is not in a position to substantially subsidize a rental or ownership housing development. Nonetheless, the City will continue to provide referrals to the County's Housing Authority and/or local nonprofit agencies that provide homebuyer assistance. The City will also annually seek funding, as available, for first time homebuyer assistance and work with the County's Housing Authority and local nonprofit to leverage other sources of funding.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Continue to provide referrals to the County's Housing Authority and/or local nonprofit agencies that provide homebuyer assistance throughout the community on an ongoing basis.
- Annually (in March of each year), identify, evaluate, and seek funding opportunities for first time homebuyer assistance and complete at least one application per calendar year.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 10: Affordable Housing Development: The City does not have a redevelopment successor agency or housing authority with which to fund affordable housing development. Additionally, local resources and affordable housing subsidies are limited. The City is committed to assist in the development of housing for extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income households throughout the community to the extent feasible. As described in the Housing Resources chapter of the Housing Element Background Report, two specific areas of the City have been identified as best-suited to accommodate new housing. These areas include the Business Park area, where a new Workforce Housing Overlay will be introduced, and the Town Center area, where a new Mixed-Use Housing designation will be introduced. These areas are near businesses, goods, and services and will allow for the development of new attainable housing choices in proximity to jobs and transit. To support this effort, the City will:

- Collaborate with Affordable Housing Developers: The City will collaborate with affordable housing developers to develop, conserve and promote rental and ownership housing throughout the community, with a focus on encouraging the development of new affordable housing in areas near business, goods and services, thereby bringing housing and jobs closer together; these areas include the Business Park and Town Center area, where the City's Housing Element sites are located, as shown in Appendix A.

- *Provide Letters of Support for Funding Applications:* The City will support developers applications for funding (such as Low Income Housing Tax Credit or State HOME funds) for affordable housing throughout the community, provided the proposed project is consistent with the City's General Plan.

- *Priority Processing*: The City will adopt priority processing for applications that include housing affordable to lower-income and/or moderate-income households concurrent with implementation of Program 1.

- *Customized Development Standards*. The City will create and adopt new customized development standards to support its new Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing land use and zoning designation(s) to support the development of new attainable housing options in TCAC opportunity areas of high or highest resource (where the City's Housing Element sites are located, as shown in Appendix A); as part of this process, the City will engage developers of affordable and special needs housing to understand potential land use constraints related to development standards and prepare and adopt standards which support the development of housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households and households with special needs.

- *Concessions/Incentives*. The City will continue to grant concessions and incentives for projects throughout the community which include

housing affordable to lower-income and/or moderate-income households, such as reduced parking requirements.

- *Funding*. Seek funding annually through State programs (i.e., PLHA) to expand affordable housing and or homelessness prevention services.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Annually pursue affordable housing funds available at the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for new construction and acquisition/rehabilitation of affordable housing.
- Achieve the development of 48 affordable housing units in TCAC opportunity areas of high or highest resource, near businesses, goods, and services, consistent with the City's Housing Element sites (Appendix A), over eight years.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 11: Density Bonus: The City will provide for density bonuses consistent with State law, including density bonuses and incentives for projects that contain 100% very low- and low-income units. The City will monitor State law updates which impact density bonuses and will update local plans and programs as necessary.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Continue to implement density bonuses consistent with State law on an ongoing basis.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 12. California Accessibility Standards Compliance Program: The City will continue to ensure that all construction projects throughout the City requiring building permits comply with the State of California accessibility standards on an ongoing basis. The City will provide technical assistance as part of the building permit review process to assist property owners and contractors in understanding this law and related requirements applied to new development and/or retrofit or rehabilitation projects for public, residential, and commercial structures. The City will also provide a link on the City's website to the Division of the State Architect's web page that provides various access compliance reference materials, including an advisory manual and answers to frequently asked questions.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Continue to ensure that housing units communitywide accommodate residents with disabilities and make updates to the City's website by August 2022.
- Continue to implement the City's annual Capital Improvement Program which prioritizes funding for accessibility and mobility improvement projects in areas of higher need, as identified by the City's pavement condition index.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget and Disability Access & Education Fees (CASp fees)

Program 13. Energy Conservation: The uniqueness of Rancho Santa Margarita is due in large part to its many natural and open space resources. The City has taken strong efforts to create policies to protect and maintain natural resources such as water, soils, wildlife, and minerals, and to prevent wasteful resource exploitation and destruction. The Conservation/Open Space Element of the City's General Plan specifically addresses the City's goals, policies and objectives to protect environmental resources and open space.

The City will continue to implement energy-efficient standards for new construction and rehabilitation projects, including the California Green Building Standards Code. Information regarding the City's energy-efficiency standards and available programs to assist homeowners and property owners, including those identified in the Housing Element Background Report (Part 2 of this Housing Element), will be made available on the City's website and at the permit counter.

As part of the City's 2020 General Plan Update, the City committed to implementing an Energy Action Plan (EAP), which will identify opportunities to further reduce GHG emissions through a variety of energy-related programs and projects. This effort will further enhance the City's commitment to promoting energy conservation Citywide.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Continue to explore ways to promote energy conservation and sustainability.
- Implement an Energy Action Plan by March, 2022.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

3C. Remove Constraints

State law requires the Housing Element to address, where appropriate and legally possible, removal of constraints affecting the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing. Implementation of the following programs will help lessen constraints on housing development.

Program 14. Zoning Code and General Plan Amendments: Zoning Code and General Plan amendments are needed to address various recent changes to State law and create consistency with the Housing Element:

- *Low Barrier Navigation Centers:* The RSMZC shall be updated to define and permit low-barrier navigation centers consistent with the requirements of Government Code Sections 65660 through 65668, including treating low-barrier navigation centers as a by-right use in areas zoned for mixed use and in nonresidential zones permitting multi-family uses (if applicable).
- *Transitional and Supportive Housing*: The RSMZC shall be revised as necessary to ensure that transitional and supportive housing are allowed in residential and mixed-use zones in accordance with Government Code Section 65583(c)(3), and to allow eligible supportive housing in zones where multi-family and mixed uses are permitted in accordance with Government Code Sections 65650 through 65656.
- *Employee Housing and Agricultural Worker Housing:* The RSMZC will be updated comply with Health and Safety Code Sections 17021.5, .6, and .8. Specifically, the City will only refer to it as employee housing and not make a distinction between agricultural versus employee housing types.
- *Workforce Housing*: In order to reduce constraints to workforce housing, the State has requested specific changes to zoning codes related to the definition of Workforce Housing pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 17021.8. The RSMZC will be updated to define "workforce housing" and to identify that any workforce housing providing no more than 36 beds in a group quarters, or consisting of 12 or fewer units or spaces, shall be deemed an agricultural land use and permitted in the same manner as agricultural uses consistent with Health and Safety Code Section 17021.6. The RSMZC will also be updated to provide for streamlined, ministerial approval of workforce housing that meets the requirements of Section 17021.8.

- *Emergency Shelter Parking*: The RSMZC will be updated to require sufficient parking to accommodate all staff working in an emergency shelter, provided that the standards will not require more parking for emergency shelters than other residential or commercial uses within the same zone, in compliance with AB 139.
- *Group Homes for Seven or More Persons*: Review and amend the RSMZC, as necessary to provide objective standards for review and approval of group homes for seven or more persons.
- *General Plan Consistency*: The Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan will be updated to create internal consistency with the adopted Housing Element; this includes an update to the City's Land Use and Circulation Elements.
- *Senior Housing Parking Standard*: The RSMZC will be updated to include fixed parking standards for senior apartments.

Objectives and Timeframe:

- Complete update to Emergency Shelter Parking Requirements within one year of Housing Element Adoption; within three years of Housing Element adoption, and no later than October 2024, adopt other identified amendments to the RSMZC and General Plan.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 15. Development Review Procedures: To facilitate residential development and to comply with State law, the RSMZC will be updated to ensure that eligible multi-family projects with an affordable housing component are provided streamlined review and are subject only to objective design standards consistent with relevant provisions of SB 35 and SB 330, as provided for by applicable sections of the Government Code, including but not limited to Sections 65905.5, 65913.4, 65940, 65941.1, 65950, and 66300. State law defines objective design standards as those that "involve no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant and public official prior to submittal."

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Within three years of Housing Element adoption, and no later than October 2024, develop procedures to address the streamlining requirements of SB 35 and objective design requirements of SB 330.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 16. Large Sites to Accommodate the RHNA: The City will provide for the inclusion of mixed-income housing through the rezoning of designated sites and implementation of Program 1. As part of its 2021-2029 RHNA strategy, the City has identified two sites larger than ten acres in size as appropriate to meet a portion of the City's RHNA through implementation of a Workforce Housing Overlay. Both large sites are in the Business Park, are privately owned, and the City has a letter of support from the property owner expressing a desire to develop workforce housing at these locations.

The City is committed to working proactively with the property owner of these large sites in order to facilitate the development of housing to accommodate a portion of the City's RHNA, including a portion of the City's lower-income RHNA. To help facilitate the development of large sites identified in Appendix A, the City will give high priority to processing subdivision maps for these RHNA sites. Also, an expedited review process will be available for the subdivision of sites identified in Appendix A (including the two large sites) into buildable lots where the development application can be found consistent with the General Plan and program environmental impact report(s).

The City will offer incentives for the development of housing on large sites identified to accommodate a portion of the City's RHNA (sites identified in Appendix A), which may include, but is not limited to:

- Expedited approval of lot splits;
- Expedited processing;
- Shared/campus parking and alternative parking standards; and,
- Incentives for provision of alternative transportation.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Meet with property owner(s) of large sites identified in the City's Housing Inventory (Appendix A) by October 2022 and annually thereafter.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

3D. Promote Equal Housing Opportunities

In order to make adequate provision for the housing needs of all segments of the community, the housing program must include actions that promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, family size, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, or disability.

Program 17. Fair Housing Council of Orange County: Currently, Rancho Santa Margarita contracts with the Fair Housing Council of Orange County (FHCOC) to provide fair housing services. Services offered include counseling for landlord/tenant problems, special assistance for ethnic minority and single-parent households, bilingual housing literature and videotape presentations, and housing assistance counseling.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Continue to contract on an ongoing basis with a qualified provider to provide fair housing services to City residents.
- Advertise fair housing services communitywide in the City newsletter and in local periodicals annually and place posters and brochures advertising fair housing services in both English and Spanish at the public counter, library, post office, and other community locations and ensure that posters and brochures are updated on at least an annual basis.
- Increase the number of places with fair housing service provider information by 25% by 2024.

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: CDBG funds

Program 18. Expand Housing Opportunities: To diversify the City's housing choices, the City must expand opportunities for housing throughout the City.

Program Objectives and Timeframe:

- Within three years of Housing Element adoption, and no later than October 2024, establish the Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing land use designation/zone to increase housing opportunities throughout the City (Program 1).
- Within three years of Housing Element adoption, and no later than October 2024, amend the RSMZC to facilitate the development of a variety of housing types (Program 14).

Responsible Agency: Development Services Department

Funding Source: Departmental budget

Program 19. Affirmatively Further Fair Housing: Facilitate equal and fair housing opportunities by implementing actions to affirmatively further fair housing and opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, age, marital or familial status, ancestry, national origin, color, disability, or other protected characteristics through provision of information, coordination, and education on fair housing law and practices to residents, landlords, and housing developers.

The identified fair housing issues facing Rancho Santa Margarita are: location of employers; availability, type, frequency and reliability of public transportation; location and type of affordable housing; land use and zoning laws; community opposition; availability of affordable units in a range of sizes; access to transportation for persons with disabilities; lack of resources for fair housing agencies and organizations; and lack of local private fair housing outreach and enforcement. The new Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) component of the Housing Element connects these fair housing issues with programs in the Housing Element, as well as additional meaningful actions that the City will undertake to help address them. Table HP-2 on the following pages presents a summary of the issues, contributing factors, and the City's planned actions to address these issues.

Table HP-2: Summary Matrix of Fair Housing Issues and Actions for Mitigation

Fair Housing Issue	Contributing Factor	Priority Level	Actions and Outcomes
Disparities in Access to Opportunity (New Opportunities)	1. Location of employers 2. Availability, type, frequency, and reliability of public transportation 3. Location and type of affordable housing 4. Land use and zoning laws	High	**City Actions:** • Request the Orange County Transportation Authority explore bus route options to ensure neighborhoods with concentration of low-income or protected class populations have access to transportation services. • Update the City's Circulation element to better facilitate multimodal transportation to/from the lower opportunity census tracts to goods and services by December 2024. • Implement Programs 1, 3, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, and 18 **Action Outcomes:** Through the above steps, the City's goal will be to increase the number of local persons taking transit by 5% by 2029, support the development of up to 344 new units in the Business Park to serve as workforce housing, thereby bringing jobs, housing, and services closer together in an area where attainable housing options are currently limited, and support the development of up to 320 units in the City's mixed-use areas, thereby expanding the range of affordable housing choices and options in areas of high and highest opportunity.

Segregation and Integration (Place-based Strategies, Displacement)	1. Community opposition 2. Location and type of affordable housing 3. Land use and zoning laws	High	**City Actions:** • Implement Programs 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17, and 18 **Action Outcomes:** Through the above steps, the City's goal will be to rezone sufficient sites to allow for the development of up to 664 units (including at least 329 units affordable to lower income households) in areas of high or highest opportunity and to encourage the development of 8 ADUs per year (with a goal of at least 5 being affordable to lower income households).
Disproportionate Housing Needs, including Displacement Risks (New Opportunities)	1. Economic displacement 2. Land use and zoning laws 3. Environmental concerns	High	**City Actions:** • Support local eviction prevention strategies to reduce the number of homeless individuals and families (homelessness prevention services). • Update the City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by December 2024 to ensure community resiliency from hazards. • Implement Programs 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 18 **Action Outcomes:** Through the above steps, the City's goal will be to refer 100% of eviction process violation complaints to the City's fair housing service provider, reduce the number of persons in the City experiencing homelessness by 15%, continue education efforts and cooperation with OCFA and HOAs about the very high fire hazard severity zones by the end of the planning period, and through landlord outreach and OCHA's mobility counseling program, the City's goal will be to increase Housing Choice Vouchers through the Orange County Housing Authority by 5%.

Disparities in Access to Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities (New Opportunities)	1. Access to transportation for persons with disabilities 2. Lack of affordable, accessible housing in range of unit sizes 3. Land use and zoning laws	Medium	**City Actions:** • In cooperation with the Orange County Transportation Authority, provide community education regarding transport services for persons with disabilities. • Implement Programs 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, and 18 **Action Outcomes:** Through the above steps, the City's goal will be to increase the number of local persons with disabilities taking transit by 10%, encourage the development of at least 20% of new rental units to be three bedrooms or larger, and rezone sufficient sites to accommodate the development of up to 664 new units in areas of high or highest opportunity.
Fair Housing Enforcement and Outreach (Housing Mobility, Displacement)	1. Lack of resources for fair housing agencies and organizations 2. Lack of local private fair housing outreach and enforcement	Medium	**City Actions:** • Continue to serve as liaison between the public and appropriate agencies in matters concerning housing discrimination within the City. • Provide annual fair housing literature to schools, libraries, and post offices. Make information available via the City's fair housing service provider. Review annually to ensure that the posters and literature being provided are up-to-date. • In coordination with OCHA and fair housing services provider, conduct biennial landlord education campaign to educate property owners about State law prohibiting discrimination based on household income. Provide public information and brochures regarding fair housing/equal housing opportunity requirements including how to file a complaint and access the investigation and enforcement activities of the State Fair Employment and Housing Commission. Make said information available on the City's website and at City Hall. Review information annually to ensure that any materials, links, and

			information provided are current. • In collaboration with the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA): a. Attend quarterly OCHA Housing Advisory Committee to enhance the exchange of information regarding the availability, procedures, and policies related to the Housing Assistance Voucher program and regional housing issues. b. Support OCHA's affirmative fair marketing plan and de-concentration policies by providing five-year and annual PHA plan certifications. • Monitor FBI data annually to determine if any hate crimes are housing related and if there are actions that may be taken by the City's fair housing service provider to address potential discrimination linked to the bias motivations of hate crimes. • Implement Program 17 **Action Outcomes:** Through the above steps, the City's goal will be to refer five discrimination complaints to the City's fair housing services provider annually, increase the number of places with fair housing service provider information by 25% by 2024, and educate two landlords annually.

4. Quantified Objectives

State Housing Element Law requires that after the City of Rancho Santa Margarita identifies housing needs, surveys land and financial resources, analyzes constraints, and develops appropriate programmatic and policy responses that reflect the community's unique needs and circumstances, it then set quantified objectives. The quantified objectives are an estimate of the number of units likely to be constructed, rehabilitated, or conserved/preserved by income level during the planning period. The quantified objectives do not represent a ceiling on development, but rather set a target goal for the jurisdiction to achieve, based on needs, resources, and constraints.

Pursuant to Government Code 64483(b)(2), it is recognized that the RHNA may exceed available resources and the community's ability to produce housing. Accordingly, the City's quantified objectives for new construction, rehabilitation and conservation, are presented in Table HP-3. The new construction objective represents a portion of the City's State-mandated RHNA that the City has found to be an appropriate estimate of the likely number of units the private market may develop during the planning period. The City is not responsible for building these units. While the new construction objectives include 48 lower-income units, it must be recognized that the City has no redevelopment agency, and other local resources for affordable housing subsidies are severely limited. A rehabilitation objective of eight units (one annually) is established since the City's housing stock is relatively new and there are very few units in need of substantial repair. No conservation objective is identified, as no units are at risk during this planning period.

Table HP-3: Quantified Objectives – 2021-2029

Program Category	Income Category					
	Ex. Low	V. Low	Low	Mod	Above Mod	Totals
New Construction	15	15	18	25	45	118
Rehabilitation	2	2	2	2	0	8
Conservation	0	0	0	0	0	0

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PART 2:
BACKGROUND REPORT

Adopted August 24, 2022

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1. Introduction

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is a master planned community that was incorporated on January 1, 2000, making it one of Orange County's newest communities. The City is located in the eastern part of Orange County in the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains. Rancho Santa Margarita is located approximately four miles southeast of Irvine and 10 miles northeast of the Pacific Ocean. California State Route 241 runs through the City and provides vehicle access. Rancho Santa Margarita has an estimated 2020 population of 48,793.[1]

Rancho Santa Margarita prides itself on having a small town character, protected and enhanced by well-designed and well-maintained neighborhoods that complement the natural environment. As such, the community has become a desirable place to live. Rancho Santa Margarita's family-oriented atmosphere is especially appealing to those with younger children. The City is served by two K-12 school districts, Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD) and Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD), as well as several large private schools.

The community experienced rapid growth from 1980 to 1999, during which time 86.2% of the City's housing stock was constructed. New development has since slowed as the City is essentially built out, although there are some remaining development opportunities within the City boundaries and also in an area designated as Future Planned Community (FPC) within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI).

State Housing law (Government Code Section 65583) requires that a "housing element shall consist of an identification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs and a statement of goals, policies, quantified objectives, financial resources, and scheduled programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. The housing element shall identify adequate sites for housing, including rental housing, factory-built housing, and mobile homes, and shall make adequate provision for the existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community." This Background Report provides updated population, household characteristics, and trends to illustrate housing needs in the community.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65583 (a), the assessment and inventory must include all of the following:

- Analysis of population and employment trends, documentation of projections, and a quantification of the locality's existing and projected housing needs for all income levels. Such existing and projected needs shall include the locality's share of the regional housing need in accordance with Section 65584 of the Government Code.

[1] "E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State with Annual Percent Change – January 1, 2020 and 2021," *State of California, Department of Finance* (May 2021).



- Analysis and documentation of household characteristics, including level of payment compared to ability to pay, housing characteristics, including overcrowding, and housing stock condition.
- An inventory of land suitable for residential development, including vacant sites and sites having realistic and demonstrated potential for redevelopment during the planning period, and an analysis of the relationship between zoning, public facilities, and city services to these sites.
- Analysis of potential and actual governmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels and for persons with disabilities, including land use controls, building codes and their enforcement, site improvements, fees and other exactions required of developers, local processing and permit procedures, and any locally adopted ordinances that directly impact the cost and supply of residential development.
- Analysis of potential and actual non-governmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels, including the availability of financing, the price of land, the cost of construction, requests to develop housing at densities below the minimum densities in the inventory of sites, and the length of time between receiving approval for a housing development and submittal of an application for building permits that hinder the construction of a locality's share of the regional housing need.
- Analysis of any special housing needs, such as those of the elderly, disabled, including developmentally disabled, large families, farmworkers, families with female heads of households, and families and persons in need of emergency shelter.
- Analysis of opportunities for energy conservation with respect to residential development.
- Analysis of existing assisted multi-family rental housing developments that are eligible to change from low-income housing to market-rate during the next 10 years.

This Background Report for the 2021-2029 Housing Element identifies the nature and extent of Rancho Santa Margarita's housing needs, including those of special populations, potential housing resources (land and funds), potential constraints to housing production, and energy conservation opportunities. In addition, this Background Report also includes an evaluation of accomplishments under the prior (5th Cycle) Housing Element, presented herein as Section 2. By examining the City's housing needs, resources, constraints, and progress, the City can then determine a plan of action to accommodate future residential development in accordance with local needs and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The action plan is presented as the "Housing Plan," which is Part 1 (the policy component) of the Housing Element. In addition to identifying housing needs, this Background Report also presents information regarding the setting in which these needs occur. This information is instrumental in providing a better understanding of the community, which in turn is essential for planning to meet the RHNA and local housing needs.

2. Accomplishments Under 5th Cycle Housing Element

The following section reviews and evaluates the City's progress in implementing the 2013 Housing Element. It reviews the results and effectiveness of programs, policies, and objectives from the previous Housing Element **planning period**, which covered 2013 through 2021. It is noted that there is a difference between the 5th Cycle "planning period" which was from 2013-2021, and the "Regional Housing Needs Assessment period" which was, for SCAG's 5th Cycle, between 2014-2021. This section also analyzes the difference between projected housing need and actual housing production.

2A. Review of 2013 Housing Element

The 2013 Housing Element program strategy focused on the accomplishment of policies and implementation of programs to ensure adequate housing sites, to encourage the production of new housing, including affordable and special needs housing, to encourage the maintenance and preservation of existing housing, to remove various constraints to housing, including housing for special needs populations, and to encourage fair housing and non-discrimination. The 2013 Housing Element identified the following goals:

GOAL 1: HOUSING DIVERSITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Maintain a range of housing opportunities to adequately meet the existing and projected needs of the entire community.

GOAL 2: MAINTENANCE AND PRESERVATION OF HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Maintain and improve existing neighborhoods and housing stock.

GOAL 3: HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Use public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts to ensure that all segments of the community have access to safe and decent housing that meets their special needs.

2B. Housing Production During 5th Cycle RHNA Period

The City's 5th Cycle Housing Element specifically addressed housing needs for Rancho Santa Margarita from October 15, 2014 through October 15, 2021, in line with the **RHNA period (2014-2021)** adopted by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), which, as described above, is different than the **planning period (2013-2021)**.

Table H-1 shows the total number of housing units built in the City during the 5th RHNA cycle to date and compares these units with the units required to be accommodated under the Regional Housing Needs Allocation. As the City is largely built out, SCAG identified a 2014-2021 future housing need for Rancho Santa Margarita of only two new units – one very low-income unit and one low-income unit.

During the 2014-2021 RHNA period, the City added 37 new units to its housing stock. This includes development of Dahlia Court, a 36-unit market rate single-family attached townhome project and one accessory dwelling unit, with a rental rate affordable to lower-income households. The 2014-2021 RHNA period saw less housing production than earlier cycles primarily due to the built-out nature of the community.

TABLE H-1: REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION – 5TH CYCLE PROGRESS

Status	Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	TOTAL
RHNA Allocation	0	1	1	0	0	2
Built	0	0	1	0	36	37
Under Construction/Permitted	0	0	0	0	0	0
Remaining Allocation	0	1	0	0	+36 (surplus)	+35 (surplus)

Sources: City of Rancho Santa Margarita 2013-2021 Housing Element; 2020 General Plan Annual Progress Report; City of Rancho Santa Margarita, 2021

2C. Appropriateness and Effectiveness of 2013 Housing Element

Most of the City's existing housing programs have been effective or are necessary, as discussed in. The intent of these programs will be kept in the Housing Plan, with revisions to address identified specific housing needs, constraints, or other concerns identified as part of this update, and to meet State requirements. The City implemented many of the housing programs in the last several years and anticipates that these changes will further encourage affordable and special needs housing.

While the City took a number of significant steps to promote housing during the prior planning period, the experience of Rancho Santa Margarita and other small communities throughout the State demonstrates that it is very difficult for local governments to meet their State-allocated housing goals for lower and moderate-income housing working alone. Small cities, such as Rancho Santa Margarita, have limited financial and staffing resources and require substantial State and/or federal assistance, as well as technical assistance, which is not available at the levels necessary to support the City's housing needs.

TABLE H-2: EVALUATION OF THE 2013-2021 HOUSING PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2021-2029 HOUSING PROGRAMS

Program	Accomplishments
1. Provide Adequate Housing Sites	
Program 1.1: Regional Housing Needs Allocation: Planning and regulatory actions to provide adequate housing sites are achieved through the Land Use Element and Zoning Code. The Land Use Element provides for a variety of residential types, ranging from lower-density single-family homes to higher-density apartments and condominiums, transitional housing and second units. Pre-incorporation development agreements apply to a number of the planned communities in Rancho Santa Margarita and identify permitted levels of development based on the provision of public facilities and infrastructure. The use designations identified in the Land Use Element are consistent with the development densities identified in the development agreements. The City is primarily built out and therefore SCAG has identified a 2014-2021 future housing need for Rancho Santa Margarita of only two new units – one very low income unit and one low income unit. Second unit construction is likely the primary source of new housing units in the future. Program Objectives and Timeframe: • As part of the annual General Plan Implementation Report, the City will monitor and report on progress made toward meeting the 2013-2021 RHNA allocation. • Monitor the development of second units in the City to determine if the current development standards in place are adequate to facilitate the construction of second units, given current market conditions.	**Result/Evaluation:** Program considered successful. The City has maintained an inventory of residential sites and has maintained adequate capacity to accommodate its RHNA. Regarding the program objectives: • The City prepares a General Plan Annual Progress Report to monitor progress towards its RHNA. The 2020 APR reported that one of the City's two allocated units had been constructed. • In 2021, the City updated and amended Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code (RSMZC) Section 9.04.190 Accessory Dwelling Units, to ensure that it complies with State law and streamlines approval of ADUs. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program provides relevant information to ensure that the City is able to accommodate its RHNA. However, given the significant increase in the City's RHNA allocation from 2 units to 680 units, a more robust program will need to be implemented.

Program	Accomplishments
Develop incentives or modify development standards as necessary and appropriate. • Continue to pursue annexation of the Future Planned Area. Pursue developers for these sites and the annexation area in order to provide future rental and ownership opportunities for a range of income groups and household types. • Support applications by qualified housing developers to pursue local, State and federal funds for the rehabilitation and/or construction of housing targeted for persons with disabilities, including persons with developmental disabilities, provided the proposed project is consistent with the City's General Plan.	
Program 1.2: Homeless Services: The main source for data regarding the number of homeless in Orange County is the 2011 Point-In-Time Homeless Count and Survey (PITS). However, based on the 2011 PITS data, no homeless person identified Rancho Santa Margarita as the city in which they resided before becoming homeless. This finding is consistent with input provided by the Orange County Sheriff's Department, which indicates that there are few (if any) homeless in the City. Transients and victims of domestic violence make up the bulk of the Sheriff's service calls related to homelessness. According to the City's Consolidated Plan, homelessness is not a significant issue in the City, but services and shelter for victims of domestic violence and assistance to prevent homelessness were identified as needs. The City continues to utilize a portion of its CDBG public service grant resources to support	**Result/Evaluation:** Program considered successful. The City continues to allocate a portion of its CDBG funds to support local agencies that provide services to the homeless or to prevent homelessness, including Families Forward, Family Assistance Ministries, and South County Outreach. These agencies provide a variety of services including counseling and referrals, access to food pantries, utility shut-off prevention, life skills training, and employment counseling. In 2020, the agencies collectively provided assistance to 57 individuals (rent/utility assistance to prevent loss of housing/services), and 15 individuals (case management) paid with CDBG funds, and non-profit partner paying rent for homeless individual). Additionally, the City provided Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) funds to Mercy House to provide the City with 16 hours/week

Program	Accomplishments
local agencies that address these needs. About five individuals annually receive emergency shelter assistance from the City and various service providers. Program Objectives and Timeframe: • Continue to coordinate with the County of Orange and homeless service providers to ensure that homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness are referred to shelters and appropriate social service agencies.	of outreach as a homeless liaison worker. The City was awarded a $101,396 Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) Program grant by HCD in 2020 that will allow the City to assist tenants at risk of homelessness. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate and is included in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.
2. Provide, Maintain, and Improve Affordable Housing	
Program 2.1: Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Assistance: The City of Rancho Santa Margarita cooperates with the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA), which administers the Section 8 Voucher Program. The Housing Assistance Payments Program assists low income, elderly and disabled households by paying the difference between 30% of an eligible household's income and the actual rent. This program addresses the needs of overpayment and overcrowding of very-low- and extremely low-income households through the provision of adequately-sized apartments at affordable rents. According to the Orange County Housing Authority, a total of 115 tenant-based Section 8 vouchers are used in the City. Of these 115 households, there are 93 extremely-low, 16 very-low, and six low-income households. Additionally, there are 54 disabled households and 58 elderly households. The City facilitates use of the Section 8 program within its jurisdiction by advertising OCHA Section 8 programs on the City's website and newsletters.	**Result/Evaluation:** Program considered successful. The City continues to cooperate with OCHA to provide Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance to residents. In 2020, 138 Housing Vouchers were provided to 34 disabled individuals, 61 seniors, and 9 homeless and Vets (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing or VASH), and 11 are Continuum of Care (homeless) who were provided with vouchers. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate and is included in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

Program	Accomplishments
Program Objectives and Timeframe: • The City will cooperate with OCHA to continue to assist 115 households annually, and if possible, expand assistance to an increased number of households, particularly families with children.	
Program 2.2: OCHA Special Needs Groups Rental Assistance Programs: The County administers rental assistance programs targeting special needs groups, including families whose children are at risk of being placed in out-of-home care, disabled persons, homeless and veterans. These programs serve extremely low-income persons and include the following: • Family Unification Program which provides Section 8 assistance to families whose children are at risk of being placed in out-of-home care or delayed in returning from care because of the families' inadequate housing. • Shelter Plus Care Program which provides rent subsidies to homeless persons with disabilities. • Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program which provides permanent housing subsidies and case management services to homeless veterans with mental and addictive disorders. • Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities Program which provides incremental Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers for non-elderly disabled families.	**Result/Evaluation:** Program considered successful. The City coordinates with OCHA to continue to provide for these programs and facilitates participation in the Housing Choice Voucher Program by advertising the program on the City website and in newsletters, and by referring potential applicants to the OCHA, as needed. In 2020, 138 Housing Vouchers were provided to 34 disabled individuals, 61 seniors, and 9 homeless and Vets (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing or VASH). and 11 are Continuum of Care (homeless) who were provided with vouchers. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate and is included in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

Program 2.3: Code Enforcement: The Code Enforcement Program is operated through the City's Planning Department. Code Enforcement staff cooperates with the various Homeowner Associations in the City to respond to complaints related to substandard housing, property maintenance, overgrown vegetation, trash and debris, improper occupancy, and other nuisance and zoning complaints.	**Result/Evaluation:** Program considered successful. The City continues to provide code enforcement activities with the goal of the Code Enforcement Program to address housing concerns before they become serious problems. This program is complaint-driven and staff offers resources and guidance to property owners to correct any violations. Staff completed 150 inspections annually. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate and is included in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.
Program 2.4: First Time Homebuyer Assistance: With limited public resources, the City is not in a position to substantially subsidize a rental or ownership housing development. Nonetheless, the City will continue to provide referrals to the County's Housing Authority and/or local nonprofit agencies that provide homebuyer assistance. In addition, the Southern California Home Financing Authority (SCHFA) offers a mortgage revenue bond program that issues 30-year mortgage revenue funds at below-market interest rates. To be eligible for the program, the buyer must be a first-time homebuyer whose income may not exceed 120 percent of the Orange County median income. The City will continue to participate in the mortgage revenue bond program, providing information regarding the program on the City's website and at the public counter, library, post office, and other community locations. Program Objectives and Timeframe: • Continue to provide referrals to the County's Housing Authority and/or local nonprofit agencies	**Result/Evaluation:** During the planning period, the City lacked financial and staffing resources to fund and administer a First Time Homebuyer Assistance program. However, the City continued to refer individuals to programs such as OCHA's Homeownership Program. The City continues to review available funding sources. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue: The City will continue to provide referrals to the County's Housing Authority a/o local non-profit agencies that provide homebuyer assistance.



that provide homebuyer assistance. • Continue to participate in the mortgage revenue bond program, providing information regarding the program to interested residents.	
Program 2.5: Second Units: The City plans to meet its 2014-2021 RHNA through the provision of second units. In order to facilitate second unit construction, the City adopted the Second Unit Ordinance in 2007, which allows a second unit to be detached, attached, or fully integrated into the principal unit. This flexibility is intended to encourage second unit construction and offers opportunity for moderating the cost of construction. However, due to the housing market crash in 2008 and subsequent economic recession, no second units have been constructed. Along with the gradual recovery of the economy, the City is beginning to receive inquiries about second units. The City will promote second unit opportunities and, based on past trends, anticipates at least two second units could be constructed between 2014 and 2021, fulfilling the City's RHNA of two units. Program Objectives and Timeframe: • Promote second unit opportunities to interested residents. • Monitor the development of second units in the City to determine if the current development standards in place are adequate to facilitate the construction of second units, given current market conditions. Develop incentives or modify development standards as necessary and appropriate.	**Result/Evaluation:** Program considered successful. Pursuant to State law, the City continues to streamline approvals of ADUs. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate and is included in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

Program 2.6: Energy Conservation: The uniqueness of Rancho Santa Margarita is due, in large part, to its many natural and open space resources. The City has taken strong efforts to create policies to protect and maintain natural resources such as water, soils, wildlife, and minerals, and prevent wasteful resource exploitation and destruction. The Conservation/ Open Space Element of the City's General Plan specifically addresses the City's goals, policies and objectives to protect environmental resources and open space. Program Objectives and Timeframe: • Continue to explore ways to promote energy conservation and sustainability.	**Result/Evaluation:** The City participates in the HERO program, which is a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program that provides low-cost financing to homeowners for energy-efficient, water-efficient, and renewable energy upgrades. Furthermore, sustainability principles have been incorporated into the Building Code. As part of the City's 2020 General Plan Update, the City committed to implementing an Energy Action Plan (EAP), which will identify opportunities to further reduce GHG emissions through a variety of energy-related programs and projects. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate and is included in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

3. Remove Governmental Constraints	
Program 3.1: Expedited Project Review: The City's evaluation and review process for housing projects contributes to the cost of housing because holding costs incurred by developers are ultimately reflected in the unit's selling price. To minimize holding costs incurred by developers, Rancho Santa Margarita will prioritize any project with an affordable housing component. The City recently expedited the approval of 66 housing units on the former Morasha Jewish Day School site. Program Objectives and Timeframe: • Continue to implement procedures for priority processing of affordable housing projects in order to reduce the time and cost associated with the development process. • Expedite permit processing for projects targeted for persons with disabilities, including persons with developmental disabilities.	**Result/Evaluation:** One market rate housing project (Dahlia Court, 36 units) and one ADU were built during the 2013-2021 Housing Element Planning Period. • One ADU in the low-income category was submitted, approved, and constructed in an expeditious manner in 2019. • No proposals were submitted for projects targeted for persons with disabilities during the Planning Period. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate and is included in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

4. Promote Equal Housing Opportunities	
Program 4.1: Fair Housing Council of Orange County: Currently, Rancho Santa Margarita contracts with the Fair Housing Council of Orange County (FHCOC) to provide fair housing services. Services offered include counseling and landlord/tenant problems, special assistance for ethnic minority and single-parent households, bilingual housing literature and videotape presentations, and housing assistance counseling. Program Objectives and Timeframe: • Continue to contract with a qualified provider to provide fair housing services to City residents. • Advertise fair housing services in the City newsletter and in local periodicals and place posters and brochures advertising fair housing services in both English and Spanish at the public counter, library, post office, and other community locations.	**Result/Evaluation:** Program considered successful. Most recently, 54 households were assisted with fair housing referral services through FHCOC in 2020. Issues addressed included concerns with rental agreements, deposits, unit repairs, and notices. Regarding the program objectives: • The City is an active member of the Fair Housing Council of Orange County. The Fair Housing Council provides services that include fair housing enforcement and education, landlord/ tenant counseling, mediation and homebuyer HUD counseling which includes first-time homebuyer education and mortgage default counseling. Services are available to low-to-moderate income clients free of charge and to others for a moderate donation. Services are available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. As part of the City's larger Action Plan to address housing needs, and in partnership with FHCOC, multi-faceted fair housing outreach to tenants, landlords, property owners, realtors, and property management companies has included informational booths at City sponsored community-wide events, and staff training. **Continue/Modify/Delete:** Continue. This program continues to be appropriate.



Cumulative Evaluation of the Effectiveness in Meeting the Housing Needs of Special Needs Populations

While goals, policies, and programs that increase the number and variety of different types of units and maintain the high-quality of existing housing stock benefits all residents in Rancho Santa Margarita, the 2013 Housing Element included a number of policies and programs to specifically address the needs of special needs populations (e.g., elderly, persons with disabilities, large households, female headed households, farmworkers, and persons experiencing homelessness). To meet the housing needs of special needs populations, the City accomplished the following during the last planning period:

- *Seniors/elderly*: The City cooperated with OCHA to provide Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance to seniors (Program 2.1 and Program 2.2).
- *Disabled persons*: The City cooperated with OCHA to provide Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance to disabled persons (Program 2.1 and Program 2.2). In addition, the City's reasonable accommodation process is codified in Section 9.05.130 of the Zoning Code, and allows for reasonable accommodation (i.e., modifications or exceptions) in the City's zoning laws and other land use regulations to allow disabled persons an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.
- *Large family households*: The City is an active member of the FHCOC and provided informational flyers at City Hall, information on the City's webpage, and staff referrals, leading to fair housing referral services for residents, including large family households (Program 4.1). In addition, as shown in Table H-36, there are sufficient units in the City to accommodate both large owner and renter households. The City is further addressing the needs of large family households in the 6th Cycle Housing Element.
- *Single parent and female-headed households*: The City is an active member of the FHCOC and provided informational flyers at City Hall, information on the City's webpage, and staff referrals, leading to fair housing referral services for residents, including single-parent households (Program 4.1).
- *Farmworkers*: As discussed further in this document, although farmworkers are not a significant presence in Rancho Santa Margarita, the City supports a number of programs aimed at providing assistance to low-income individuals, which could include farmworkers. The City is an active member of the FHCOC and provided informational flyers at City Hall, information on the City's webpage, and staff referrals, leading to fair housing referral services for residents, including farmworkers (Program 4.1).
- *Homeless persons*: The City allocated a portion of CDBG funds to support local agencies that provide services to the homeless or to prevent homelessness, including Families Forward, Family Assistance Ministries, and South County Outreach (Program 1.2). The City also provided HEAP funds and now provides PLHA funds to Mercy House to provide the City with 16 hours/week of outreach as a homeless liaison worker. The City cooperated with OCHA to provide Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance to homeless individuals and vets (Program 2.1 and Program 2.2).

3. Housing Needs Assessment

3A. Introduction and Background

The purpose of the Housing Needs Assessment is to describe housing, economic, and demographic conditions in Rancho Santa Margarita, assess the demand for housing for households at all income levels, and document the demand for housing to serve various special needs populations. The Housing Needs Assessment also addresses whether assisted housing projects are at-risk of converting to market rate projects. The Housing Needs Assessment is intended to assist Rancho Santa Margarita in developing housing goals and formulating policies and programs that address local housing needs.

Several sources of data were used to describe existing demographic and housing conditions, including the following:

- Pre-Certified Local Housing Data package for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita developed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and pre-certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for use in 6th cycle housing elements.
- Data from the 2010 U.S. Census, 2014-2018 U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), California Department of Finance (DOF), California Employee Development Department (EDD), and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is included to provide information on population, household, housing, income, employment, and other demographic characteristics.
- Regional information from the Fair Housing Council of Orange County.
- Other sources of economic data such as information from the website rental listings, multiple listing service, and other published data are used where current Census, ACS, DOF, HUD, and other standard data sources do not provide relevant data.
- Interviews with key agencies and organizations were conducted to obtain information on housing needs and, in particular, needs of populations with special housing needs.

Due to the use of multiple data sources (with some varying dates), there are slight variations in some of the information, such as total population and total household numbers, presented in this document. However, these variations do not significantly affect the discussion of overall housing needs and trends.

3B. Population Trends and Characteristics

POPULATION GROWTH

Table H-3 shows population growth for Rancho Santa Margarita and other jurisdictions in the region from 2000 through 2020. According to data prepared by the California DOF, the population of Rancho Santa Margarita in 2020 was 48,793 persons, an increase of approximately 2% since 2010. During the previous decade (2000 to 2010), the City's population increased 1.4% to total 47,853 in 2010. Rancho Santa Margarita's growth has been slower than countywide growth, with Orange County experiencing significantly higher population growth rates during both the 2000 to 2010 and 2010 to 2020 periods, as shown in Table H-3. The City's population is anticipated to increase to approximately 51,404 persons by 2040 (General Plan 2020 Environmental Impact Report).

TABLE H-3: POPULATION TRENDS – NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS

Jurisdiction	2000	2010	2020	Change 2000-20	% Change 2000-20
Rancho Santa Margarita	47,214	47,853	48,793	1,579	3.3%
Irvine	145,628	212,375	281,707	136,079	93.4%
Laguna Hills	31,178	30,270	31,508	330	1.1%
Lake Forest	58,707	77,395	84,711	26,004	44.3%
Mission Viejo	93,102	93,174	94,267	1,165	1.3%
San Juan Capistrano	33,826	34,593	36,318	2,492	7.4%
Orange County	2,846,289	3,010,232	3,194,332	348,043	12.2%

Sources: US Census, 2000; DOF, 2020

AGE

Changes in the age groups can indicate future housing needs. Table H-4 compares age groups in 2018 for Rancho Santa Margarita and Orange County. In Rancho Santa Margarita, children under 15 comprise 21% of the City's population, teens and young adults (15 – 24) represent 13.2%, and adults in family-forming age groups (25 – 44) comprise 26.1%. Adults aged 45 to 64 represent 31.8% of the population and seniors (65 and over) comprise 7.9%. In 2018, the median age in Rancho Santa Margarita (37.6 years) was slightly lower than that of Orange County (37.8 years) and 1.3 years higher than the Statewide median age of 36.3 years. The median age of City residents has increased from the 2010 median age of 34.1 years.

TABLE H-4: POPULATION BY AGE (2018)

Age	Rancho Santa Margarita		Orange County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5 Years	3,398	7.0%	188,956	6.0%
5 to 9	3,116	6.4%	189,548	6.0%
10 to 14	3,705	7.6%	206,380	6.5%
15 to 19	3,781	7.7%	208,793	6.6%
20 to 24	2,677	5.5%	218,993	6.9%
25 to 34	6,085	12.5%	453,121	14.3%
35 to 44	6,657	13.6%	415,919	13.1%
45 to 54	8,567	17.6%	453,608	14.3%
55 to 64	6,922	14.2%	388,376	12.3%
65 to 74	2,366	4.8%	249,211	7.9%
75 to 84	978	2.0%	131,180	4.1%
85 and Over	540	1.1%	60,097	1.9%
TOTAL	48,792	100%	3,164,182	100%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

RACE/ETHNICITY

Table H-5 shows the ethnic composition of Rancho Santa Margarita's population. As with Orange County, the majority of the City's population are White (77.1%). The next largest racial group is Asian (10.7%), followed by "two or more races" (5.3%), "other race" (3.5%), Black or African American (2.9%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (0.4%), and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (0.1%). Just over one-fifth of the population (20.7%) is of Hispanic or Latino origin.

TABLE H-5: RACE AND ETHNICITY (2018)

Race/Ethnicity	Rancho Santa Margarita		Orange County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	37,620	77.1%	1,950,902	61.7%
Black or African American	1,439	2.9%	54,732	1.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	176	0.4%	14,466	0.5%
Asian	5,216	10.7%	635,672	20.1%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	42	0.1%	9,442	0.3%
Some Other Race	1,695	3.5%	370,679	11.7%
Two or More Races	2,604	5.3%	128,289	4.1%
TOTAL	48,792	100%	3,164,182	100%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	10,077	20.7%	1,080,195	34.1%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

EMPLOYMENT

One of the factors that can contribute to an increase in demand for housing is expansion of the employment base. Table H-6 shows the employment and unemployment rates for persons 16 years and older that were in the labor force in 2000 and 2018 in Rancho Santa Margarita. The number of employed residents increased by 1,932 from 2010 to 2018. In 2018, ACS data indicated that the unemployment rate in Rancho Santa Margarita was approximately 3%, a decrease from 5.1% in 2010. According to the labor report data compiled by the California EDD, the Anaheim-Santa Ana-Irvine Metropolitan Area's average annual unemployment rate in 2018 was estimated at 3%, Orange County's rate was also 3%, while California's was 4.1%.

TABLE H-6: JOB GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS, RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

	2010		2018	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Persons in Labor Force	25,902	100%	27,834	100%
Employed	24,575	94.9%	27,011	97%
Unemployed	1,327	5.1%	823	3%

Sources: US Census, 2010-2014 ACS and 2014-2018 ACS

INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION

The 2014-2018 ACS data identified 27,011 employed persons in the Rancho Santa Margarita labor force. Table H-7 shows 2018 employment by industry for the City. Of Rancho Santa Margarita's employed residents, the "Educational services, health care and social assistance" industry employed the most people at 19.1%. The second largest employment sector was the "Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management" industry, which had 14.8% of the total employed persons in Rancho Santa Margarita. The top two employment categories in Orange County were also the "Educational services, health care and social assistance" industry at 19.3% and the "Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management" industry at 14.4%. The City's workforce holds a variety of types of jobs as shown in Table H-8, with the largest sector (50.6%) working in management, business, science, and arts occupations, followed by 25.6% in sales and office occupations.

TABLE H-7: JOBS BY INDUSTRY (2018)

Industry	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining	59	0.2%
Construction	879	3.3%
Manufacturing	3,266	12.1%
Wholesale trade	1,195	4.4%
Retail trade	2,895	10.7%
Transportation, warehousing, utilities	766	2.8%
Information	548	2.0%
Finance and insurance, real estate and rental and leasing	2,873	10.6%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste mgmt.	4,000	14.8%
Educational services, health care and social assistance	5,155	19.1%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food services	2,829	10.5%
Other services	1,330	4.9%
Public administration	1,183	4.4%
Total (Civilian Labor Force)	26,978	99.9%
Armed Forces	33	0.1%
Total employed persons	27,011	100%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

TABLE H-8: JOBS BY OCCUPATION (2018)

Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Earnings*
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	13,662	50.6%	$86,957
Service occupations	3,850	14.3%	$18,929
Sales and office occupations	6,903	25.6%	$46,005
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	885	3.3%	$40,846
Production, transportation, and material moving	1,678	6.2%	$31,313

**Median earnings in previous 12 months prior to survey*

Sources: SCAG 6th Cycle Data Package; US Census, 2014-2018 ACS



TRAVEL TO WORK

Just over half of Rancho Santa Margarita's employed residents, 50.9%, travelled less than 30 minutes to work. Approximately 9.4% of employed residents drive more than 60 minutes to work. Most Rancho Santa Margarita workers, 82.5%, drive alone to work and 7.6% carpool. Table H-9 identifies travel time to work and Table H-10 identifies commute methods for Rancho Santa Margarita workers in 2018.

TABLE H-9: TRAVEL TIME TO WORK (2018)

	Number	Percent
Less than 10 minutes	2,373	9.5%
10-19 minutes	4,730	19.0%
20-29 minutes	5,558	22.4%
30-44 minutes	7,431	29.9%
45-59 minutes	2,431	9.8%
60 + minutes	2,334	9.4%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

TABLE H-10: COMMUTE METHOD (2018)

	Number	Percent
Drive Alone	22,017	82.5%
Carpooled	2,027	7.6%
Public Transportation	124	0.5%
Walk	445	1.7%
Other	244	0.9%
Work at Home	1,832	6.9%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

3C. Household Characteristics

According to the Census, a household is defined as all persons living in a housing unit. This definition includes families (related individuals living together), unrelated individuals living together, and individuals living alone.

A housing unit is defined by the Census as a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

People living in retirement homes or other group living situations are not considered "households" for the purpose of the U.S. Census count. The household characteristics in a community, including household size, income, and the presence of special needs households, are important factors in determining the size and type of housing needed in the City.

Table H-11 below identifies the ages of householders in Rancho Santa Margarita in 2018 based on ACS data from 2014-2018; 67.7% of homeowner households are headed by someone 35-59 years of age, compared to 51% of renter households headed by someone in that same age range. Renter households are generally younger; about 27.3% of renter households are headed by a person aged 25-34, compared to 7.7% of homeowner households headed by someone in that younger age range.

TABLE H-11: HOUSEHOLDS BY TENURE AND AGE (2018)

	Rancho Santa Margarita		Orange County	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total:	17,290	-	1,032,373	-
Owner Occupied:	12,295	71.1%	592,269	57.4%
Householder 15 to 24 years	16	<1%	2,053	<1%
Householder 25 to 34 years	939	5.4%	36,065	3.5%
Householder 35 to 44 years	2,792	16.2%	86,899	8.4%
Householder 45 to 54 years	3,679	21.3%	137,678	13.3%
Householder 55 to 59 years	1,852	10.7%	75,371	7.3%
Householder 60 to 64 years	1,427	8.3%	67,259	6.5%
Householder 65 to 74 years	1,135	6.6%	104,985	10.2%
Householder 75 to 84 years	399	2.3%	58,068	5.6%
Householder 85 years and older	56	<1%	23,891	2.3%
Renter Occupied:	4,995	28.9%	440,104	42.6%
Householder 15 to 24 years	133	<1%	23,193	2.3%
Householder 25 to 34 years	1,223	7.1%	105,489	10.2%
Householder 35 to 44 years	1,051	6.1%	101,763	10%
Householder 45 to 54 years	1,165	6.7%	91,096	8.8%
Householder 55 to 59 years	351	2%	33,973	3.3%
Householder 60 to 64 years	287	1.7%	24,592	2.4%
Householder 65 to 74 years	269	1.6%	33,099	3.2%
Householder 75 to 84 years	223	1.3%	16,518	1.6%
Householder 85 years and older	293	1.7%	10,381	1%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year Data Profile (Table B25007)

Table H-12 identifies the household sizes by housing tenure. In 2018, the majority of households consisted of 2 to 4 persons. Large households of 5 or more persons only made up 9.3% of the total households in Rancho Santa Margarita. The average household size was 2.82 persons. Additionally, the average household size in Rancho Santa Margarita in 2018 for owner-occupied units was 2.90 persons per household and 2.64 persons per household for renter-occupied units.

TABLE H-12: HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY TENURE (2018)

	Rancho Santa Margarita		Orange County	
	Number	%	Number	%
Owner Households	12,295	100%	592,269	100%
Householder living alone	2,049	16.7%	110,780	18.7%
Households 2–4 persons	9,106	74%	404,680	68.3%
Large households 5+ persons	1,140	9.3%	76,809	13%
Average Household Size	2.90 persons		2.99 persons	
Renter Households	4,995	100%	440,104	100%
Householder living alone	1,388	27.8%	106,627	24.2%
Households 2–4 persons	3,197	64%	263,316	59.8%
Large households 5+ persons	410	8.2%	70,161	15.9%
Average Household Size	2.64 persons		3.06 persons	
Total Households	17,290	100%	1,032,373	100%
Householder living alone	3,437	19.9%	217,407	21.1%
Households 2–4 persons	12,303	71.1%	667,996	64.7%
Large households 5+ persons	1,550	9%	146,970	14.2%
Average Household Size	2.82 persons		3.02 persons	

Sources: SCAG 6th Cycle Data Package; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 ACS; 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year Data Profile (Table B25009)

3D. Income

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

From 2010 to 2018, the median household income (adjusted for inflation) in Rancho Santa Margarita increased by 15.4% to $115,073 and the per capita income increased by 26.7% to $51,219. From 2010 to 2018, there was an increase in both per capita and median household incomes. Table H-13 identifies the per capita and median household incomes in Rancho Santa Margarita.

TABLE H-13: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD AND PER CAPITA INCOME

	2010	2018	% Change
Median Household Income	$99,722	$115,073	15.4%
Per Capita Income	$40,438	$51,219	26.7%

Sources: US Census, 2000; US Census, 2006-2010 ACS; US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

In 2018, the majority (57.7%) of Rancho Santa Margarita's households earned in excess of $100,000 per year. The incidence of households earning less than $25,000 per year (just over the 2018 poverty guidelines for a family of 4) was higher among renter households (17%) than owner households (3.8%). Table H-14 identifies household income by tenure. As shown in Table H-14, the average income of owner households is $76,506 more than renter households.

TABLE H-14: HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR ALL HOUSEHOLDS AND BY TENURE (2018)

	All Households		Owner Households		Renter Households	
Income	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than $5,000	210	1.2%	90	0.7%	120	2.4%
$5,000 to $9,999	139	0.8%	62	0.5%	77	1.5%
$10,000 to $14,999	311	1.8%	125	1.0%	186	3.7%
$15,000 to $19,999	343	2.0%	177	1.4%	166	3.3%
$20,000 to $24,999	332	1.9%	25	0.2%	307	6.1%
$25,000 to $34,999	713	4.1%	335	2.7%	378	7.6%
$35,000 to $49,999	920	5.3%	459	3.7%	461	9.2%
$50,000 to $74,999	2,297	13.3%	1,264	10.3%	1,033	20.7%
$75,000 to $99,999	2,046	11.8%	1,233	10.0%	813	16.3%
$100,000 to $149,999	3,760	21.7%	2,762	22.5%	998	20.0%
$150,000 or more	6,219	36.0%	5,763	46.9%	456	9.1%
Median Household Income	$115,073		$144,239		$67,733	

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS



HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME GROUP

A special aggregation of 2013-2017 ACS data analyzed by HUD – the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data – provides a breakdown of households by income group by tenure. The number of households in Extremely Low, Very Low, Low, and Moderate/Above Moderate income groups is shown in Table H-15. The majority of households (70.1%) are above median income. The HUD CHAS data indicates the extremely low-income group represents 8.3% of households, and a higher proportion are renters (905) than owners (530). The very low-income group represents 8.6% of households and the low-income group represents 13.0% of households. The RHNA (see Table H-29) identifies the City's share of regional housing needs for extremely low, very low, and low-income households, as well as for moderate and above moderate-income households. As shown in Table H-15, there is a larger proportion of renters in the extremely low, very low, and low-income groups, while there is a larger rate of moderate and above moderate-income groups in owner households.

TABLE H-15: HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME GROUP (2017)

Income Group	Total		Owner		Renter	
	Households	Percent	Households	Percent	Households	Percent
Extremely Low (<30% AMI)	1,435	8.3%	530	4.3%	905	17.9%
Very Low (31–50% AMI)	1,490	8.6%	650	5.3%	840	16.6%
Low (51–80% AMI)	2,260	13.0%	1,135	9.2%	1,125	22.3%
Moderate and Above Moderate (>80% AMI)	12,150	70.1%	9,970	81.1%	2,180	43.2%
TOTAL	17,340	100%	12,290	100%	5,050	100%

Source: HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), 2013-2017
Available: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html

POVERTY LEVELS

The 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that 457 (3.5%) of all Rancho Santa Margarita families and 2,032 individuals (4.2%), had incomes at or below the poverty level. According to the ACS data, poverty rates are disparate between races and economic indicators, and are particularly severe for American Indian and Alaska Native populations. In 2018, American Indian and Alaska Natives had a poverty rate of 14.8% (26 of 176 individuals) compared to 5.9% for Hispanics/Latinos (594 of 10,077 individuals), 4.1% for Whites (1,534 of 37,598 individuals), 3.3% for African Americans/Blacks (47 of 1,439 individuals), and 1.7% for Asians (88 of 5,216 individuals).

The level of poverty in a jurisdiction often influences the need for housing to accommodate those persons and families in the very low and low-income categories. The U.S. Census Bureau measures poverty by using a set of income thresholds that vary by family size.

Extremely Low-Income Households

Extremely low-income (ELI) households are defined as those earning up to 30% of the area median household income and are most likely to be below the federal poverty line, which fluctuates based on household size. For Orange County, the median household income in 2020 was $103,000. For ELI households in Rancho Santa Margarita, this results in an income of $38,450 or less for a four-person household, or $26,950 for a one-person household. To provide context, Table H-16 lists representative occupations with hourly wages that are within or close to the ELI income range. As shown in Table H-15, ELI households make up 8.3% of all households in Rancho Santa Margarita. Based on Table H-28, 80.1% of ELI households in Rancho Santa Margarita pay more than 30% of their incomes for housing.

TABLE H-16: OCCUPATIONS WITH WAGES FOR EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS (2020)

Occupation Title	Median Hourly Wage
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	$12.70
Telemarketers	$12.43
Waiters and Waitresses	$12.07
Retail Salespersons	$12.03
Ambulance Drivers and Attendants, Except Emergency Medical Technicians	$11.94
Cooks, Fast Food	$11.63
Couriers and Messengers	$11.61
Personal Care Aides	$11.59
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	$11.52
Amusement and Recreation Attendants	$11.42
Cashiers	$11.42
Parking Lot Attendants	$11.41

Source: Employment Development Department, Long-Term Occupational Projections 2016-2026 (accessed January 2021)

To address the range of needs of ELI households, the City will implement several programs including the following (refer to the Housing Plan for more detailed descriptions of these programs):

- Program 1: Regional Housing Needs Allocation
- Program 3: Accessory Dwelling Units
- Program 5: Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Assistance
- Program 6: Homeless Services
- Program 8: OCHA Special Needs Groups Rental Assistance Programs
- Program 10: Affordable Housing Development
- Program 11: Density Bonus
- Program 17: Fair Housing Council of Orange County
- Program 18: Expand Housing Opportunities
- Program 19: Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

3E. Housing Characteristics

HOUSING TYPE

Table H-17 identifies the types of housing units in Rancho Santa Margarita in 2020. The table summarizes total housing stock according to the type of structure. As shown in the table, the majority of housing in Rancho Santa Margarita is single-family detached housing, which accounted for 53.9% of units in 2020. Mobile homes represent 0.1% of the housing stock.[2] Multi-family units represent 25.2% of the housing stock, with duplex through fourplex units accounting for 3.6% and multi-family developments with five or more units accounting for 21.6%. Single-family attached homes represent 20.8% of housing units.

TABLE H-17: HOUSING STOCK BY TYPE AND VACANCY (2020)

	Total	Single Family		Multi-family		Mobile Homes[2]
		Detached	Attached	2 – 4	5 + Units	
Units	17,346	9,354	3,615	624	3,743	10
Percent	100%	53.9%	20.8%	3.6%	21.6%	0.1%

Sources: SCAG 6th Cycle Data Package; DOF E-5 Report 2020

VACANCY RATE

The 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that there were 338 vacant units in 2018. As shown in Table H-18, of the total vacant units in 2018, 153 were for rent, 33 were for sale, 99 were rented or sold but not yet occupied, and 53 were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. The overall vacancy rate in Rancho Santa Margarita in 2018 was 3.2%.

TABLE H-18: VACANCY BY TYPE (2018)

Vacancy Type	Number	Percent
For rent	153	45.3%
Rented, not occupied	99	29.3%
For sale only	33	9.8%
Sold, not occupied	0	0.0%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	53	15.7%
For migrant workers	0	0.0%
Other vacant	0	0.0%
TOTAL	338	100%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

[2] Note: Although the Department of Finance reports that there are 10 mobile homes located in Rancho Santa Margarita (2020), there are no mobile home parks operating within the City. The source of this misrepresentation by the Department of Finance is unknown.



HOUSING CONDITIONS

The U.S. Census provides only limited data that can be used to infer the condition of Rancho Santa Margarita's housing stock. In most cases, the age of a community's housing stock is a good indicator of its condition. The 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that most of the housing in the City is less than 40 years old; 94.4% of units were built in 1980 or later. Due to the relatively young age of the City's housing stock, overall housing conditions are good. While units built after 1970 may require new roofs and windows, it is anticipated that most units constructed after 1970 would not need significant rehabilitation to the structure, foundation, electrical, and plumbing systems. Units built prior to 1970 may require aesthetic and maintenance repairs including roof, window, and paint improvements and some units in this age range may also require significant upgrades to structural, roof, plumbing, and other systems.

To supplement the Census information regarding housing conditions, the City included specific questions pertaining to the quality of the City's housing stock in its Housing Element Update community survey #1, which was available online from January 29, 2021 to March 3, 2021 (this is further detailed in Appendix B). When asked to rate the physical condition of the residence they lived in, the majority of residents (62.4%) responded that their home was in excellent condition, while almost a third (29.1%) of residents indicated that their home shows signs of minor deferred maintenance such as peeling paint or chipped stucco. Another 7.5% of resident respondents indicated that their home was in need of one or more major systems upgrades (such as new roof, windows, electrical, plumbing, or HVAC system).

When asked to report the type of home improvements they have considered making to their homes, residents' most popular answers included improvements for kitchen or bathroom remodels, painting, solar, and HVAC systems.

US Census information can also provide insight into housing conditions, specifically based on the age of the structure and presence of adequate plumbing facilities. Table H-19 indicates that the majority of housing units in the City are 30-40 years old and all dwelling units had complete plumbing facilities in 2018.

TABLE H-19: HOUSING STOCK CONDITIONS (2018)

Year Structure Built	Owner		Renter		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2014 or later	25	0.2%	31	0.6%	56	0.3%
2010 to 2013	11	0.1%	68	1.4%	79	0.5%
2000 to 2009	519	4.2%	752	15.1%	1,271	7.4%
1999 to 1999 1980 to 1989	11,244	91.5%	3,654	73.2%	14,898	86.2%
1970 to 1979 1960 to 1969	349	2.8%	380	7.6%	729	4.2%
1950 to 1959 1940 to 1949	104	0.8%	41	0.8%	145	0.8%
1939 or earlier	43	0.3%	69	1.4%	112	0.6%
TOTAL	12,295	100%	4,995	100%	17,290	100%
Plumbing Facilities						
Units with Complete Plumbing Facilities	12,295	100%	4,995	100%	17,290	100%
Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Note: Although the US Census 2014-2018 ACS states that there are units in the City build before 1980, the City is not able to verify this housing stock data. The source of this misrepresentation by the US Census is unknown.
Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

Housing Conditions

The City's housing stock remains relatively new with only 5.6% of dwelling units in Rancho Santa Margarita having been constructed prior to 1980, and as such, structural deterioration and maintenance problems are rare. The City's Building Official has estimated that no housing units are in need of substantial rehabilitation or replacement. Nonetheless, the goal of the City's Code Enforcement program is to address housing concerns before they become serious problems.

OVERCROWDING

Typically, a housing unit is considered overcrowded if there is more than one person per room and severely overcrowded if there are more than 1.5 persons per room. Table H-20 summarizes overcrowding data for Rancho Santa Margarita. It should be noted that kitchenettes, strip or Pullman kitchens, bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, half-rooms, utility rooms, unfinished attics, basements, or other space for storage are not defined as rooms for Census purposes.

Households that cannot afford housing units suitably sized for their families often live in housing that is too small for their needs, which may result in poor physical condition of the dwelling unit. In 2018, 420 housing units (2.4% of the total occupied units) were overcrowded, which represents 1.2% of owner units and 5.5% of renter units.

TABLE H-20: OVERCROWDING BY TENURE (2018)

Persons per Room	Owner		Renter		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1.00 or less	12,148	98.8%	4,722	94.5%	16,870	97.6%
1.01 to 1.50	134	1.1%	175	3.5%	309	1.8%
1.51 or more	13	0.1%	98	2.0%	111	0.6%
TOTAL	12,295	100%	4,995	100%	17,290	100%
Overcrowded	147	1.2%	273	5.5%	420	2.4%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

As shown in Table H-21, the average household size in Rancho Santa Margarita was 2.83 persons, which is a decrease from the average household size of 2.94 persons in 2010. Table H-21 shows Rancho Santa Margarita's household sizes for owner, renter, and all households. The average household size is larger for owners (2.90 persons). Renter households have an average size of 2.64 persons, with the majority of owner and renter households having three to five persons (50.7% for owners, 38.3% for renters). Approximately 47.2% of owner households and 57.6% of renter households are two persons or less in size. Table H-22 identifies bedrooms by tenure. While renter households are generally larger than owner households, the proportion of larger housing units (4 or more bedroom homes) is higher for owner households.

TABLE H-21: HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY TENURE (2018)

Household Size	Owner		Renter		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1-person	2,049	16.7%	1,388	27.8%	3,437	19.9%
2-person	3,749	30.5%	1,490	29.8%	5,239	30.3%
3-person	2,554	20.8%	959	19.2%	3,513	20.3%
4-person	2,803	22.8%	748	15.0%	3,551	20.5%
5-person	871	7.1%	203	4.1%	1,074	6.2%
6-person	147	1.2%	122	2.4%	269	1.6%
7-or-more-person	122	1.0%	85	1.7%	207	1.2%
TOTAL	12,295	100% (71.1% of total)	4,995	100% (28.9% of total)	17,290	100%
Median Household Size	2.90		2.64		2.83	

Source: SCAG 6th Cycle Data Package

TABLE H-22: NUMBER OF BEDROOMS BY TENURE (2018)

Bedroom Type	Owner		Renter		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No bedroom	20	0.2%	197	3.9%	217	1.3%
1-bedroom	252	2.0%	1,630	32.6%	1,882	10.9%
2-bedroom	2,404	19.6%	2,253	45.1%	4,657	26.9%
3-bedroom	4,253	34.6%	727	14.6%	4,980	28.8%
4-bedroom	3,932	32.0%	142	2.8%	4,074	23.6%
5 or more bedrooms	1,434	11.7%	46	0.9%	1,480	8.6%
TOTAL	12,295	100%	4,995	100%	17,290	100%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS



3F. Housing Costs

FOR SALE HOUSING

As shown in Figure H-1: Median Home Sales Price, between 2000 and 2018, median home sales prices in Rancho Santa Margarita increased 149% while prices in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties) increased 151%. The 2018 median home sales price in Rancho Santa Margarita was $597,500 – the highest median sales price experienced since 2000. Prices in the City have ranged from a low of 94.6% of the SCAG region median in 2007 to a high of 129.4% in 2009.

TABLE H-23: HOMES FOR SALE (JANUARY 2021)

Price	Homes	Percent
$700,000 and more	11	39.3%
$600,000 - $699,999	3	10.7%
$500,000 - $599,999	4	14.3%
$400,000 - $499,999	7	25%
$300,000 - $399,999	3	10.7%
$200,000 - $299,999	0	0%
$100,000 - $199,999	0	0%
$0 - $99,999	0	0%

Source: Zillow.com, 2021

RENTAL HOUSING

Table H-24 summarizes rents paid in Rancho Santa Margarita in 2018 by rental range. The majority of units rented for $1,500 or more. Only 4.3% of rentals were under $1,000 per month. More than one-third of rentals were in the $1,500 to $1,999 range.

Based on a review of rental ads on *Zillow.com* and *Craiglist.com*, the average rent in Rancho Santa Margarita is $2,510 per month. There were 35 rentals available in January, 2021. Rents ranged from $2,160 to $2,700 for 2 bed/2 bath homes to $3,400 to $4,250 for four-bedroom homes

TABLE H-24: RENTAL COSTS (2018)

Rent Range	Number	Percent
Less than $500	118	2.4%
$500 to $999	95	1.9%
$1,000 to $1,499	547	11.2%
$1,500 to $1,999	1,867	38.1%
$2,000 to $2,499	1,429	29.2%
$2,500 to $2,999	513	10.5%
$3,000 or more	332	6.8%
Median (dollars)	$1,943	

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

TABLE H-25: RENTAL RATES BY NUMBER OF BEDROOMS

Bedroom Type	Rental Survey		
	Units Available	Range	Average Rent
Studio	2	$1,426 - $1,720	$1,573
1 bed	12	$1,610 - $2,054	$1,790
2 bed	12	$2,160 - $2,700	$2,310
3 bed	4	$2,800 - $3,500	$3,063
4 bed or more	5	$3,400 – $4,250	$3,810
Sources: Zillow.com and Craigslist.com, Jan. 2021			

INCOME GROUPS

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) publishes household income data annually. Table H-26 shows the maximum annual income level for each income group adjusted for household size for Orange County. The maximum annual income data is then utilized to calculate the maximum affordable housing payments for households of varying income levels. State income limits are also used to determine eligibility for housing assistance programs.

- *Extremely Low-Income Households* have a combined income at or lower than 30% of area median income (AMI), as established by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).
- *Very Low-Income Households* have a combined income between 30 and 50% of AMI, as established by HCD.
- *Low-Income Households* have a combined income between 50 and 80% of AMI, as established by HCD.
- *Moderate-Income Households* have a combined income between 80 and 120% of AMI, as established by HCD.
- *Above Moderate-Income Households* have a combined income greater than 120% of AMI, as established by HCD.

TABLE H-26: STATE INCOME LIMITS – ORANGE COUNTY (2021)

Income Group	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
Extremely Low	$28,250	$32,300	$36,350	$40,350	$43,600	$46,850	$50,050	$53,300
Very Low	$47,100	$53,800	$60,550	$67,250	$72,650	$78,050	$83,400	$88,800
Low	$75,300	$86,050	$96,800	$107,550	$116,200	$124,800	$133,400	$142,000
Moderate	$89,650	$102,450	$115,250	$128,050	$138,300	$148,550	$158,800	$169,050
Above Moderate	$89,650+	$102,450+	$115,250+	$128,050+	$138,300+	$148,550+	$158,800+	$169,050+

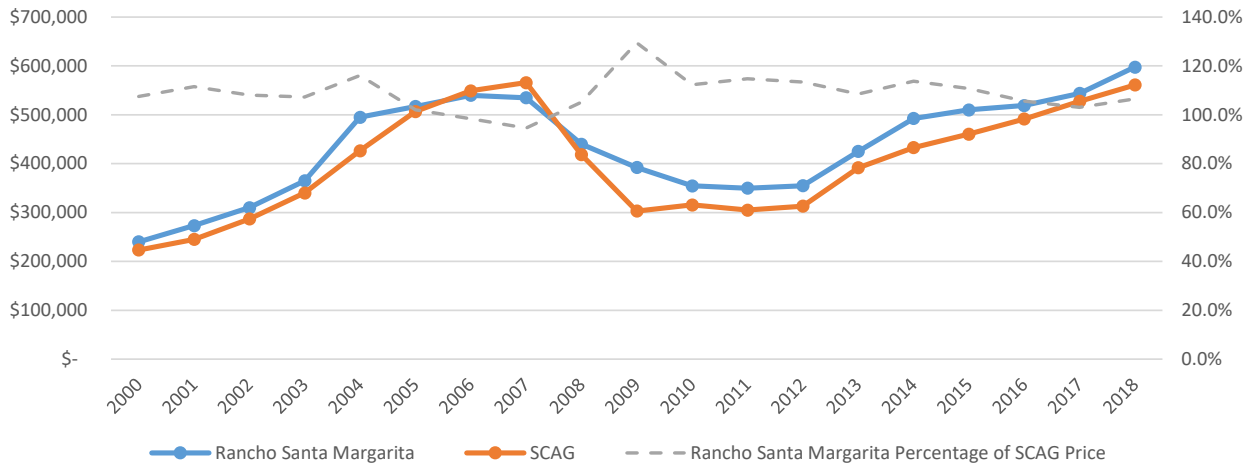
Source: HCD 2020 Orange County Income Limits



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

In January 2021, there were 28 homes listed for sale in Rancho Santa Margarita on Zillow.com with prices ranging from $329,000 to $1,454,868. Of these homes, there were 11 detached single-family homes with sales prices beginning at $674,058. As shown in Table H-23, the majority of homes for sale are in the $400,000 to $499,999 and $700,000+ price ranges, with 25% of homes in the $500,000 to $699,999 range and 3 priced under $400,000. Zillow identified the January 2021 median sales price as $766,000. While the median sales price is not affordable to lower and moderate-income households (see Table H-27), the City's home sales prices are lower compared to Orange County (Zillow reported a median home sales price of $872,000 for the County in January 2021).

FIGURE H-1: MEDIAN HOME SALES PRICE



Source: SCAG 6th Cycle Data Package

Table H-27 shows the estimated maximum rents and sales prices, respectively, that are affordable to very low, low, moderate, and above moderate-income households. Affordability is based on a household spending 30% or less of their total monthly household income for shelter based on the maximum household income levels established by HCD (Table H-26). The annual income limits established by HCD are similar to those used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for administering various affordable housing programs. Maximum affordable sales price is based generally on the following assumptions: 4% interest rate, 30-year fixed loan, and down payments that vary with income level, as described in Table H-26.

Comparing the maximum affordable housing costs in Table H-27 to the rental rates in Tables 3-24 and 3-25, rental rates in Rancho Santa Margarita are generally affordable to moderate-income households of two or more persons and to above moderate-income households. While there are some units affordable to low-income households, there are no market rate (non-subsidized) units that are affordable to extremely low and very low-income households. The majority of available rentals were one- and two-bedroom units. Moderate and above moderate-income households can afford a broad range of available housing.

Similarly, homes for sale in Rancho Santa Margarita are affordable to moderate and above moderate-income households, based on a comparison of Tables 3-21 and 3-25. Current home sales prices are not affordable to extremely low and very low-income households.

TABLE H-27: HOUSING AFFORDABILITY BY INCOME GROUP

Income Group	One Person		Two Person		Four Person		Six Person	
	Home Sale Price*	Monthly Rent or Housing Cost	Home Sale Price*	Monthly Rent or Housing Cost	Home Sale Price*	Monthly Rent or Housing Cost	Home Sale Price*	Monthly Rent or Housing Cost
Extremely Low	$100,663	$706	$116,026	$808	$146,561	$1,009	$171,216	$1,171
Very Low	$180,231	$1,178	$201,200	$1,345	$252,218	$1,681	$293,184	$1,951
Low	$286,375	$1,883	$327,151	$2,151	$408,704	$2,689	$474,136	$3,120
Moderate	$358,009	$2,241	$407,950	$2,561	$493,708	$3,201	$571,467	$3,714
Above Moderate	$358,009+	$2,241+	$407,950+	$2,561+	$493,708+	$3,201+	$571,467+	$3,714+

**Maximum affordable sales price is based on the following assumptions: 4.0% interest rate, 30-year fixed loan; down payment: $5,000 – extremely low, $10,000 – very low; $15,000 – low, $25,000 – moderate; property tax, utilities, and homeowners insurance as 30% of monthly housing cost (extremely low/very low), 28% of monthly housing cost (low), and 25% of monthly housing cost (moderate/above moderate). Homes sales prices are rounded to nearest $100.*

Source: De Novo Planning Group, 2021



OVERPAYMENT

As shown in Table H-28, 56.2% of renters in Rancho Santa Margarita and 34.4% of homeowners overpay for housing, meaning that they spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs (a benchmark set by HUD). The majority of renters that overpay are in the lower income groups, with 71.8% in the extremely low-income group and 63.1% in the very low-income group severely overpaying for housing (over 50% of their monthly income). Comparatively, however, 83.0% of extremely low-income owners and 53.8% of very low-income owners are severely overpaying. Therefore, while overpayment is more predominate among lower income renter households, overpayment is an issue for both renter and owner households. Slightly more than two-fifths (40.8%) of all households in Rancho Santa Margarita overpay for housing.

TABLE H-28: HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME LEVEL AND OVERPAYMENT (2017)

Household Overpayment	Renters	Owners	Total	% of Income Category
Extremely Low-Income Households	905	530	1,435	100%
With Cost Burden >30%	650 / 71.8%	500 / 94.3%	1,150	80.1%
With Cost Burden >50%	650 / 71.8%	440 / 83.0%	1,090	76.0%
Very Low-Income Households	840	650	1,490	100%
With Cost Burden >30%	825 / 98.2%	510 / 78.5%	1,335	89.6%
With Cost Burden >50%	530 / 63.1%	350 / 53.8%	880	59.1%
Low-Income Households	1,125	1,135	2,260	100%
With Cost Burden >30%	1,020 / 90.7%	795 / 70.0%	1,815	80.3%
With Cost Burden >50%	150 / 13.3%	220 / 19.4%	370	16.4%
Total Extremely Low, Very Low, and Low-Income Households Paying >30%	2,495 / 87%	1,805 / 78%	4,300	83% of lower income households
Moderate and Above Moderate-Income Households	2,180	9,970	12,150	100%
With Cost Burden >30%	345 /15.8%	2,425 / 24.3%	2,770	22.8%
With Cost Burden >50%	10 / 0.5%	275 / 2.8%	285	2.3%
Total Households	5,050	12,290	17,340	100%
With Cost Burden >30%	2,840 / 56.2%	4,230 / 34.4%	7,070	40.8%
With Cost Burden >50%	1,340 / 26.5%	1,285 / 10.5%	2,625	15.1%

Note: Data is rounded to the nearest 5.

Source: HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), 2013-2017

AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVENTORY

There are no subsidized or otherwise rent-restricted affordable multi-family complexes in Rancho Santa Margarita.

MOBILE HOME PARKS

Although the Department of Finance reports that there are 10 mobile homes located in Rancho Santa Margarita (2020), there are no mobile home parks operating within the City, which typically present a lower cost housing option for residents. The source of this misrepresentation by the Department of Finance is unknown.

3G. Future Housing Needs

A Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) is mandated by the State of California (Government Code [GC], Section 65584) for regions to address housing issues and needs based on future growth projections for the area. The RHNP for Rancho Santa Margarita is developed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and allocates a "fair share" of regional housing needs to individual cities (referred to as a City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation, or "RHNA"). The intent of the RHNP is to ensure that local jurisdictions address not only the needs of their immediate areas but also that needs for the entire region are fairly distributed to all communities. A major goal of the RHNP is to ensure that every community provides an opportunity for a mix of housing affordable to all economic segments of its population.

This Housing Element addresses SCAG's RHNA for the 6th Cycle, from 2021 through 2029. The City is required by State law to plan to accommodate 680 new units, which includes 104 extremely low-income units, 105 very low, 120 low, 125 moderate, and 226 above moderate-income units. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65583(a)(1), 50% of Rancho Santa Margarita's very low-income regional housing needs assigned by HCD are extremely low-income households, and hence the 104 ELI units. Table H-29 summarizes Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA by household income level.

TABLE H-29: REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION – 6TH CYCLE

Status	Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	TOTAL
RHNA Allocation	104	105	120	125	226	680

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, 2020; City of Rancho Santa Margarita, 2021

3H. Special Needs Groups

Government Code Section 65583(a)(7) requires a housing element to address special housing needs, such as those of the elderly; persons with disabilities, including a developmental disability, as defined in Section 4512 of the Welfare and Institutions Code; large families; farmworkers; families with female heads of household; and families and persons in need of emergency shelter. The needs of these groups often call for targeted program responses, such as temporary housing, preservation of residential hotels, housing with features to make it more accessible, and the development of four-bedroom apartments. Special needs groups have been identified and, to the degree possible, responsive programs are provided in the Housing Plan. A principal emphasis in addressing the needs of these groups is to continue to seek State technical assistance grants to identify the extent and location of those with special needs and identify ways and means to assist them. Local government budget limitations may impact effectiveness in implementing programs for these groups.

SENIORS

Seniors are considered persons age 65 or older in this Housing Element. However, it must be noted that some funding programs have lower age limits for persons to be eligible for senior housing projects. Seniors have special housing needs primarily resulting from physical disabilities and limitations, fixed or limited income, and health care costs. Additionally, senior households also have other needs to preserve their independence including supportive services to maintain their health and safety, in-home support services to perform activities of daily living, conservators to assist with personal care and financial affairs, public administration assistance to manage and resolve estate issues, and networks of care to provide a wide variety of services and daily assistance.

Various portions of the Housing Element describe characteristics of the senior population, the extent of their needs for affordable housing, housing designated for seniors, and City provisions to accommodate their needs. Senior household growth in Rancho Santa Margarita from 2010 to 2018 is shown in Table H-30. The increase in seniors is likely a result of Rancho Santa Margarita's residents aging in place. Seniors make up a larger proportion of residents and households in 2018 than in 2010. While seniors represent approximately 7.8% of the City's population, senior households represent approximately 13% of total households, which is primarily due to the smaller senior household size.

TABLE H-30: SENIOR POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS, 2010-2018

	Population		Households	
	2010	2018	2010	2018
Citywide	47,214	48,792	16,665	17,290
Number (Seniors)	2,480	3,884	1,749	2,375
Percent of Citywide Total	5.3%	7.8%	10.5%	13%
Percent Change	-	7.1%	-	4.5%

Source: US Census, 2010; US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

Table H-31 summarizes senior households by age and tenure. The majority of senior households are owners, 1,590 or 66.9%. Approximately 33.1% of senior households, 785, are renters. Rancho Santa Margarita has both a lower percentage of owner-occupied and a lower percentage of renter-occupied elderly households than in Orange County.

During the planning period, senior households are anticipated to increase at a rate commensurate with overall population and household growth and are expected to continue representing approximately 14% of the City's households. Based on current trends, it is anticipated that approximately 93 units of the City's RHNA will be needed or used by senior households. Senior housing types can include market rate homes, senior single-family housing communities, senior apartments, and mobile homes.

TABLE H-31: HOUSEHOLDER AGE BY TENURE (2018)

Age Group	Owners		Renters	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
65-74 years	1,135	71.4%	269	34.3%
75-84 years	399	25.1%	223	28.4%
85 plus years	56	3.5%	293	37.3%
TOTAL	1,590	9.2% (of total households)	785	4.5% (of total households)

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

The 2014-2018 ACS indicates that 11% of senior households in Rancho Santa Margarita are below the poverty level. It is likely that a portion of these senior households overpay for housing due to their limited income. The median income of households with a head of household that is 65 years and over is $32,396, only 28% of the overall median household income of $115,073.

Senior Housing

There is increasing variety in the types of housing available to the senior population. This section focuses on three basic types.

Independent Living – Housing for healthy seniors who are self-sufficient and want the freedom and privacy of their own separate apartment or house. Many seniors remain in their original homes, and others move to residential communities which provide a greater level of security and social activities of a senior community.

Group Living – Shared living arrangements in which seniors live in close proximity to their peers and have access to activities and tailored services.

Assisted Living – Provides the greatest level of support, including meal preparation and assistance with activities of daily living.

There is one assisted living residential care facility for the elderly in Rancho Santa Margarita:

- Park Terrace, 21952 Buena Suerte – retirement community offering independent and assisted living, and Alzheimer's care, with a capacity of 230 beds

In addition, there are two 55+ senior apartment homes in Rancho Santa Margarita:

- Overture Rancho Santa Margarita, 30824 La Miranda – 55+ community offering one- and two-bedroom apartments
- Fountain Glen, 30751 El Corazon – 55+ community offering studio and one- and two-bedroom apartments

Several programs address the non-housing needs of seniors in the City. Additional support for senior residents is provided by the City-operated Bell Tower Regional Community Center, which serves as the primary site for senior services programs offered by the City and nonprofits. Some of the programs and services provided at the Center include health screening, legal assistance, and tax preparation services. The City partners with the non-profit Age Well Senior Services organization to provide meal programs and case management services for homebound seniors.

DISABLED PERSONS

A "disability" includes, but is not limited to, any physical or mental disability as defined in California Government Code Section 12926. Physical, mental, and/or developmental disabilities could prevent a person from working, restrict a person's mobility, or make caring for oneself difficult. Therefore, disabled persons often require special housing needs related to potential limited earning capacity, the lack of accessible and affordable housing, and higher health costs associated with disabilities. Additionally, people with disabilities require a wide range of housing, depending on the type and severity of their disability. Housing needs can range from institutional care facilities to facilities that support partial or full independence (i.e., group care homes). Supportive services such as daily living skills and employment assistance may be integrated in the housing situation.

- Individuals with a mobility, visual, or hearing limitation may require housing that is physically accessible. Examples of accessibility in housing include widened doorways and hallways, ramps, bathroom modifications (e.g., lowered countertops, grab bars, adjustable shower heads, etc.) and special sensory devices including smoke alarms and flashing lights.
- Individuals with self-care limitations (which can include persons with mobility difficulties) may require residential environments that include in-home or on-site support services ranging from congregate to convalescent care. Support services can include medical therapy, daily living assistance, congregate dining, and related services.
- Individuals with developmental disabilities and other physical and mental conditions that prevent them from functioning independently may require assisted care or group home environments.
- Individuals with disabilities may require financial assistance to meet their housing needs because a higher percentage than the population at large are low-income and their special housing needs are often more costly than conventional housing.

According to the 2014-2018 ACS, there were 2,818 persons with one or more disabilities in Rancho Santa Margarita. Of the disabled population, 62.6% were aged 5 to 64 and 36.8% were aged 65 and over. No disabilities were reported in the population aged 5 and under (except for a vision difficulty – 10 persons under 5 years). Table H-32 identifies disabilities by type of disability.

TABLE H-32: DISABILITIES BY DISABILITY TYPE (2018)

Type of Disability	Persons Ages 5-64		Persons Ages 65+		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hearing Difficulty	386	21.9%	376	36.2%	762	27.0%
Vision Difficulty	252	14.3%	185	17.8%	437	15.5%
Cognitive Difficulty	608	34.5%	324	31.2%	932	33.1%
Ambulatory Difficulty	654	37.1%	726	70.0%	1,380	49.0%
Self-Care Difficulty	276	15.6%	345	33.2%	621	22.0%
Independent Living Difficulty	372	21.1%	426	41.0%	798	28.3%
Total Persons with One or More Disabilities[1]	1,764	100% / 62.6% of disabled	1,038	100% / 36.8% of disabled	2,818	100%

[1]*A person may have more than one disability, so the total disabilities may exceed the total persons with a disability*

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

As shown in Table H-33, the 2014-2018 ACS indicates that for individuals between the ages of 16 and 64, approximately 646 persons had some form or type of disability and were not in the labor force. This indicates that their disability may impede their ability to earn an adequate income, which in turn could affect their ability to afford suitable housing accommodations to meet their special needs. Therefore, many in this group may be in need of housing assistance.

TABLE H-33: DISABLED PERSONS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS (2018)

	Ages 16 to 64	Percent
Employed with Disability	860	56.1%
Unemployed with Disability	27	1.8%
Not in Labor Force	646	42.1%
Total	1,533	100%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

While recent Census data does not provide income levels or overpayment data for persons with a disability, the 2014-2018 ACS does report on indicators that relate to a disabled person's or household's income. The 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that 132 persons with a disability are below the poverty level. It is likely that a portion of these disabled persons are in households that overpay for housing due to their limited income. The 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that 25.3% of households receiving food stamps or similar assistance have a disabled member. Of the 2,404 households with a disabled member, 130 households receive food stamps or similar assistance. However, the 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that the median earnings for males 16 years and over with a disability were $73,229 compared with $73,207 for males with no disability. Median earnings for females 16 years and over with a disability were $45,833, compared to $41,230 for females with no disability.

The persons in the *with a disability* category in Tables 3-32 and 3-33 include persons with developmental disabilities. "Developmental disability" means "a disability that originates before an individual attains age 18 years, continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely, and constitutes a substantial disability for that individual." This term includes disabling conditions, but does not include other handicapping conditions that are solely physical in nature.

While the U.S. Census reports on a broad range of disabilities, the Census does not identify the subpopulation that has a developmental disability. The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) maintains data regarding people with developmental disabilities, defined as those with severe, life-long disabilities attributable to mental and/or physical impairments. The DDS data is reported by zip code, so the data reflects a larger area than the City of Rancho Santa Margarita; however, the data was joined at the jurisdiction level by SCAG to approximate the counts for Rancho Santa Margarita. The DDS/SCAG data indicates that 392 developmentally disabled persons reside in zip codes 92679 and 92688. Table H-34 breaks down the developmentally disabled population by residence type. Of these persons, the majority (355) live at home with a parent or guardian and only 22 live independently.

TABLE H-34: DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PERSONS BY RESIDENCE TYPE (2018)

	Home of Parent/ Guardian	Independent/ Supported Living	Community Care Facility	Intermediate Care Facility	Foster/ Family Home	Other	TOTAL
Rancho Santa Margarita*	355	22	5	0	10	0	392

**Data is for the Rancho Santa Margarita portion of zip codes 92679 and 92688*

Sources: CA DDS, 2020; SCAG 6th Cycle Data Package



Housing for Disabled Persons

Households with a disabled member will require a mixture of housing units with accessibility features, in-home care, or group care housing facilities. Some of these households will have a member with a developmental disability and are expected to have unique housing needs. Developmentally disabled persons may live with a family in a typical single-family or multi-family home, but some developmentally disabled persons with more severe disabilities may have additional housing needs that may include extended family homes, group homes, small and large residential care facilities, intermediate care, and skilled nursing facilities and affordable housing such as extremely low, very low, and low-income housing (both rental and ownership), Section 8 housing choice vouchers, and single room occupancy-type units.

Aside from the one assisted living residential care facility for the elderly identified in the previous section of this Housing Element (Park Terrace), there are no other residential facilities in Rancho Santa Margarita serving adults with special needs, including physical, mental, and developmental disabilities. However, the Regional Center of Orange County located in Tustin, California offers services and support for persons with developmental disabilities by referring consumers to programs that meet their respective housing, work, educational, and leisure needs. In an effort to further assist persons with developmental disabilities, the City allocates part of its CDBG funding to the non-profit Vocational Visions organization, which offers vocational training through community supported employment. Residents with disabilities can also benefit from services offered by the Dayle McIntosh Center for the Disabled – South County Branch in neighboring Laguna Hills. The center offers disabled persons a variety of services including peer support and advocacy, along with housing referral, and rental and hotel/motel assistance if needed.

The 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that for individuals between the ages of 5 and 64, approximately 1.3% of the total population of Rancho Santa Margarita have an ambulatory difficulty, 0.5% have a vision difficulty, 0.8% have a hearing difficulty, and 0.8% have an independent living difficulty. These types of disabilities may impede their ability to find suitable housing accommodations to meet their needs. Therefore, many in these groups may require housing assistance. Households containing physically handicapped persons may also need housing with universal design measures or features to allow better physical mobility for occupants.

The 2014-18 ACS data also indicates that 2,404 households (13.9%) in Rancho Santa Margarita had one or more disabled persons, including developmentally disabled persons. It is anticipated that this rate will remain the same during the planning period. Housing needed for persons with a disability during the planning period is anticipated to include community care facilities or at-home supportive services for persons with an independent living difficulty or self-care difficulty (approximately 2.9% of the population), as well as housing that is equipped to serve persons with ambulatory and sensory disabilities. Based on the current proportion of residents with more or more disabilities, approximately 13.9% of the RHNA, 95 units, may be needed to have universal design measures or be accessible to persons with a disability.

LARGE FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

Large family households are defined as households of five or more persons. Large family households are considered a special needs group because there is often a limited supply of adequately sized housing to accommodate their needs. The more persons in a household, the more rooms are needed to accommodate that household.

In Rancho Santa Margarita, 1,550 households, 9.0% of all households, have five or more persons as described in Table H-21. Of the large households, 73.5% own their home and 26.5% rent. Typically, there are more owner-occupied large households that are cost burdened when compared to renter households and the population as a whole. However, the 2014-2018 ACS survey does not provide data regarding overpayment (where households spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs) for large households. Table H-35 compares the median income for households with five or more persons to the citywide median income **for 2019**. For each large family category, the median household income was higher versus the citywide median of $121,017 (for reference, the median household income for 2018, as referenced elsewhere in this Background Report, is $115,073).

TABLE H-35: MEDIAN INCOME BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE (2019)

Size	Median Income
5-Person Households	$165,099
6-Person Households	$216,750
7 or More Person Households	$182,560
Median Household Income (All Households)	$121,017

Source: US Census, 2015-2019 ACS

Large families can have a difficult time finding housing units to meet their needs. In Rancho Santa Margarita, there appears to be a significant amount of ownership housing available to provide units with enough bedrooms for larger households; however, there is a small shortfall of adequately sized rental housing for households with six or more members. Table H-36 identifies the number of large households by household size versus the number of large owner and rental units. While for the most part there are adequate units in Rancho Santa Margarita to accommodate large owner and renter households, it does not mean that there is a match between housing units that exist and large families. As described in Table H-20, 1.2% of owner-occupied homes and 5.5% of renter-occupied homes are overcrowded.

TABLE H-36: HOUSEHOLD SIZE VERSUS BEDROOM SIZE BY TENURE (2018)

Tenure	3 BR Units	5 Person Households		4+ BR Units	6 Person and Larger Households	
		House-holds	Shortfall/ Excess		House-holds	Shortfall/ Excess
Owner	4,253	871	3,382	5,366	169	5,197
Renter	727	203	524	188	207	-19

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS



Large households require housing units with more bedrooms than housing units needed by smaller households. In general, housing for these households should provide safe outdoor play areas for children and should be located to provide convenient access to schools and child-care facilities. These types of needs can pose problems particularly for large families that cannot afford to buy or rent single-family houses. Based on current trends, it is anticipated that approximately 9% (61 units) of the regional housing needs allocation units will be needed to accommodate large households and an emphasis should be placed on ensuring rental units are available to large households.

SINGLE PARENT AND FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Single parent households are households with children under the age of 18 at home and include either a male- or a female-headed households. For these households , living expenses take up a larger share of income than is generally the case in two-parent households. Therefore, finding affordable, decent, and safe housing is often more difficult for single parent and female-headed households. Additionally, single parent and female-headed households have special needs involving access to daycare or childcare, health care, and other supportive services.

While the majority of households in Rancho Santa Margarita are either couples or single person households, 17.7% of family households are headed by a single male or single female. There are 618 male heads of household with no spouse present and 301 of these households have children under 18. There is a larger number of female householders with no spouse present – 1,693 households or 13.0% of family households – and 882 of these female-headed households have children under 18. Table H-37 identifies single parent households by gender of the householder and presence of children.

The median income (2018 inflation-adjusted dollars) of female-headed households (no spouse present) is $69,310, 30% less than the median income of a male-headed, no spouse present family ($93,804) and 62% less than the median income of all households in the City ($132,360 using the 2018 ACS 5-Year estimate with inflation adjustment). Approximately 2.7% of households are under the poverty level; 23.9% of female-headed households with related children under 18 are under the poverty level.

TABLE H-37: FAMILIES AND FEMALE HOUSEHOLDER WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 (2018)

Category	Number	Percent
Total Families	13,048	100%
Other	9,554	73.2%
Male householder, no spouse present	618	4.7%
With children under 18	301	2.3%
Female householder, no spouse present	1,693	13.0%
With children under 18	882	6.8%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

FARMWORKERS

Farmworkers are traditionally defined as persons whose primary incomes are earned through permanent or seasonal agricultural labor. Following changes in the area's economy, Orange County today is a mostly developed urban/suburban region, with a strong local economy that is not tied to an agricultural base. While there are still significant active farming areas on the Irvine Ranch and in some other cities, shifts in the County's economy to manufacturing, technology, and service-oriented sectors have significantly curtailed agricultural production. The American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Data Profile estimates that only 59 (less than 1% of the working population) of Rancho Santa Margarita's residents were employed in agriculture (or related industries) in 2018.

HOMELESS PERSONS

Government Code Section 65583(a)(7) requires that the Housing Element include an analysis of the needs of persons and families experiencing homelessness. Homeless persons are defined in Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations as those who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. People who are homeless may be chronically homeless (perhaps due to substance abuse or mental health issues) or situationally homeless (perhaps resulting from job loss or family strife). Homeless people face critical housing challenges due to their very low incomes and lack of appropriate housing. Thus, State law requires jurisdictions to plan to help meet the needs of their homeless populations.

The law also requires that each jurisdiction address community needs and available resources for special housing opportunities known as transitional and supportive housing. These housing types provide the opportunity for families and individuals to "transition" from a homeless condition to permanent housing, often with the assistance of supportive services to assist individuals in gaining necessary life skills in support of independent living.

Homeless Estimates

The Orange County Continuum of Care (CoC) is responsible for managing U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds and some State programs for persons experiencing homelessness. CoC is uniquely positioned to identify system needs and to take steps to address them with the collaboration and partnership of community stakeholders and local jurisdictions.

The Orange County CoC conducted the latest biennial point-in-time count to identify the sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness in Orange County. Orange County's 2019 Sheltered Point-In-Time Count took place the night of Tuesday, January 22, 2019. Emergency shelters and transitional housing programs collected client-level demographic information from individuals and families staying the night in each program. The 2019 Unsheltered Count took place over two days, Wednesday, January 23 and Thursday, January 24, to ensure the 800 square mile county was canvassed effectively.

The 2019 Point-In-Time Report identified 15 people in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita experiencing homelessness, representing 0.2% of Orange County's total homeless count (6,860 individuals). All 15 homeless individuals in the City were unsheltered. The City requested the data collected during the 2019 to independently verify it, but was unable to do so. While the Point-in-Time Count is traditionally conducted every two years, the 2021 count was canceled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Housing Accommodations

In 2011, the City amended the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code (RSMZC) to allow 1) emergency shelters by-right in the Public/Quasi-Public (PQ) zoning district, subject to compliance with objective standards consistent with the requirements identified in Government Code Section 65583(a)(4), and 2) transitional and supportive housing by-right in all residential zoning districts and subject only to the same requirements for residential uses of the same type (e.g., single-family or multi-family) in the same zone. The Housing Plan includes policies and programs directed to encourage the provision of housing and services for the homeless population as well as persons and households at-risk of homelessness. There are currently no homeless shelters or transitional housing facilities operating in the City. Rancho Santa Margarita supports a regional effort among the various local agencies making up the South Service Planning Area of Orange County, which includes 12 cities (Rancho Santa Margarita, Aliso Viejo, Dana Point, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, San Clemente, and San Juan Capistrano).

The most recent inventory of resources available within Orange County for emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing units comes from the 2019 Housing Inventory reported to HUD by the Orange County CoC. Table H-38 shows the total beds offered by facilities in the Orange County CoC area.

TABLE H-38: HOMELESS FACILITIES (2019)

Facility Type	Orange County CoC Region*			
	Family Units	Family Beds	Adult-Only Beds	Total Year-Round Beds
Emergency Shelter	170	574	1,401	1,989
Transitional Housing	272	816	289	1,105
Permanent Supportive Housing	213	518	1,725	2,243
Rapid Re-Housing	149	615	159	774
Other Permanent Housing	8	16	92	108
TOTAL UNITS/BEDS	812	2,539	3,666	6,219

**Numbers are for the total Orange County Continuum of Care region for which RSM is a participating member*

Source: HUD 2019 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs, Housing Inventory Count Report

- **Emergency Shelters** – Six emergency shelters are available to provide services in the South Service Planning Area of the CoC jurisdiction – CSP Youth Shelter (Laguna Beach), Cold Weather Shelter (Laguna Beach), Friendship Shelter (Laguna Beach), Gilchrist House (San Clemente), Human Options (Irvine), and Laura's House (San Clemente). According to the HUD 2019 Continuum of Care Housing Inventory Count Report for the Orange County CoC, a total of 1,989 year-round emergency shelter beds and 400 seasonal beds are available in the Orange County CoC region. During the 2019 point-in-time survey, the CoC found that the average occupancy for emergency shelter beds was 79.2%.
- **Transitional Housing** – Sometimes referred to as "bridge" housing, transitional housing provides housing accommodations and support services for persons and families, but restricts occupancy to no more than 24 months. In the Orange County CoC region, a total of 1,105 transitional housing beds are provided. Transitional housing nearest to Rancho Santa Margarita includes Families Forward, Friendship Shelter, Henderson House, Hope's House, Gilchrist House, Kathy's House, Laura's House, South County Outreach, and Toby's House. The 2019 point-in-time survey found that the average occupancy for transitional housing beds was 78.2% at the time of the survey.

- **Permanent Supportive Housing** – Supportive housing has no limit on length of stay and is linked to on-site or off-site services that assist residents in retaining housing, improving their health status, and maximizing their ability to live and, when possible, work in the community. A total of 2,243 permanent supportive housing beds are provided in the Orange County CoC region.
- **Rapid Re-Housing** – Rapid re-housing provides short-term rental assistance and services. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency, and stay housed.
- **Other Permanent Housing** – Consists of permanent housing and supportive services to assist homeless persons to live independently but does not limit eligibility to individuals with disabilities (no disability required for entry) and permanent housing for persons who are homeless, but does not make supportive services available as part of the project (no services).

Assessment of Need

Based on the 2019 Point-in-Time Count, there is a countywide homeless population of 6,860 persons but only 3,674 beds, indicating an unmet demand for 3,186 homeless persons. It is noted that the 2019 point-in-time survey identified 2,899 sheltered homeless persons and 3,961 unsheltered homeless persons (15 unsheltered for Rancho Santa Margarita). The discrepancy between sheltered homeless persons and the County's total capacity to house homeless persons indicates a need for additional community services resources to assist and match the homeless population with the countywide shelter and housing resources. Overall, the average bed-utilization rate for emergency shelters is 79.2% and 78.2% for transitional housing, according to the point-in-time survey information. Although there are seasonal fluctuations in bed counts, these figures demonstrate a demand for supportive housing. As new data is collected related to the number of unhoused persons in the County, the City will continue to monitor local need and work collaboratively with regional agencies and service providers to address this issue.

3I. Units at Risk of Conversion

ASSISTED HOUSING AT RISK OF CONVERSION

California housing element law requires jurisdictions to provide an analysis of low-income, assisted multi-family housing units that are eligible to change from low-income housing uses during the next 10 years (2021-2031) due to termination of subsidy contracts, mortgage prepayment, or expiration of restricted use (Government Code 65583). These units risk the termination of various subsidy groups which could convert certain multi-family housing from affordable to market rate. State law requires housing elements to assess at-risk housing in order to project any potential loss of affordable housing.

Rancho Santa Margarita does not have any assisted multi-family rental housing based on a review of HUD, LIHTC, USDA, and public housing data for the region (California Housing Partnership mapping tool) and, consequently, does not have any units at-risk of conversion. The City has one deed-restricted affordable housing project which was constructed in 1991 by Habitat for Humanity. This project is known as Carina Vista, which consists of 48 affordable owner-occupied family units, will remain affordable in perpetuity and is not at-risk of conversion.

TABLE H-39: SUMMARY OF SUBSIDIZED HOUSING UNITS

Project/Address	No. & Type of Units	Type of Subsidy	Current Owner	Earliest Date of Conversion	At-Risk
Carina Vista	48 Family	Sweat Equity	Habitat for Humanity	In Perpetuity	No

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita, 2021

3J. Estimates of Housing Need

Several factors influence the degree of demand, or "need," for housing in Rancho Santa Margarita. The major needs categories considered in this element include:

- Housing needs resulting from the overcrowding of units;
- Housing needs that result when households pay more than they can afford for housing; and
- Housing needs of "special needs groups" such as elderly, large families, single parent (i.e. female headed households), households with a disabled person, and persons experiencing homelessness

State law requires that cities quantify existing housing need in their Housing Element. Table H-40: Summary of Needs summarizes those findings

TABLE H-40: SUMMARY OF NEEDS

Summary of Households/Persons with Identified Housing Need	Percent of Total City Population/Households
Households Overpaying for Housing:	-
% of Renter Households Overpaying	56.2%
% of Owner Households Overpaying	34.4%
% of Extremely Low-income Households (0-30% AMI) Overpaying	80.1%
% of Very low-income Households (0-30% AMI) Overpaying	89.6%
% of Low-income Households (0-30% AMI) Overpaying	80.3%
Overcrowded Households:	-
% of Overcrowded Renter Households	5.5%
% of Overcrowded Owner Households	1.2%
% of All Overcrowded Households	2.4%
Special Needs Groups:	-
Elderly Households	7.9% of population 13.7% of households
Disabled Persons	5.8% of population
Developmentally Disabled Persons	0.8% of population
Large Households	9% of households
Female Headed Households	13% of households
Female Headed Households with Children	6.8% of households
Farmworkers	0.1% of population
Homeless	Less than 0.1% of population
Affordable Housing Units At-Risk of Conversion to Market Rate Costs	0

Source: Census 2014-2018 ACS Estimates, Orange County Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

To summarize, the Housing Needs Analysis has identified specific housing that may be needed in the 6th Cycle Housing Element Regional Housing Needs Allocation:

1) 93 units may be needed or used by senior households (p. 40).
2) 95 units may be needed to have universal design measures or be accessible to persons with a disability (p. 44).
3) 61 units may be needed to accommodate large households (five or more persons) (p. 46).

4. Constraints

Constraints to housing development include government measures or non-governmental conditions that limit the amount or timing of residential development.

Government regulations can potentially constrain the supply of housing available in a community if the regulations limit the opportunities to develop housing, impose requirements that unnecessarily increase the cost to develop housing, or make the development process so arduous as to discourage housing developers. State law requires housing elements to contain an analysis of the governmental constraints on housing maintenance, improvement, and development (Government Code Section 65583(a)(4)).

Non-governmental constraints (required to be analyzed under Government Code Section 65583(a)(5)) cover land prices, construction costs, and financing. While local governments cannot control prices or costs, identification of these constraints can be helpful to Rancho Santa Margarita in formulating housing programs.

4A. Governmental Constraints

Housing affordability is affected by factors in both the private and public sectors. Actions by the City can have an impact on the price and availability of housing in Rancho Santa Margarita. Land use controls, site improvement requirements, building codes, fees, and other local programs intended to improve the overall quality of housing may serve as a constraint to housing development. These governmental constraints can limit the operations of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, making it difficult to meet the demand for affordable housing and limiting supply in a region. All City zoning regulations, development standards, specific plans, and fees are posted online and available to the public, consistent with the requirements of AB 1483.

LAND USE CONTROLS

Local land use policies and regulations impact the price and availability of housing, including affordable housing. This section discusses the General Plan land use designations and provisions in the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code (RSMZC) relative to the types of housing allowed within Rancho Santa Margarita as a potential governmental constraint.

General Plan

The General Plan Land Use Element sets forth land use designations that guide the location, type, and intensity or density of permitted uses of land in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The RSMZC (Title 9 of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code) implements the General Plan by providing specific development standards for each general plan land use category. Table H-41 shows residential land uses, the corresponding zoning designation, and permitted densities allowed for housing. During the 2020 General Plan Update, the City amended the Land Use Element to create a Mixed-Use (MU) land use designation. However, no

parcels were designated MU as part of the General Plan Update process; future use of the MU designation will require a General Plan Map Amendment and adoption of MU zoning standards.

TABLE H-41: GENERAL PLAN RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

General Plan Designation	Description	Zone Symbol	Zoning Description
Low Density Residential (LDR)	Provides for single-family detached homes on moderate to large lots. This designation allows a maximum density of 7.0 du/ac.	RL-6000, RL-5000	Residential – Low Density (1.0-7.0 du/ac)
Low-Medium Density Residential (LMDR)	Provides for small-lot single-family detached homes, and development of single-family attached residential units such as townhomes and duplexes. This designation allows a maximum density of 11.0 du/ac.	RLM-4000-A, RLM-4000-D	Residential – Low-Medium Density (7.1-11.0 du/ac)
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	Provides for detached and attached single-family homes, condominiums, duplexes, and apartments. This designation allows a maximum density of 18.0 du/ac.	RM-3000-D; RM-2000-A	Residential – Medium Density (11.1-18.0 du/ac)
High Density Residential (HDR)	Provides for attached units, condominiums, duplexes, and apartments, as well as senior housing. This designation allows a maximum density of 25.0 du/ac.	RH	Residential – High Density (18.1-25.0 du/ac)
Mixed-Use (MU)[1]	Provides for combinations of uses typically found within the Medium Density Residential (MDR), High Density Residential (HDR), Commercial General (C), and Neighborhood Commercial (NC) designations. Mixed-use developments may occur as vertical (first-floor commercial with 2-3 floors of residential above) or horizontal (adjacent development on the same parcel or site). This designation allows a maximum density of 25.0 du/ac.	N/A	N/A

Sources: City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan, 2020; City of Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code, 2021

1. The City's existing Mixed-Use designation allows for up to 25.0 du/ac. As described in Section 5, Housing Resources, the City has proposed to create a new Mixed-Use Housing land use designation to accommodate a portion of its unaccommodated 6th Cycle RHNA.

Specific Plans

A specific plan is a comprehensive planning document that guides the development of a defined geographic area and may include a single land use type or a mix of uses including residential, commercial, industrial, schools, and parks and open space. Specific plans typically include more detailed information than the General Plan about land use, traffic circulation, development standards, affordable housing programs, resource management strategies, and a comprehensive infrastructure plan. Specific plans are also used as a means of achieving superior design by providing flexibility in development standards beyond those contained in the Zoning Code.

The City Council has adopted two specific plans: the RSM Townhomes Specific Plan (RSMTSP) and the Plano Trabuco Townhomes Specific Plan (PTTSP). Each one contains detailed regulations, conditions, programs, and design criteria unique to a defined geographic area within Rancho Santa Margarita and is intended to

implement the General Plan. The adopted specific plans are consistent with the General Plan. Future specific plans, specific plan amendments, and development projects must be consistent with policies contained in the General Plan, including the General Plan Land Use Element. The following discussion summarizes the two specific plans, which are built out and not expected to accommodate any portion of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) through the planning period.

RSM Townhomes Specific Plan

The RSM Townhomes Specific Plan was adopted in May 2011 and accommodates 66 two and three-story multi-family townhomes over a 4.09-acre project site. The Planning Area is located in the southwestern portion of Rancho Santa Margarita and is bordered by Avenida De Las Banderas to the north, Alma Aldea to the east, State Route 241 to the west, and residential development to the south. The Planning Area is zoned Residential High Density – Specific Plan (RH-SP). The development standards and parking requirements that apply to the Planning Area are shown in Table H-42.

Plano Trabuco Townhomes Specific Plan

The Plano Trabuco Townhomes Specific Plan was adopted in June 2015 and accommodates a total of 36 attached three-story townhome units in 12 triplex buildings. The Planning Area is located in northeastern Rancho Santa Margarita and bounded by Plano Trabuco Road to the west, residential development to the north and east, and commercial development to the south. The Planning Area is zoned Residential High Density – Specific Plan (RH-SP). Table H-42 outlines the site development standards and parking requirements established for the Specific Plan area.

TABLE H-42: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS – SPECIFIC PLANS

Development Standard		RSM Townhomes Specific Plan	Plano Trabuco Townhomes Specific Plan
Project Area (acres)		4.09	1.84
Total Units		66	36
Density (du/ac)		16.1	19.6
Maximum Lot Coverage		40%	45%
Minimum Unit Size (square feet)	2-bedroom	N/A	1,450
	3-bedroom	1,644	1,700
	4-bedroom	1,853	2,000
Setbacks (feet)	Front	10	5
	Side	15	10
	Rear	15	5
Distance Between Buildings (feet)		16 (two-story units) 24 (three-story units)	10
Maximum Building Height (feet/stories)		38/3	38/3
Minimum Open Space (% of site area)		25%	15%
Parking Requirements		2.0 spaces/unit + 0.75 guest spaces/unit	2.0 spaces/unit + 1 guest space/unit

Sources: RSM Townhomes Specific Plan, 2011; Plano Trabuco Townhomes Specific Plan, 2015



PLANNED COMMUNITIES

Rancho Santa Margarita was primarily developed as a series of Planned Communities prior to incorporation. The Planned Communities comprising the incorporated City include:

- Rancho Santa Margarita Planned Community
- Rancho Trabuco Planned Community
- Robinson Ranch Planned Community
- Dove Canyon Planned Community

The area located southwest of the Robinson Ranch Planned Community is referred to as the Rancho Cielo and Walden Communities. These areas were developed consistent with the Orange County Development Code in effect at the time of development.

While the Planned Communities once set forth the zoning and site development standards for specific areas within the City, they were replaced by the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code in 2007. The Planned Communities now serve as a guide for the character of development in specific geographic areas of the City. At this time, the Planned Communities have been built out, leaving little opportunity for significant new residential development. However, redevelopment or reuse that is consistent with the vision of the Planned Communities (while also consistent with the Zoning Code) may occur during the planning period. The opportunity for adding housing through Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) is also available in all residential zoning districts, pursuant to State law and the RSMZC.

The unincorporated area located north of Robinson Ranch is known as the Northeast Future Planned Community and designated Future Planned Community (FPC) on the General Plan Land Use Map. This area is currently within the jurisdiction of the County of Orange and within the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Sphere of Influence. Zoning for the property allows for a variety of residential uses as entitled through the Foothill-Trabuco Specific Plan. Future development review of the FPC may include annexation by the City, and City approval of a Specific Plan. This area is subject to detailed planning and development of residential, commercial, community facility, recreation, and open space uses to ensure that it is complementary to the master planned development of Rancho Santa Margarita and properly planned for its interface with Trabuco Canyon and adjacent neighborhoods.

ZONING CODE

Land use policies in the General Plan are implemented primarily through the Zoning Code. The Zoning Code provides for a range of densities and residential uses and is designed to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of residents, which includes preserving the character and integrity of established residential neighborhoods. To that end, the City has specific development standards that apply to residential construction in various districts. These include density, lot coverage, building height, parking standards, and other applicable requirements.

Provisions for a Variety of Housing Types

State housing element law requires that jurisdictions facilitate and encourage a range of housing types for all economic segments of the community. This includes the production of housing to meet the needs of different types of households with incomes ranging from low to above moderate. The Housing Element is the City's plan for achieving this objective.

As shown in Table H-43, the City's Zoning Code accommodates a wide variety of conventional and special needs housing, including single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), manufactured housing, residential care facilities (small and large), and transitional and supportive housing.

TABLE H-43: PERMITTED RESIDENTIAL USES BY ZONE

Housing Type	Residential Zones				Commercial		Business Park	Public/Quasi-Public
	RL	RLM	RM	RH	CG	CN	BP	PQ
Conventional Housing								
Single-Family (Detached)	P	P[1]	P[2]	--	--	--	--	--
Single-Family (Attached)	--	P[3]	P[4]	P	--	--	--	--
Multi-family	--	--	P[4]	P	--	--	--	--
Accessory Dwelling Unit	P	P	P	P	--	--	--	--
Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit	P	P	P	P[5]	--	--	--	--
Manufactured Housing/Mobile Homes	P	P	P	P	--	--	--	--
Special Needs Housing								
Residential Care Facility[6] --Small (6 or fewer clients) --Large (7 or more clients)	 P C	 P C	 P C	 P C	 C C	 C C	 -- --	 C C
Convalescent Homes --Small (6 or fewer clients) --Large (7 or more clients)	 P C	 P C	 P C	 P C	 -- --	 -- --	 -- --	 -- --
Emergency Shelter	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	P
Transitional/Supportive Housing	P	P	P	P	--	--	--	C
Single Room Occupancy (SRO)	--	--	--	P	--	--	--	--

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code, 2021

Notes:

"P" = Principal Use Permitted; "C" = Conditional Use Permit; and "--" = Not Permitted

A site development permit is required for all development unless another discretionary permit is required.

1. Only permitted in the RLM-4,000-D zoning district.

2. Only permitted in the RM-3,000-D zoning district.

3. Only permitted in the RLM-3,000-A zoning district.

4. Only permitted in the RM-2,000-A zoning district.

5. JADUs are permitted in the RH zone only within a single-family attached dwelling per 9.04.190(d)(2).

6. The applicable use in CG and CN is Family Care Home and in BP it is Health-related institutional uses.



Single-Family: Detached single-family dwellings are permitted by-right within the RL, RLM, and RM zones. Attached single-family dwellings, which are units that are attached side by side such as townhomes or duplexes, are allowed within the RLM, RM, and RH zones. New single-family projects in areas not currently developed with residential uses are subject to discretionary review through the Site Development Permit process to ensure the project conforms to City standards. An application to build one single-family unit on an existing single-family lot is subject to ministerial review only. Pursuant to recently adopted SB9 (Atkins, 2021) additional development on single-family lots, as well as single-family lot splits, are required to be approved ministerially.

Multi-family: Multi-family developments include apartments, condominiums, senior housing, and multi-family clusters such as triplexes and fourplexes, and are permitted in the RM and RH zones by-right, as reflected in Table H-43. Multi-family projects are subject to review through the Site Development Permit process. Approval of a Conditional Use Permit is not required for multi-family homes in the RM and RH zones.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): Government Code Section 65852.2(a)(1) allows local agencies to designate areas within a city where accessory dwelling units (ADUs) may be permitted and to impose development standards addressing issues such as unit size, height, setbacks, lot coverage, parking, landscaping, and architectural review. The City recently (2021) updated Section 9.04.190 of its Municipal Code to be consistent with California Government Code Sections 65852.150 and 65852.2, which establish regulations for accessory dwelling units. As part of this Housing Element Update process, the State has identified the need for the City to update its ADU Ordinance to comply with State law. Program 3 in the Housing Plan has been included to address this requirement.

RSMZC Section 9.04.190 defines an accessory dwelling unit in the same way as Government Code § 65852.2; that is, "an attached or a detached residential dwelling unit that provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons and is located on a lot with a proposed or existing primary residence. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel as the single-family or multi-family dwelling is or will be situated." An accessory dwelling unit also includes an efficiency unit and a manufactured home.

RSMZC Section 9.04.190 defines a junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU) in the same way as Government Code § 65852.22(h)(1); that is, "a unit that is no more than 500 square feet in size and contained entirely within a single-family residence. A junior accessory dwelling unit may include separate sanitation facilities, or may share sanitation facilities with the existing structure."

ADUs are permitted on any lot in the City zoned to allow single-family or multi-family residential uses and that includes a proposed or existing legally developed single-family or multi-family dwelling. JADUs may be located within a proposed or existing legally developed single-family dwelling on any lot in the City that is zoned to allow single-family residential uses. A building permit is required for any ADU or JADU pursuant to compliance with the minimum requirements described in RSMZC Section 9.04.190, which include but are not limited to:

- For lots with a proposed or existing single-family dwelling, no more than one attached, converted or detached ADU and one JADU shall be permitted on the lot. In cases where both a detached ADU and JADU are developed or proposed on a lot, the total floor area of the detached ADU must be 800 square feet or less.
- For lots with an existing multi-family dwelling: (i) On lots with no detached ADUs, at least one ADU, and up to 25 percent of the number of the existing units may be constructed within portions of the existing multi-family dwelling structure that are not used as livable space (e.g., storage rooms, boiler rooms, passageways, attics, basements, or garages) provided all applicable building code standards are met; or (ii) Not more than two detached ADUs shall be permitted on the lot.

The approval process is ministerial in nature, and the City must approve or deny an application to construct an ADU or JADU within 60 days after receiving a complete application. If a complete application for a building permit to construct an ADU or JADU is submitted in connection with an application to construct a new primary dwelling on a lot, the application may not be approved until the application is approved for the new dwelling. The application for the ADU or JADU must be processed ministerially regardless of the approvals required for the primary dwelling. Further, the ordinance sets forth development standards for ADUs, as referenced in

:

TABLE H-44: ADU AND JADU DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Specific Regulations	ADU(1)		JADU	Additional Provisions
	Attached	Detached		
Minimum Size	220 sf	220 sf	220 sf	
Maximum Size	1,200(1) sf	1,200 sf	500 sf	(2)
Maximum Height	(3)	16 ft	--	
Minimum Side/Rear Yard Setback	4 ft	4 ft	--	(4)(5)
Minimum Parking	1	1	0	(6)(7)(8)

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code, 2021

Notes:

1. The total floor area of an attached ADU shall not exceed (i) 1,200 square feet, or (ii) 50 percent of the floor area of the primary dwelling unit, whichever is less. However, in no case shall this limitation be imposed to require an ADU with a total floor area of less than 800 square feet.

2. The maximum size limitations do not apply to converted ADUs that do not increase the existing floor area of a structure. In addition, a converted ADU created within an existing accessory structure may include an expansion of not more than 150 square feet beyond the same physical dimensions as the existing accessory structure to the extent necessary to accommodate ingress and egress.

3. Attached or converted ADUs shall not exceed the height of the tallest point of the existing primary structure and shall comply with the height limit of the applicable zoning district.

4. New attached and detached ADUs are subject to the same minimum front yard setback requirements applicable to other structures on the lot on which the ADU is located.

5. No setbacks are required for converted ADUs, provided the side and rear yard setbacks of the existing converted structure are sufficient for fire and safety, as determined by the City's building official.

6. When a garage, carport, or covered parking structure is demolished in conjunction with the construction of an ADU or converted to an ADU, those off-street parking spaces are not required to be replaced.

7. Off-street parking is not required in the following instances: (i) the ADU is located within one-half mile walking distance of public transit, including transit stations and bus stations; (ii) the ADU is located within an architecturally and historically significant historic district; (iii) the ADU is part of the proposed or existing primary residence or accessory structure (i.e. a converted ADU); (iv) when on-street parking permits are required but not offered to the occupant of the ADU; and/or (v) when there is a car share vehicle station located within one block of the ADU.

8. When an existing attached garage is converted to a JADU, any required off-street parking spaces for the primary dwelling that are eliminated as a result of the conversion must be replaced. These replacement parking spaces may be located in any configuration on the same lot, including, but not limited to, as covered spaces, uncovered spaces, or tandem spaces.

Manufactured Housing: State law requires that manufactured housing, when constructed as a single-family dwelling on a permanent foundation, be treated as a conventional single-family home subject to the same development standards as a single-family residential dwelling on the same lot would require, except for architectural requirements limited to its roof overhang, roofing material, and siding material.

Section 9.01.190 of the RSMZC defines mobile home as a manufactured home. As with manufactured housing, mobile homes are allowed in all residential zones as a permitted use provided the installation complies with the site development standards for the applicable zoning district. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita currently has no mobile home parks.

Residential Care Facility: "Small" residential care facilities (those serving six or fewer clients) are allowed by-right in the residential zones and subject to the same development standards and permit processing requirements as other residential uses in those zones, pursuant to the California Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act. "Large" residential care facilities (those serving seven or more clients) are subject to a Conditional Use Permit (CUP); although requiring a CUP may be considered a constraint to development of this housing type, it is also important for the City to review, on a case-by-case basis, the specifics of the application to ensure that "large" residential care facilities are supported by adequate services and infrastructure. The CUP process allows for this review and the City is not aware of any "large" residential care facilities that have been discouraged from locating in the City due to this requirement.

Senior Housing: Senior citizen housing developments, identified in the Zoning Code as a housing development that has been designed to meet the physical and social needs of senior citizens, can include independent living facilities in single or multi-family housing units or through group or assisted living such as residential care facilities, which are described above.

Emergency Shelter: Emergency shelters are allowed in the PQ zone by-right and in the residential, CG, CN, and BP zones subject to a Conditional Use Permit and the requirements of RSMZC Section 9.04.170. Emergency shelters in the PQ zone are subject to ministerial review and approval, and compliance with objective standards consistent with the requirements identified in Government Code Section 65583(a)(4).

No emergency shelters are currently located within Rancho Santa Margarita. The PQ zone includes approximately 219 acres. Although all of these sites are currently developed, future opportunities for redevelopment or adaptive reuse exist. Zoning Code Section 9.04.170 restricts the number of unsheltered persons per shelter to 10 per night. Water, sewer, and utilities are available in the PQ zone to accommodate emergency shelters.

The PQ zone is suitable for emergency shelters because:

- Shelters are compatible with a range of uses that are common in suburban communities and allowed in the Public/Quasi-Public zone (e.g., public buildings and facilities, health-related medical uses, religious, fraternal, or service organizations, etc.);
- The PQ zone is generally located along major corridors (Santa Margarita Parkway, Antonio Parkway, Avenida de Las Banderas) with easy access to public transit (bus); and
- There is a mixture of existing uses in and surrounding the PQ zone that includes open space, commercial, manufacturing, warehousing, office uses, and non-industrial uses.

Program 14 in the Housing Plan requires the Zoning Code to be updated to address emergency shelter parking requirements per AB 139.

Low Barrier Navigation Center: A low barrier navigation center is a housing first, low-barrier, service-enriched shelter focused on moving people into permanent housing that provides temporary living facilities while case managers connect individuals experiencing homelessness to income, public benefits, health services, shelter, and housing. AB 2162 codified as Government Code Sections 65660-65668 require jurisdictions to further streamline approval of eligible low barrier navigation center applications in areas zoned for mixed-use and residential zones permitting multi-family uses, subject to specific criteria. The City's Zoning Code does not conform to these recent requirements; however, Program 14 in the Housing Plan requires the Zoning Code to be updated to address AB 2162.

Transitional and Supportive Housing: Transitional housing is a type of housing used to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing. Transitional housing can take several forms, including group quarters with beds, single-family homes, and multi-family apartments, and typically offers case management and support services to return people to independent living (usually between 6-24 months). The Zoning Code defines transitional housing as "a type of supportive housing used to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing." Although this definition is consistent with Government Code Section 65582(j), the term should be better defined to differentiate transitional housing from supportive housing, which the Zoning Code currently does not define. Program 14 included in the Housing Plan requires the Zoning Code to be updated to redefine both transitional and supportive housing. According to the National Housing Institute, supportive housing is permanent housing with a service component, which can be provided either on-site or off-site. The target population for transitional and supportive housing includes persons with disabilities, elderly, youth aging out of the foster system, veterans, and homeless.

Senate Bill 2 (Cedillo) passed in 2007 adds language to the Government Code providing that transitional housing and supportive housing that is a rental housing development constitutes a residential use. It requires zoning to treat such uses as a residential use and subject onl to those restrictions that apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone. The Zoning Code allows transitional housing as a residential use, subject to the same permitting process and development standards as other residential uses in the residential zones, and in the PQ zone subject to a CUP.

Single-Room Occupancy (SRO): Single-room occupancy (SRO) facilities are a housing type that is considered suitable to meet the needs of extremely low, very low, and low-income households. With high housing costs, many communities in California are exploring the use of single-room occupancy housing to fulfill the affordable housing needs of certain segments of the community, such as seniors, students, and single workers. Rancho Santa Margarita amended its Zoning Code in 2011 to define SROs as a building with a common entrance containing a cluster of rental units which each provide sleeping and living facilities for one or two persons. SROs are permitted by-right in the RH zone, subject to the development and management standards in RSMZC Section 9.04.180.

Housing for Persons with Disabilities: On January 1, 2002, SB 520 became effective and required local jurisdictions to analyze local government constraints on developing, maintaining, and improving housing for persons with disabilities. In accordance with SB 520 and Government Code 65583(a)(7), the City recognizes the importance of providing housing for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities have a number of specific housing needs, including those related to design and location. Design needs generally include the removal of architectural barriers that limit the accessibility of dwelling units and construction of wheelchair ramps, railings, etc. Location needs include accessibility to public transportation, commercial services, health care, and supportive services. Some persons with disabilities need group housing opportunities, especially those who are lower-income or homeless. The following discussion addresses these issues and determines that no specific City policy or regulation serves to impede access by persons with disabilities to housing that suits their specific needs.

Zoning and Land Use: The General Plan and Zoning Code provide for the development of multi-family housing in the RM and RH zones by-right. Traditional multi-family housing for persons with special needs, such as apartments for the disabled, are considered regular residential uses permitted in these zones. The City's land use policies and zoning provisions do not constrain the development of such housing.

Under the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Lanterman Act), small State-licensed residential care facilities for six or fewer persons must be permitted in all zones that allow single or multi-family uses, subject to the same permit processing requirements and development standards. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita complies with the Lanterman Act and allows small residential care facilities in all residential zones. Large residential care facilities serving seven or more clients are permitted in residential zones subject to a Conditional Use Permit. Potential conditions of approval may include hours of operation, security, loading requirements, and management. Conditions do not serve to unduly constrain the development of residential care facilities for more than six persons. Occupancy standards for residential care facilities are the same as occupancy standards for all other residential uses. The Zoning Code also accommodates transitional and supportive housing in all residential zoning districts subject only to the same requirements for residential uses of the same type (e.g., single-family or multi-family) in the same zone, and in the PQ zone subject to a Conditional Use Permit. These facilities may serve persons with disabilities.

The City's Zoning Code does not include a definition for "family", thereby providing maximum flexibility in accommodating housing for persons with disabilities.

Building Code: Building construction and procedures within Rancho Santa Margarita are required to conform to the 2019 California Building Code, as adopted in Title 10 of the City's Municipal Code, and which are updated triennially. Standards within the Building Code include provisions to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. These standards are consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). No local amendments that would constrain accessibility or increase the cost of housing for persons with disabilities have been

adopted and City officials are not aware of any instances in which an applicant experienced delays or rejection of a retrofitting proposal for accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Reasonable Accommodation: Both the federal Fair Housing Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act direct local governments to make reasonable accommodation (i.e. modifications or exceptions) in their zoning laws and other land use regulations to allow disabled persons an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. For example, it may be a reasonable accommodation to waive a setback requirement so that elevated ramping can be constructed to provide access to a dwelling unit for a resident who has mobility impairments. Whether a particular modification is reasonable depends on the circumstances and must be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Reasonable accommodation refers to flexibility in standards and policies to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities. The City's zoning and building codes, as well as approach to code enforcement, allow for special provisions that meet the needs of persons with disabilities without the need for variances. The City's reasonable accommodations process is codified in Section 9.05.130 of the RSMZC.

The City's Development Services Director has administrative authority to hear and decide applications for reasonable accommodation to allow for relief from zoning and other land use regulations, policies, and procedures for individuals with physical or mental impairment. A request for reasonable accommodation may include a modification or exception to the rules, standards, and practices for the siting, development, and use of housing or housing-related facilities that would eliminate regulatory barriers and provide a person with a disability equal opportunity to housing of their choice.

Reasonable accommodation applications are not charged a fee for review and the Development Services Director must consider all of the following factors:

1. Whether the housing that is the subject of the request will be used by an individual with a disability;
2. Whether the request is necessary to make specific housing available to an individual with a disability;
3. Whether the request would impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the City;
4. Whether the request would require a fundamental alteration in the nature of a City program or law, including but not limited to land use or zoning;
5. Whether the request will have a potentially adverse impact on surrounding uses;
6. Whether the physical attributes of the property and structures justify the requested reasonable accommodation;
7. Whether the request will provide an equivalent level of benefit as the neighbors.

Conclusion: Current planning policies and zoning regulations have mitigated

potential constraints to the availability of housing for persons with disabilities. The City has analyzed its Zoning Code and procedures to ensure that it is providing flexibility in, and not constraining the development of, housing for persons with disabilities.

Program 14 in the Housing Plan directs the City to update the Zoning Code to ensure the Zoning Code provides objective standards for review and approval of permits for group homes for seven or more persons.

Development Standards

Development standards directly shape the form and intensity of residential development by providing controls over land use, heights and density of buildings, open space on a site, etc. Site development standards also ensure a quality living environment for all household groups in the City, including special groups such as lower and moderate-income households and senior citizens. Table H-45 summarizes development standards in the residential zones (RL, RLM, RM, and RH), including density, minimum lot size, lot coverage, setbacks, and building height, by zoning district.

TABLE H-45: BASIC RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Development Standard		RL[1]	RLM	RM[2]	RH
Maximum Density (units per acre)		7.0	11.0	18.0	25.0
Minimum Lot Area (square feet)		5,000	4,000	2,000	7,500
Maximum Lot Coverage (% of lot area)		60%	60%	65%[3]	65%
Setbacks (feet)[4]	Front	15	15	15[5]	20
	Side Yard (internal)	5	5	10[6]	20
	Side Yard (street)	10	10	10	20
	Rear	10	10	10	20
Maximum Building Height (feet)		35 feet and 2 stories			
Landscaping (% of net site area)		15%			

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code, 2021

Notes:

1. Includes RL-6,000 with 6,000 sf minimum lot size and RL-5,000 with 5,000 sf minimum lot size.

2. Includes RM-3,000-D with 3,000 sf minimum lot and RM-2,000-A with 2,000 sf minimum lot.

3. Maximum lot coverage in RM-3,000-D zone is 60%.

4. Buildings located within the RLM-4,000-A, RM-2,000-A, and RH zoning districts shall maintain a minimum distance of ten feet between buildings.

5. Minimum front setback in RM-2,000-A zone is 10 feet.

6. Minimum side (internal) setback in RM-3,000-D zone is 5 feet.

Minimum unit size standards are established to facilitate the inclusion of smaller units in the High Density Residential (RH) zone. Table H-46 summarizes the unit size development standards for the RH zone.

TABLE H-46: MINIMUM UNIT SIZE (RH ZONE)

Unit Type	Minimum Size (square feet)
Studio	500
One-bedroom unit	600
Two-bedroom unit	700
Three-bedroom unit	800

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code, 2021

The City has analyzed development standards and concluded that they do not pose a significant constraint to housing supply, affordability, and ability to achieve maximum allowable densities. Principal Architect of RRM Design Group, Detty Peikert, AIA, LEED AP, who has over 38 years of experience in developing affordable and market-rate housing, has analyzed the height requirements in the RM and RH zones as potential constraints on housing supply, affordability, and ability to achieve maximum allowable densities. Upon analyzing these development standards, Detty concluded that RM and RH densities (18du/ac and 25du/ac, respectively) can be achieved within a 2-story building configuration. Additionally, Detty considered the City's 15% landscape requirement, and considers it modest and not onerous, and the 60% lot coverage (building footprint), which he finds suitable for these development patterns. Therefore, the City's current RM and RH development standards are not considered constraints to providing housing, providing affordable housing, or achieving maximum allowable densities. In addition, the City has demonstrated a willingness to accommodate alternative development standards in order to provide infill residential development, as evidenced by the two most recently approved residential projects in the City (RSM Townhomes Specific Plan and Plano Trabuco Townhomes). For instance, the Plano Trabuco Townhomes project provides 36 three-story condominiums with a height limit of 35 feet, a deviation from two-story maximum building height limit in the RH zone.

Moreover, in order to accommodate its 6th Cycle RHNA, the City is proposing the creation of two new land use mechanisms (Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing) to allow for residential development up to 35 du/ac (see Section 5 for additional information). The City will create new land use and/or zoning requirements to implement these mechanisms. In November 2021 the City issued a Request for Proposals to create new standards to support these strategies and expects to initiate work in 2022. As part of this process, the City will consider and adopt specific development standards to support development of residential uses at densities up to 35 du/ac. Program 1 is included in the Housing Plan to commit the City to complete this work in accordance with State law.

Residential Parking Requirements

Parking standards are an important development regulation in communities. The City's parking requirements are intended to ensure that adequate off-street parking and loading facilities are provided in proportion to the need created by the type of use. Adequate parking for residential projects contributes to the value of a project, the safety of residents, and the quality of a project's appearance.

However, excessive parking standards can pose a significant constraint to the development of housing because they can reduce the buildable area on a site and impact the funding available for project amenities or additional units. The parking requirements for residential developments are shown in Table H-47.

TABLE H-47: RESIDENTIAL PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Use	Requirement	Additional Regulations
Single-family dwellings (single-family detached dwellings, two-family dwellings (duplexes), and townhomes sharing a common wall)	2 off-street spaces in a garage per dwelling unit	In addition, a minimum of one on-street parking space within 100 feet of the subject dwelling unit For new development projects, those dwellings having less than an 18-foot front setback must provide one additional parking space within 200 feet of the dwelling (on-street or off-street)
Multi-family (apartments and condominiums)	Studio: 1 covered off-street space per dwelling unit + 0.5 guest space per unit 1 bdrm: 2 off-street spaces per dwelling unit (at least one covered) + 0.5 guest space per unit 2 bdrm: 2 off-street spaces per dwelling unit (at least one covered) + 1 guest space per unit 3+ bdrm: 3 off-street spaces per dwelling unit (at least one covered) + 1.5 guest spaces per dwelling unit	
Accessory Dwelling Unit	1 off-street space per ADU No spaces required for JADU	When a garage, carport, or covered parking structure is demolished in conjunction with the construction of an ADU or converted to an ADU, those off-street parking spaces are not required to be replaced No parking is required if ADU is: Located within 0.5 mile walking distance of public transit Located within an architecturally and historically significant historic district Part of the proposed or existing primary residence or an accessory structure When on-street parking permits are required but not offered to the occupant of the ADU When there is a car share vehicle station located within one block of the ADU



Use	Requirement	Additional Regulations
Health-related institutional uses including family care homes, convalescent and nursing homes, adult living facility, assisted care facilities, senior living facilities, emergency shelters, children's homes, and sanitariums, health related institutional uses, transitional housing	1 off-street space per each 3 beds based on maximum occupancy	Development Services Director may allow for a different parking standard if credible evidence is provided that a different parking ratio is appropriate based on an emergency shelter's demonstrated need
Senior apartments (age-restricted)	To be determined through the conditional use permit	
Single-room occupancy (SRO) facilities	0.5 off-street space per unit + 1 off-street space for each employee	
Affordable housing projects	0 - 1 bdrm: 1 off-street parking space 2 - 3 bdrm: 2 off-street parking spaces 4+ bdrm: 2.5 off-street parking spaces	

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code, 2021 (Chapter 9.06, Parking)

A parking reduction is available for projects that qualify as affordable housing developments or through the CUP process for senior housing. Moreover, affordable housing developments that are eligible for a density bonus pursuant to Government Code Section 65915-65918 are eligible to use parking standards established by State Density Bonus law. The Zoning Code also has shared parking provisions for "mixed land use developments," (see 9.06.090(d)) and although the code does not specify the types of mixed uses, the provisions are available for future residential/commercial mixed-use projects.

The City has analyzed parking standards and concluded that while they generally do not pose a significant constraint on housing, the lack of a fixed parking standard for senior apartments could be construed as a potential constraint. The City has included, as part of Program 14, a commitment to amend the RSMZC to adopt fixed parking standards for senior apartments. Provisions in the RSMZC for deviations from minimum parking standards through the Alternative Development Standards process and through density bonus provisions allow flexibility. For instance, Buena Vida, a 115-unit apartment complex for seniors, was granted relief for a total of four parking spaces (approved to provide 145 parking spaces, rather than the development standard of 149). This project approval illustrates the City's willingness to accommodate higher density, and a relief from parking requirements.

Buena Vida is an essential apartment community to the City as it provides high-quality residential homes to seniors that are walkable to grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants, the Public Library, City Hall, the City's Bell Tower Regional

Community Center, Age Well Senior Services, Central Park, and other essential services.

It is important to note that this senior apartment community is directly adjacent to sites 5-9 in the Sites Inventory, and is 600' away from sites 10-15, all in the City's downtown core and also walkable to all of these services and amenities. The City anticipates applying similar relief to proposals on the sites in the Sites Inventory.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The time and cost of permit processing and review can be a constraint to housing development if significant or lengthy development review is required. Project review and permit processing are necessary steps to ensure that residential construction proceeds in an orderly manner. The time required for project approval is often not so much a factor of the approval body (Director versus Planning Commission), but the complexity of the project and associated environmental review. However, small infill projects that can be approved administratively are generally less complex and take a shorter time to obtain appropriate approvals. Large multi-family developments or residential subdivision maps, require a public hearing before the Planning Commission and are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The City reviews all applications for development to ensure the construction of projects contribute in a positive manner to the community and improve quality-of-life. Residential development projects typically undergo several types of approvals – ministerial, discretionary actions (either with or without a public hearing), and legislative actions. This section outlines the timeline for typical residential development review and describes the permitting requirements and procedures for Site Development Permits, Conditional Use Permits (CUP), Subdivision Maps, etc.

Timeframes

Processing times for applications in Rancho Santa Margarita can vary based upon the scope and type of project. The amount of time involved in processing applications depends on the type of project, the applicant's compliance with the City's ordinances, and the completeness of the applications. Certain types of applications/permits require a public hearing, while others are processed administratively with approvals by staff. Administrative approvals generally have a shorter processing time because a public hearing is not required.

Some projects may take an extended period for final approval. Projects which would generally have significant environmental impacts, involve a General Plan amendment or a Specific Plan, rezoning, or need additional community workshops and outreach, are generally more complex projects to evaluate and take longer to process than simpler applications. State requirements for public review periods and public noticing under the Brown Act must be followed. Developers may also be responsible for delays by failing to provide information in a timely manner or requesting continuances.

As a built-out community, residential development in Rancho Santa Margarita during the previous planning period was modest and does not provide ample measure for determining processing times for residential development

applications. However, based on typical processing times for similar projects, review and approval of one single-family home on an existing single-family lot will range from 30 to 60 days, which assumes plan check and building permits with no additional entitlements required. Construction of a single residential unit on an existing lot would not create substantial new environmental impacts, and would not be subject to CEQA review, thereby greatly reducing the time needed for review. The typical processing time for a single-family subdivision or multi-family project would be 9-12 months, which assumes that discretionary entitlements are required, a moderate level of environmental analysis is necessary, and public hearings with the Planning Commission and/or City Council will occur.

Table H-48 outlines the typical permit processing times and associated review body by the type of approval or permit. It should be noted that many projects require multiple entitlements, which are often processed concurrently, thereby shortening the overall processing time.

TABLE H-48: TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PROCESSING TIMES AND REVIEWING BODY

Type of Residential Project Approval or Permit	Review Authority				Processing Times
	Director	PC	CC	Public Hearing	
Accessory Dwelling Unit	D	A	--	No	30-60 days
Alternative Development Standards	--	D	A	Yes	2-3 months
Amendment of Zoning Code Text/ Zone Change	--	R	D	Yes	6-8 months
Conditional Use Permit	--	D	A	Yes	2-3 months
Development Agreement	--	R	D	Yes	6-12 months
Lot Line Adjustment	D	A	--	No	3-6 months
Reasonable Accommodation	D	--	--	No	30-60 days
Site Development Permit	D	D	A	No	2-3 months[1]
Specific Plan	--	A	D	Yes	6-12 months
Tentative Map	--	D	A	Yes	6-8 months
Variance	--	D	A	Yes	2-3 months

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita, 2021(Table 9.08.1)

D = Deciding body whose decision is final unless appealed

R = Advisory body required to make recommendations

A = Appeal authority

Notes:

1. Based on Planning Commission review.

Site Development Permit

In accordance with Chapter 9.08, Section 9.08.170 of the RSMZC, when no other discretionary permit is required, a Site Development Permit is required for new residential development projects (excluding development of a single-family residential unit on a single-family lot, which is ministerial), and non-residential development projects involving new construction, reconstruction, building additions, or structural or site modifications, and, at the Development Services Director's discretion, may be required to be filed for any proposal determined by the Director not to be in clear compliance with General Plan policies or consistent with the RSMZC. The Site Development Permit process is a discretionary action performed by either the Development Services Director or Planning Commission.

Site Development Permit review ensures that a project complies with all applicable site development standards, including minimum lot size, maximum lot coverage, height limit, setbacks, parking and garage/carport placement, landscaping, and screening, and that the findings required by RSMZC Section 9.08.170(e) can be made. The process also gives the City the ability to review the development to determine the applicable provision of park land, public improvements, or other applicable items as required by the RSMZC.

Table H-49 describes the City's processing and approval procedures and time for typical single- and multi-family developments, including type of permit, level of review, approval findings, and any discretionary approval procedures.

TABLE H-49: LOCAL PROCESSING AND PERMIT PROCEDURES

Residential Type	Permit Type, Procedures	Review Body	Required Findings	Average Processing Time
One Single-Family Home on a single-family lot	Plan Check & Building permit, ministerial	Staff	None	30-60 days
Accessory Dwelling Unit	Plan Check & Building permit, ministerial	Staff	None	30-60 days
Single-family subdivision	Tract or Parcel Map, Site Development Permit, Public hearing	Planning Commission	Site Development Permit Findings: • That the proposed site development permit will be consistent with the objectives, policies and general land uses and programs specified in the City's General Plan; • That the proposed site development permit is consistent with the provisions of this Title; • That the location, size, design and operating characteristics of the proposed site development	6-8 months

			permit will not create unusual noise, traffic or other conditions or situations that may be objectionable, detrimental, or incompatible with other permitted uses in the vicinity; and; • That the proposed site development permit will not result in conditions or circumstances contrary to the public health and safety and the general welfare. Tentative Map Findings: • That the proposed map is consistent with the General Plan; • That the design and improvement of the proposed subdivision is consistent with the General Plan; • That the site is physically suitable for the proposed type of development; • That the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been satisfied; • That the site is physically suitable for the proposed density of development; • That the design of the subdivision and the proposed improvements are not likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantial and avoidable injury to fish or wildlife or their habitat; • That the design of the subdivision and the type of improvements proposed are not likely to cause serious public health problems; • That the design of the subdivision and the type of improvements proposed will not conflict with easements of record or established by court judgment acquired by the public	

			at large for access through or use of property within the proposed subdivision; or, if such easements exist, that alternate easements for access or for use will be provided and that these will be substantially equivalent to ones previously acquired by the public; and • That the design and improvement of the proposed subdivision are suitable for the uses proposed and the subdivision can be developed in compliance with the applicable zoning regulations pursuant to Subsection (h).	
Multi-family project	Site Development Permit, Public hearing	Planning Commission	Site Development Permit Findings: • That the proposed site development permit will be consistent with the objectives, policies and general land uses and programs specified in the City's General Plan; • That the proposed site development permit is consistent with the provisions of this Title; • That the location, size, design and operating characteristics of the proposed site development permit will not create unusual noise, traffic or other conditions or situations that may be objectionable, detrimental, or incompatible with other permitted uses in the vicinity; and • That the proposed site development permit will not result in conditions or circumstances contrary to the public health and safety and the general welfare.	2-3 months
Mixed-Use Project	See Program 14			

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita, 2021



Conditional Use Permit (CUP)

Chapter 9.08, Section 9.08.110 of the Zoning Code regulates the issuance of Conditional Use Permits (CUP). Land uses that require a CUP are deemed consistent with the purpose and intent of the zoning district, but typically have characteristics that require special regulation in order to avoid or minimize potential adverse impacts on surrounding properties. The following residential uses require a CUP:

- Small (6 or fewer clients) residential care facilities in the CG, CN, and PQ zones;
- Large (7 or more clients) residential care facilities in the RL, RLM, RM, RH, CG, CN, and PQ zones;
- Emergency shelters in the RL, RLM, RM, RH, CG, CN, and BP zones; and
- Transitional/supportive housing in the PQ zone.

The Planning Commission may approve, conditionally approve, or deny a CUP application unless the application includes concurrent processing of a permit that requires City Council action, in which case the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council. The approving body must make the following findings prior to approval, pursuant to Section 9.08.110 of the Zoning Code:

1. That the use proposed CUP will be consistent with the objectives, policies, and general land uses and programs specified in the City's General Plan;
2. That the proposed CUP is consistent with the provisions of the Zoning Code;
3. That the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed CUP will not create unusual noise, traffic, or other conditions or situations that may be objectionable, detrimental, or incompatible with other permitted uses in the vicinity; and
4. That the proposed CUP will not result in conditions or circumstances contrary to the public health and safety and the general welfare.

These findings apply to all uses that require a CUP; no special or unique findings are required for residential uses.

Subdivisions

This review process applies to all residential and non-residential land divisions within the City. Section 9.08.200, and Chapter 9.10 of the RSMZC includes the standards and processes for subdivisions. It is based primarily on the State Subdivision Map Act. As it relates to residential development, the regulations apply to all land divisions that create lots for single-family homes and lots, or condominiums, and for some multi-family development. As part of the review process for subdivisions, the City reviews applications for compliance with lot size and shape standards, the general layout of the subdivision, and infrastructure requirements. If the project complies with the subdivision standards and General Plan density, the project can proceed through the approval process.

Specific Plans

Specific Plans are legislative in nature and require review and approval by the City Council. Residential and mixed-use projects within an approved Specific Plan are permitted by-right, which would include administrative design review as defined in California Government Code Sec. 65583.2(i). Once approved, a Specific Plan sets the allowable uses and site development standards applicable to a specific project area. As described earlier in this section, Rancho Santa Margarita utilized specific plans for last two residential projects in the City (RSM Townhomes and Plano Trabuco Townhomes) to implement development standards to facilitate higher density infill development. The development standards for these projects included three story building heights which would not be allowed under the RH zoning. The City will continue to use Specific Plans on a project-specific basis to provide flexibility in development standards and facilitate development.

Alternative Development Standards

The RSMZC allows the Planning Commission to approve Alternative Development Standards including but not limited to reduction in required lot size, variations from landscaping and screening requirements, variations from sign standards, and variations in parking standards. The purpose of Alternative Development Standards is to permit development on property that is constrained due to lot size, shape, location, access restrictions, or other constraints. Such constraints often apply to infill development projects. Over the past five years, the most common use of Alternative Development Standards has been for reductions in parking or increases in allowable signage.

Reasonable Accommodation

The City's process for providing reasonable accommodation allows individuals, or their representatives, to make requests for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities as part of any permit process. No additional permits are required or additional fees charged by the City. Requests for reasonable accommodation to meet the needs of persons with disabilities are approved administratively, and a use permit is not required. City staff is available to provide assistance regarding the processing of requests for the construction of accessory structures intended to accommodate persons with disabilities. Rancho Santa Margarita's reasonable accommodation procedure complies with Housing Element law and provides an accessible way for disabled residents to make necessary changes to their properties.

Analysis of Land Use Controls

The City has considered the land use controls applicable in the City and has concluded that they do not generally represent a constraint to development. Where a potential constraint has been identified (i.e., emergency shelter parking), the City has included a Program (as specified in this section) to address the constraint. Where no Program for revision is included, the City finds that based on substantial evidence, the land use control does not present a constraint on the cost, supply, timing or certainty of approval. In particular, the City has a history of working with applicants to develop feasible and creative solutions to potential land use constraints and is committed to proactively working with applicants to develop similar solutions for future projects, specifically projects providing housing affordable to lower income households.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The City has adopted uniform procedures for complying with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for assessing the potential environmental impacts of those development applications determined to be a "project" as defined by Public Resources Code 21000-21177. Environmental review is required for most discretionary actions including Conditional Use Permits, Subdivision Maps, and legislative actions including General Plan Amendments, zone changes, and code amendments. Environmental review occurs while the application is being processed. An environmental determination by City staff for a project is made in order to prepare the appropriate environmental document that can be considered by the decision-making authority with the legislative or discretionary application. Given that a large portion of the existing and likely future development potential in Rancho Santa Margarita will be of an infill nature, many residential development projects may qualify for categorical exemption from the CEQA process.

STREAMLINING APPROVALS

Lower Income Sites Included in Previous Elements

While the Site Development Permit process is not considered a constraint to housing, Policy 1.8, in the Housing Plan (Part 1 of the Housing Element) has been included to comply with Government Code Section 65583.2. This program will provide for administrative approval (e.g., Development Services Director approval of a Site Development Permit and entitlements other than a subdivision map) of housing projects on sites included in a previous (5th cycle or before) Housing Element Sites Inventory, with a minimum of 20% of units affordable to lower income households and will increase certainty for affordable and multi-family developers.

Senate Bill (SB) 35

SB 35 provides provisions for streamlining projects based on a jurisdiction's progress towards its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and timely submittal of the Housing Element Annual Progress Report. Jurisdictions which have made insufficient progress toward their lower income RHNA and/or have not submitted the latest Housing Element Annual Progress Report are subject to the streamlined ministerial approval process (SB 35, Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017, streamlining) for proposed developments with between 10% and 50% affordability, as determined by California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)based on the lack of progress .

Based on the Annual Progress Reports and progress towards the RHNA, Rancho Santa Margarita is currently subject to SB 35 streamlining provisions when proposed developments include 50% affordability. Program 15 in the Housing Plan has been provided to incorporate the mandatory streamlining provisions into the City's Zoning Code. These streamlining provisions will modify approval requirements for projects that include a minimum of 50% of units affordable to lower income households and that meet the criteria specified by State law.

FLEXIBILITY IN DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Development standards affect the financial feasibility of a residential project, both from the revenue side (through achievable density) and through the costs of accommodating specific development standards. However, there is no specific threshold that determines whether a particular standard or combination constrains the affordability or supply of housing. Many factors determine project feasibility. While prior sections discussed how to reduce development costs, the following describes ways that the Zoning Code offers flexibility in development standards.

Density Bonus

In 2007, the City adopted the RSMZC that allows density bonuses for affordable and senior residential projects in accordance with State Density Bonus law (prior to 2007, the City relied on the County of Orange's Zoning Code). Section 9.05.040 of the RSMZC requires density bonuses and other incentives for housing and/or child care facilities to be granted in accordance with the requirements of State law, including Government Code Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 4.3 (Density Bonuses and Other Incentives).

Section 9.05.040 of the RSMZC allows density bonuses for affordable and senior residential projects in accordance with State Density Bonus law (Government Code Sections 65915 – 65918). Density bonuses and other incentives for housing and/or child care facilities may be granted in accordance with the requirements of the law. The City is required to grant a density bonus on a sliding scale if a development provides a percentage of the units at rates that are affordable to very low, low, and moderate-income households. For example, a density bonus of 20 percent above the maximum permitted density can be granted if at least 5 percent of the units are affordable to very low-income households or 10 percent of the units are affordable to low-income households. If 10 percent of condominium or planned development units are affordable to moderate-income households, then the project is eligible to receive a 5 percent density bonus. The sliding scale requires additional density bonuses above the percentage thresholds (up to a maximum density bonus of 35 percent) as additional affordable units are provided.

Additionally, jurisdictions must grant concessions or incentives depending on the percentage of affordable units provided. Concessions and incentives include reductions in zoning standards, other development standards, design requirements, and mixed-use zoning among others. Any project that meets the minimum criteria for a density bonus is entitled to at least one concession and may be entitled to as many as four concessions.

Government Code Section 65915 et. seq. also specifies the reduced parking standards to be used for development for projects eligible for a density bonus. These numbers are inclusive of guest parking and handicapped parking. Spaces may be tandem and/or uncovered.

- Zero to one bedroom: one onsite parking space
- Two to three bedrooms: one and one-half onsite parking spaces
- Four or more bedrooms: two and one-half parking spaces

The Government Code directs jurisdictions to offer incentives for projects that meet the density bonus affordable unit requirements, regardless of whether or not the project is utilizing a density bonus. The thresholds for incentives are shown below.

- One incentive or concession for projects that include at least 10 percent of the total units for lower income households, at least 5 percent for very low income households, or at least 10 percent for persons and families of moderate income in a common interest development.
- Two incentives or concessions for projects that include at least 17 percent of the total units for lower income households, at least 10 percent for very low income households, or at least 20 percent for persons and families of moderate income in a common interest development.
- Three incentives or concessions for projects that include at least 24 percent of the total units for lower income households, at least 15 percent for very low income households, or at least 30 percent for persons and families of moderate income in a common interest development.
- Four incentives or concessions for projects meeting the criteria of subparagraph (G) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) (Government Code Section 65915 et. seq.). If the project is located within one-half mile of a major transit stop, the applicant shall also receive a height increase of up to three additional stories, or 33 feet.

Inclusionary Housing

The City does not have any requirements that obligate developers to provide or fund housing at specific affordability levels.

Condominium Conversions

In order to reduce the impacts of condominium conversions on residents of rental housing, some of which provides housing for low and moderate-income persons, RSMZC Section 9.05.020 requires the following:

1. Application for a Site Development Permit to be submitted to the Development Services Director;
2. Submission of an engineering report on the general condition of all structural, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical elements of the existing development;
3. Submission of a housing program which includes:
    a. The means by which the provision of housing affordable to lower and moderate-income households will be achieved;
    b. A housing report addressing the balance of housing in the community, including vacancy rates and other available housing of similar type and rent; the current rents and estimated monthly payments and fees of the units to be converted, and all improvements and/or renovations contemplated;
    c. A survey of existing tenants as to their length of occupancy, and the number of those projected to purchase one of the units; and

d. A relocation plan that identifies the steps that will be taken to ensure the successful relocation of each tenant in the event the conversion take places

4. A requirement that the property owner provide tenants a 90 day preemptive right to purchase units or a right of exclusive occupancy upon more favorable terms and conditions than those on which the units will be initially offered to the public.

When a condominium conversion is permitted, the increase in the supply of less expensive for-sale units helps to compensate for the loss of rental units. The ordinance to regulate condominium conversions is reasonable to preserve rental housing opportunities, and does not present an unreasonable constraint on the production of ownership housing.

Short-Term Rentals

Section 9.04.190 of the RSMZC addresses short-term rentals for ADU and JADU units. Section 9.04.190 prohibits an owner of an ADU or JADU from renting the unit for a period of less than 30-days. There were no short-term ADU rentals in Rancho Santa Margarita listed on *Airbnb.com* in July 2021; however, there were four rentals for either an entire house, condominium, or apartment. The number of short-term rentals in the City is small enough to not significantly decrease the amount of housing stock available for permanent occupancy.

BUILDING CODES AND ENFORCEMENT

New construction in Rancho Santa Margarita, including additions and remodels, must comply with the 2019 California Building Code (CBC). The City adopted the 2019 California Building Code with all required updates and re-adopts the codes triennially. The Building Code establishes construction standards necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare, and the local enforcement of this code does not unduly constrain development of housing. The 2019 California Building Code, Title 24, Part 2, Volumes 1 and 2, published by the International Code Council, was adopted by the City by reference as Title 10 of the City's Municipal Code and subject to the amendments contained in that Title.

No local amendment to the Building Code has either been initiated or approved that directly impacts housing standards or processes. Code enforcement is conducted by the City and is based upon issues identified by the community and reported to City staff. The City maintains general records of neighborhoods where code complaints are most prevalent and works proactively with these neighborhoods to address potential issues before they become significant concerns. The City enforces its code requirements equitably throughout the community, as necessary. The Code Enforcement Officer works with property owners and renters to assist in meeting State health and safety codes.

DEVELOPMENT FEES

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita charges fees to process plans submitted for residential projects commensurate with the cost of providing this service. The City posts all zoning, development standards, and fees on the City's website at http://www.cityofrsm.org/195/Development-Services. Fees and/or exactions may be charged to specific projects that require public facilities and roadways to be upgraded. However, the City has not adopted any such exactions and only collects statutory fees related to the Quimby Act for provision of parks and recreation. Other agencies, including water and school districts, collect fees. Additionally, road fees are collected by the Transportation Corridor Agency (TCA) and County of Orange. Fees are assessed through a pro rata share system, based on the magnitude of the project's impact or the extent of the benefit that will be derived. Failure to adequately plan for infrastructure to support residential development is a key reason why jurisdictions are so financially constrained today. In general, fees and exactions can be a constraint on housing development and compromise market-rate affordability because the additional cost borne by developers contributes to overall increased housing unit cost. However, the fees are necessary to maintain adequate public services, infrastructure, and facilities in the City.

For new residential projects, developers in Rancho Santa Margarita may be required to pay one or more of the following fees depending on the location, type, and size of the project:

Planning, Building, and Environmental Fees: The City of Rancho Santa Margarita charges developers fees for processing applications, standard plan check fees, building permits, tentative tract maps, conditional use permits, variances, environmental initial studies, and/or other permits to pay for the cost of processing applications and conducting inspections for specific projects. Additional fees may be required for project-specific environmental review.

City Impact Fees: The City may charge impact fees to finance new or expanded infrastructure and public facilities required to serve residents. The fee must have a reasonable relationship to the infrastructure costs and represent the marginal cost of improvements required to serve residents of the new residential projects. The City has not adopted any fees to offset impacts to public streets, drainage facilities, water quality, and parks. Fees and assessments may apply in the future, if adopted.

Regional Impact Fees: Regional impact fees include water and sewer fees collected by the water districts, and school impact fees collected by the school districts as allowed by State law to finance the construction and expansion of schools to accommodate student enrollment. The water and school districts have the authority to set the fee levels; the City does not have any ability to adjust these fees.

Table H-50 details the City's Planning Department processing fees for development project entitlements and Table H-51 describes the fee schedule for residential building permits. One or more of the entitlements would be required to process a residential project depending on the scale and complexity of the project and a building permit is required for each residential structure.

TABLE H-50: DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PROCESSING FEES (EFFECTIVE JULY 12, 2021)

Entitlements	
Planning and Application Fees[1]	
Conditional Use Permit – Minor	$4,575 deposit
Conditional Use Permit – Major	$8,040 deposit
Development Agreement	$12,812 deposit
General Plan Amendment	$9,788 deposit
Pre-Application Meeting – Design Review	$556 per request
Site Development Permit (Administrative Approval)	$3,182 deposit
Site Development Permit (Planning Commission Approval)	$4,575 deposit
Site Development Permit (Includes Alternate Development Standard)	$8,040 deposit
Specific Plan	$18,383 deposit
Tentative Parcel Map Filing	$5,410 deposit
Tentative Tract Map Filing	$6,763 deposit
Variance	$7,638 deposit
Zone Change	$8,673 deposit
Zoning Plan Check – Major (grading, landscape, and building permits)	$953 deposit
Environmental Review[1]	
Environmental Impact Report	$12,892 deposit
Initial Study	$8,435 deposit
Hourly Rate	
Hourly Rate	$158

Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita Master Fee Schedule, 2021

Note: This is only a partial list of typical Planning fees.

1. Deposit based fees include Time & Materials (T&M), actual costs, and Citywide Overhead rate of 13%.

The residential building permit fees described in Table H-51 are based on a hypothetical 2,500 square foot single-family detached dwelling unit with a 400 square foot garage. Total fees for a typical single-family detached dwelling unit, located within the boundaries of the Santa Margarita Water District and Capistrano Unified School District, would be approximately $13,316.89. Total fees for a typical 1,500 square foot multi-family dwelling would be approximately $17,891.89. As described in Figure H-1, the median home price in Rancho Santa Margarita in 2018 was $597,500. Therefore, development fees for a typical single-family house represent just 2.2 percent of median home values and development fees for a typical multi-family unit represent 3.0 percent of the median sales price.

TABLE H-51: RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT FEES

Permits/Development Impact Fees	
Building	
Building	
Plan Check	$1,937.24
Permit Issuance	$82.10
Permit/Inspection Fee	$2,905.86
Electrical	included in the permit fees
Mechanical	included in the permit fees
Plumbing	included in the permit fees
Energy	N/A
Strong Motion Instrumentation Program (SMIP)	$21.69
Engineering and Subdivision	
Grading	N/A
Residential Development Impact Fees	
Parks Facilities	$0
Water	Assessed by Water District
Sewer	Assessed by Water District
School Facilities	see below
Capistrano Unified School District	$4.08 per square foot
Saddleback Unified	$3.79 per square foot

Sources: City of Rancho Santa Margarita, 2021; BIA/OC Land Development Fee Survey for Orange County 2013-2014

4B. Non-Governmental Constraints

Non-governmental constraints refer to market factors such as the demand for housing, the price of land, construction costs, availability of financing, and other factors that increase the cost of housing development.

DEVELOPMENT COSTS

Land Prices

The cost to develop housing is influenced by the cost of the raw land, the cost of holding the land during the development process, and the cost of providing services to meet City standards for development. The cost of raw land is influenced by variables such as scarcity, location, availability of public utilities, zoning, and unique features such as environmental conditions and adjoining uses. In Orange County, undeveloped land is limited and combined with a rapidly growing population land prices have generally increased. A review of lots for sale and recently sold, as of mid-2021 using Zillow and LoopNet listings, found no vacant lots zoned for residential use in Rancho Santa Margarita.

A small number of underdeveloped parcels with a single-family unit that could be redeveloped with larger, single-family homes (with ADUs) have been sold for $475,000 to $830,000 or approximately $105.56 to $249.40 per square foot, largely depending on the location within the community.

It is difficult to ascertain the cost of raw land for multi-family development since there has been a limited number of recent multi-family sales in Rancho Santa Margarita. A review of multi-family developments for sale or recently sold through Zillow and Redfin found no multi-family developments in Rancho Santa Margarita. A small number of multi-family condominiums have been sold, including 12 Montana Del Lago Drive #168, a 1,350 square foot unit that sold for $515,000 in January 2020 ($381.48 per square foot); 28 Gavilan #180, a 882 square foot unit that sold for $466,264 in August 2021 ($528.64 per square foot); and 82 Flor De Sol #49, a 737 square foot unit which sold for $365,000 in September 2020 ($495.25 per square foot).

Cost of Construction

Construction cost is determined primarily by the cost of labor and materials. The relative importance of each is a function of the complexity of the construction job and the desired quality of the finished product. As a result, builders are under constant pressure to complete a project for as low a price as possible while still providing a quality product. This pressure has led (and is still leading) to an emphasis on labor-saving materials and construction techniques.

The International Code Council (ICC) provides estimates for the average cost of labor and materials for typical protected wood-frame housing. Estimates are based on "good-quality" construction, providing for materials and fixtures well above the minimum required by state and local building codes. In the 2018 edition of the Building Safety Journal, the ICC estimated that the average per square foot cost for good-quality housing in the Rancho Santa Margarita area was approximately $113 for multi-family housing and $139 – $206 per square foot for single-family homes. Although construction costs are a substantial portion of the overall development cost, they are consistent throughout the region and therefore are not considered a major constraint to housing production. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic social distancing guidelines, as well as labor shortages and material constraints, may increase construction costs for an unknown period.

Construction cost increases, like land cost increases, affect the ability of consumers to pay for housing. Construction cost increases occur due to the cost of materials, labor, and higher government-imposed standards (e.g., energy conservation requirements). The development community is currently producing market rate for-sale housing that is affordable to moderate and above moderate-income households.

Cost and Availability of Financing

Financing is critical to the housing market. Developers require construction financing and buyers require permanent financing (mortgages). The two principal ways in which financing can serve as a constraint to new residential development are the availability and cost of construction financing and the availability and cost of permanent financing.

- If financing is not easily available, then more equity may be required for developing new projects and fewer homebuyers can purchase homes, since higher down payments are required.
- Higher construction period interest rates for developers result in higher development costs. For homebuyers, higher interest rates translate into higher mortgage payments (for the same loan amount), which therefore reduces the purchasing power of homebuyers.

On May 6, 2021, the reported average rate for a 30-year mortgage was 2.96% with 0.6 fees/points (Freddie Mac, 2021). From 2005 through 2021, average monthly mortgage rates have ranged from a high of 6.76% in July 2006 to today's record lows. For homebuyers, it is necessary to pay a higher down payment than in the recent past, and demonstrate credit worthiness and adequate incomes, so that loan applications meet standard underwriting criteria. While adherence to strict underwriting criteria was not required during the early and mid-2000s, the return to stricter standards is consistent with loan standards prior to 2001.

Approved and Built Densities

While the City's zoning regulations identify minimum and maximum densities that can be developed in Rancho Santa Margarita, individual developers may opt to build at the lower, mid-range, or higher end of allowed densities. Typically, projects in Rancho Santa Margarita have been built within 10% of the maximum allowable density. The most recent residential developments in the City were a 66 unit condominium project built in 2011 in the HDR category at a density of 25 units per acre (known as Tesoro Trails), and a 36-unit condominium project built in 2016 in the HDR category built at a density of 19.5 units per acre (known as Dahlia Court). Due to high demand for residential uses and high development costs, the City expects any new projects to be built at or near the maximum allowable density.

Requests to Build at Lower Densities

The City has not received any requests from applicants to build at densities lower than those allowed by the General Plan and/or Zoning Code. The two most recent development projects in the City (Tesoro Trails and Dahlia Court, described above) developed within their allowable densities.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

In addition to the constraints to market rate housing development discussed above, affordable housing projects face other constraints. While there may be sites available for potential affordable housing projects, as well as projects that focus on special needs populations, financial assistance for the development of affordable housing is limited and highly competitive.

Multiple funding sources are typically needed to construct an affordable housing project since substantial subsidies are required to make the units affordable to extremely low, very low, and low-income households. It is not unusual to see five or more funding sources assembled to make a project financially feasible. Each of these sources may have different requirements and application deadlines, and some sources may require that the project has already successfully secured financing commitments. Since financing is so critical and is also generally competitive, organizations and agencies that provide funding can often effectively dictate the type and size of projects. Thus, in some years senior housing may be favored by financing programs, while in other years family housing may be preferred. Target income levels can also vary from year to year.

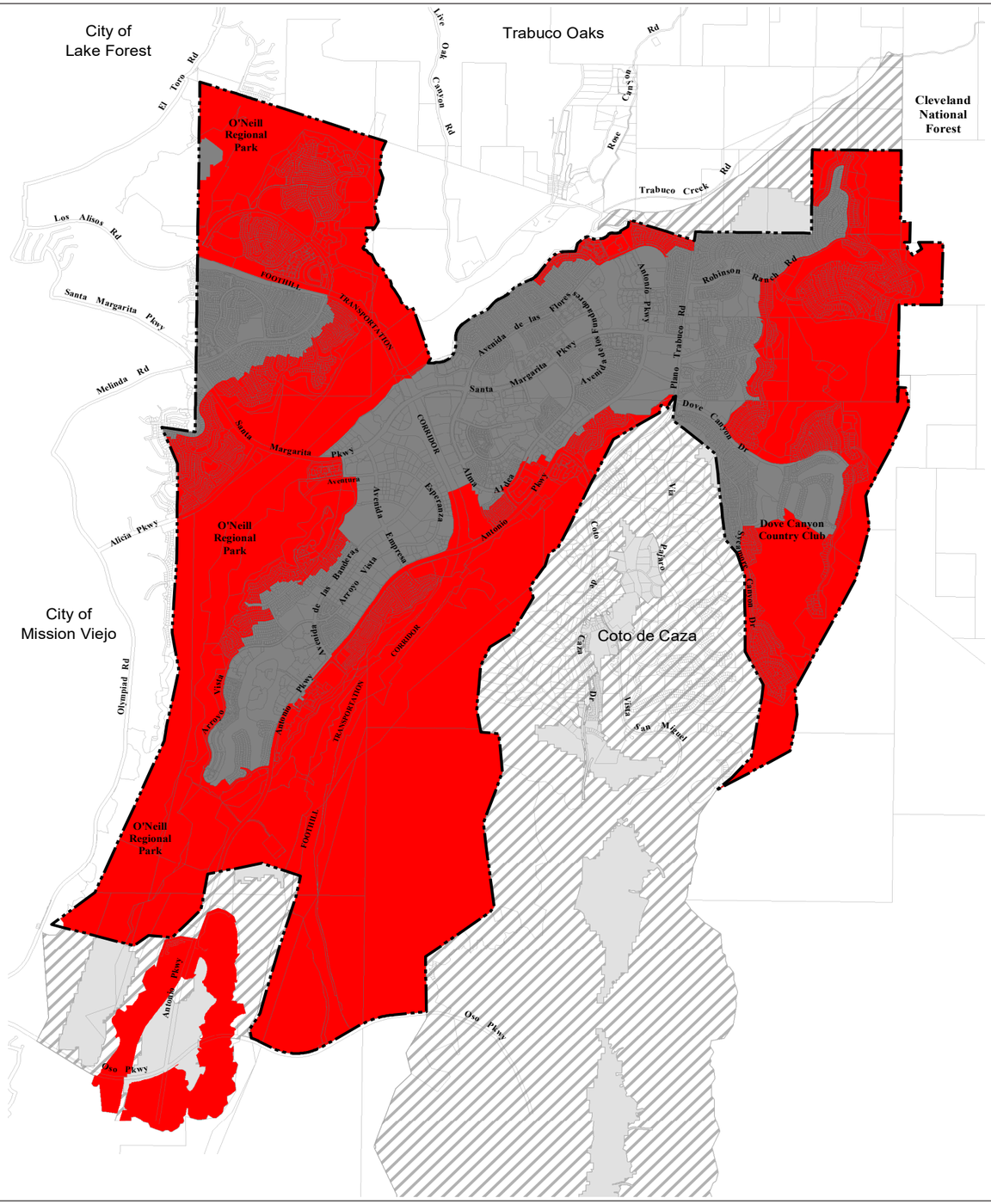
This situation has worsened in recent years. Federal and state funding has decreased and limited amounts of housing funds are available. Tax credits, often a fundamental source of financing for affordable housing, are no longer selling on a one for one basis. In other words, once a project has received authorization to sell a specified amount of tax credits to equity investors, the investors are no longer purchasing the credits at face value but are purchasing them at a discount.

4C. Environmental Constraints

According to the City's 2019 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), environmental hazards affecting residential development in the City include wildfire, which represents the greatest threat to the built environment, flooding, and geologic and seismic conditions. The LHMP identifies other hazards including windstorm, changing weather patterns, and disease/pest management, however, these hazards are not expected to affect residential development. The following hazards may impact development of residential units in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Wildfire

CalFIRE prepares wildfire hazard severity maps including mapping areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. These zones, referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs), identify areas where wildfire hazards could be more severe. Rancho Santa Margarita's terrain and topography makes wildfire a significant risk to the community. Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are located in the west, south, and east areas of the City, as well as surrounding areas including the Cleveland National Forest and parts of the City of Lake Forest and the City of Mission Viejo. The LHMP along with the General Plan Safety Element, identifies and addresses these areas of concern through goals, policies, and mitigation actions that reduce wildfire risk to residential development throughout the City. As described above, the City has adopted the 2019 Fire Code into Title 10 of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code (RSMMC); therefore, wildfire risk to residential development is mitigated through building and development standards. Wildfire risk is further mitigated through regional cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions and the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA). While these policies may constrain residential development to some extent, they are necessary to protect public safety by avoiding development in hazardous areas. The City's Fire Zones are illustrated on Figure H-2.



LEGEND

Local Responsibility Area

- VHFHSZ
- Non-VHFHSZ

State and Federal Responsibility Area

- VHFHSZ
- Non-VHFHSZ
- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence

VHFHSZ - Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

0 2,400 4,800 Feet

Sources: CALFire Fire Resource and Assessment Program (FRAP), October 2011 and Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission, 2013.

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02/20 JN 152779

FIGURE H-2: FIRE HAZARD ZONES

Figure from General Plan Safety Element (2020)

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Seismic and Geologic Hazards

Similar to other southern California cities, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita is located in an area of high seismic activity. Although no active or potentially active faults traverse the City, Rancho Santa Margarita is located within close proximity of three active faults: the Elsinore-Glen Ivy fault (10.1 miles away), the Chino fault (11.1 miles away), and the Newport-Inglewood fault (14.4 miles away). The two other local faults outside the City, the Aliso and Cristianitos, are thought to be inactive and are not zoned under the State's Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act. Surface rupture in Rancho Santa Margarita is unlikely since no faults have been identified within the City boundaries. However, the City is likely to experience ground shaking, the degree to which would be based on the fault from which the earthquake occurs, distance from the City, and the magnitude. Impacts of an earthquake include potential liquefaction, which occurs when the strength and stiffness of a soil is reduced by intense ground shaking. Areas in the City susceptible to liquefaction are located primarily along Trabuco Canyon and Tijeras Canyon Creek. Additionally, most of the low-lying areas in Rancho Santa Margarita have a high liquefaction potential because of shallow ground water, within 50 feet of the ground surface. These liquefaction hazard zones are mapped in the LHMP.

Structures particularly susceptible to earthquake damage include tilt-up structures, unreinforced masonry buildings, older buildings, and mobile homes. After the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, building codes and design criteria were updated to address seismic occurrences. These building codes may increase the cost of development, but are necessary to protect public safety.

Flooding

The terrain of Rancho Santa Margarita makes portions of the City naturally susceptible to flooding. Both 100 and 500-year flood zones are located within the City. Potential flooding could occur along the Arroyo Trabuco Creek (also known as Trabuco Creek) and Tijeras Canyon Creek, and is limited to open space and canyon areas. According to the General Plan Safety Element, no homes or structures are located within the 100-year or 500-year flood zones within the City. This danger is further mitigated by the Rancho Santa Margarita Stormwater Program and Local Implementation Plan which incorporates mitigation actions such as design and construction measures that address flooding. Although federal, state, and local policies may constrain residential development to some extent in areas prone to flooding, they are necessary to protect public safety by avoiding development in hazardous areas.



4D. Infrastructure Constraints

Another factor adding to the cost of new construction is the provision of adequate infrastructure: major and local streets; curbs, gutters, and sidewalks; water and sewer lines; storm drains; and street lighting. All these improvements are required to be built or installed in conjunction with new development. The cost of these facilities is borne by developers, added to the cost of new housing units, and eventually passed on to the homebuyer or property owner. As noted in the Resources chapter of this Housing Element, public infrastructure and services are available, or are programmed to be made available, for all the sites included in the sites inventory, including the capacity to accommodate Rancho Santa Margarita's total share of the regional housing need (RHNA).

Senate Bill 1087 (enacted 2006) requires that water providers develop written policies that grant priority to proposed development that includes housing affordable to lower income households. The legislation also prohibits water providers from denying or conditioning the approval of development that includes housing affordable to lower income households, unless specific written findings are made. Senate Bill 1087 also mandates priority sewage collection and treatment service to housing developments providing units affordable to lower income households. The City will provide a copy of the Housing Element to its water and sewer providers in compliance with Government Code Section 65589.7 and SB 1087. As well, the Planning Division will continue to coordinate with the water and sewer providers to ensure priority service provision to affordable housing developments.

Water Capacity

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is serviced by two water districts: Trabuco Canyon Water District (TCWD), which serves the eastern portion of the City including the Robinson Ranch, Dove Canyon, Walden, and Rancho Cielo areas, and Santa Margarita Water District (SMWD), which serves the rest of the City. Water delivered to customers in the City is a combination of groundwater from the San Juan Valley Groundwater Basin, recycled water, and imported purchased water from the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC), imported from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Approximately 70 percent of TCWD's supply needs and approximately 72 percent of SMWD's supply needs are met by water imported by MWD and purchased from MWDOC.

Both the 2020 SMWD Urban Water Management Plan and 2020 TCWD Urban Water Management Plan state that they will be able to serve 100 percent of projected demands for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita in normal, single-dry and multiple-dry years. The SMWD projects that its service population will increase during the 2021-2029 planning period, from 161,264 in 2020 to 185,430 in 2030. The TCWD also projects that its service population will increase during the 2021-2029 planning period, from 12,921 in 2020 to 14,612 in 2030. As described in both 2020 Urban Water Management Plans, service population projections are primarily based on the 2018 Orange County Projections dataset, which was developed prior to the 6th Cycle RHNA assignments for southern California jurisdictions, and as such, these projections may not specifically account for the State-mandated RHNA assigned to the Districts' service areas. However, the 2018 Orange County Projections dataset does anticipate growth in the service area, including in Rancho Santa Margarita, and collectively, water supplies are projected to be sufficient to meet demands in all year types through 2045.[3], [4]

Upon the next update to the 2020 SMWD Urban Water Management Plan and 2020 TCWD Urban Water Management Plan, the City will provide input regarding planned land uses to ensure that future development in Rancho Santa Margarita is accurately reflected in each Districts' service population projections and demand planning.

Sewer Capacity

Wastewater collection and treatment systems for the City are provided by the TCWD and SMWD. The wastewater is collected by the districts and directed to local and regional treatment plants in conjunction with the South Orange County Wastewater Authority. SMWD services the majority of residents in Rancho Santa Margarita. SMWD owns, operates, and maintains all the public sewer facilities within its service area. Wastewater generated in SMWD is treated at the following facilities: Oso Creek Water Reclamation Plant (OCWRP), with a design capacity of three (3) million gallons per day (mgd) and flow of approximately 1.7 mgd; 3A Water Reclamation Plant (WRP), with a secondary treatment capacity of 6 mgd and tertiary treatment of 2.4 mgd with current flows for secondary and tertiary treatment of 1.9 mgd respectively; J.B. Latham, with a design capacity of 13 mgd and average flow of 9.18 mgd; Los Alisos Water Recycling Plant, with a design capacity of 0.7 mgd; and Chiquita Water Reclamation Plant, which has a current secondary design capacity of 9 mgd and tertiary treatment capacity of 6 mgd.[5] SMWD provides additional treatment to a portion of its secondary treated wastewater, rather than discharging it to the ocean, and is used for landscape irrigation services.

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[3] "2020 Urban Water Management Plan: Santa Margarita Water District," *California Water Service* (June 2021).

[4] "2020 Urban Water Management Plan: Trabuco Canyon Water District," *California Water Service* (June 2021).

[5] "2019 General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report," *Rancho Santa Margarita* (April 2019).



TCWD has sewer collection facilities and acquired treatment capacity from SMWD for the western portion of its service area. The eastern portion of TCWD's service area is served through a district-owned sewer system, wastewater treatment facilities, and recycled water facilities. TCWD treats the collected wastewater at the Robinson Ranch Wastewater Treatment Plant (RRWWTP), a 0.85-million mgd water reclamation treatment facility, and has the capability to divert or convey wastewater to SMWD for treatment at its Chiquita Water Reclamation Plant.

The local system of collector and lateral sewer lines is owned and operated by two independent water districts, with minimal secondary oversight by the City. The overall wastewater collection system within the City is regulated under the jurisdiction of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, the State Water Resources Control Board, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The City has sufficient capacity for wastewater treatment resulting in no constraints on development. No deficiencies presently exist in either district's facilities that serve Rancho Santa Margarita.

Electric, Gas, and Telecommunications

Southern California Edison (SCE) provides electrical service and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) provides natural gas services to residences and businesses throughout the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. SCE provides electricity service to 15 million people over an approximately 50,000 square mile area throughout southern California.[6] SoCalGas provides natural gas service to approximately 21.6 million customers, spanning roughly 20,000 miles.[7] Infrastructure to deliver electricity and natural gas throughout Rancho Santa Margarita is currently in place. SCE and SoCalGas generally can provide these services to newer development on request.

Telecommunications services in Rancho Santa Margarita are provided by a variety of service providers including AT&T, Cox, and Viasat.[8] Infrastructure to deliver telecommunications throughout Rancho Santa Margarita is currently in place and can generally be provided to newer development upon request.

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[6] "About Us," *Southern California Edison*, https://www.sce.com/about-us (December 2021).

[7] "Company Profile," *Southern California Gas Company*, https://www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-profile (December 2021).

[8] "Internet Providers in Rancho Santa Margarita," *HighSpeedInternet.com*, https://www.highspeedinternet.com/ca/rancho-santa-margarita (December 2021).

5. Housing Resources

This section of the Housing Element describes resources available for housing development. Resources include land designated for housing development and financial resources to assist with the development of housing.

5A. Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

California General Plan law requires each city and county to have land zoned to accommodate its fair share of the regional housing need. HCD allocates a numeric regional housing goal to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG is then mandated to distribute the housing goal among the cities and counties in the region. This share for the SCAG region is known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, or RHNA. The SCAG region encompasses six counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura) and 191 cities in an area covering more than 38,000 square miles. The major goal of the RHNA is to assure a distribution of housing among cities and counties within the SCAG region so that every community provides for a mix of housing for all economic segments. The housing allocation is not a building requirement; rather, it creates planning goals for each community to accommodate through appropriate planning policies and land use regulations. Allocations are intended to assure that adequate sites and zoning are made available to address anticipated housing demand during the planning period.

This RHNA covers an 8-year planning period (2021 through 2029) and is divided into four income categories: very low, low, moderate, and above moderate. Pursuant to State law (AB 2634), local jurisdictions are also required to project the housing needs of extremely low-income households (0-30% Area Median Income (AMI)). In estimating the number of extremely low-income households, a jurisdiction can use 50% of the very low-income allocation; therefore, the City's very low income RHNA of 209 units can be split into 105 extremely low income and 104 very low-income units.

TABLE H-52: RHNA 2021-2029

Income Group	Total Housing Units Allocated	Percentage of Units
Extremely/Very Low	209	30.7%
Low	120	17.6%
Moderate	125	18.4%
Above Moderate	226	33.2%
Total	**680**	**100%**

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, 2021



5B. Development Credits

In planning to accommodate its RHNA, the City can identify the potential development of future accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a credit towards meeting its targets.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Since 2017, State laws have been passed that substantially relax development standards and procedures for the construction of ADUs. The City approved one ADU in 2018, one ADU in 2019, and one ADU in 2020, however, development of ADUs is expected to modestly increase as a result of new State legislation and updated City standards. In 2021, the City has seen new interest in development of ADUs and, as of September 2021, has already approved one ADU for the 2021 calendar year. The City includes information regarding development of ADUs on the City's website, has briefed the Planning Commission and City Council regarding the potential for ADU development, and has answered questions from the public in-person at City Hall and over the telephone.

The development of ADUs throughout the planning period is expected to help meet a modest portion of the City's RHNA obligation. To arrive at an estimate of potential ADU development, the City has assumed the development of five ADUs per year for the eight-year planning period. This yields an estimate of 40 ADUs, which represent approximately 5.8% of the City's 2021-2029 RHNA. The City will monitor the number of permitted ADUs and affordability every year and continue to evaluate whether these ADU trends and assumptions are consistent. The monitoring of ADUs in the City has been added to the Housing Plan Program 3. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) prepared a Regional Accessory Dwelling Unit Affordability Analysis in 2020, which assigned sample affordability levels for subregional areas in the SCAG region, including Orange County. The City has used SCAG's affordability distribution (shown in Table H-53) to assign projected affordability levels to future ADUs, with one exception. Based on local information, the City has assigned a slightly higher proportion of all future ADUs to the above moderate income category and assigned a slightly lower percentage to the moderate income category.

TABLE H-53: ADU PROJECTIONS AND AFFORDABILITY

Income Group	Units	SCAG ADU Affordability Guidance	City Specific Affordability Distribution
Extremely Low	6	15%	15%
Very Low	4	10%	10%
Low	17	43%	43%
Moderate	11	30%	27%
Above Moderate	2	2%	5%
Total	**40**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Accessory Dwelling Unit Affordability Analysis – Orange County, 2020.

REMAINING RHNA

Based on the anticipated ADUs shown in Table H-53, the City has a remaining RHNA of 640 units. The remaining RHNA is presented by income category in Table H-54 below. The City is required to provide adequate sites for the remaining RHNA of 302 lower income units (199 extremely/very low income units and 103 low income units), 114 moderate income units, and 224 above moderate income units.

TABLE H-54: CREDITS AND REMAINING RHNA

Income Group	ADUs	RHNA	Remaining RHNA
Extremely/Very Low	10	209	199
Low	17	120	103
Moderate	11	125	114
Above Moderate	2	226	224
Total	**40**	**680**	**640**

5C. Residential Sites Inventory

The RHNA period extends from June 30, 2021, to October 15, 2029. A jurisdiction may meet the RHNA requirement using potential development on suitable vacant and/or nonvacant sites within the community. A jurisdiction must document how zoning and development standards on the sites facilitate housing to accommodate the remaining RHNA identified in Table H-54. The City has no vacant land or underutilized land within existing residential zones to accommodate its RHNA. Sites are considered suitable for residential development if zoned appropriately and available for residential use during the planning period. To accommodate the RHNA for each income category, the City is introducing two new mechanisms to allow for residential development, to be created within three years of Housing Element adoption (and no later than October 2024) on sites considered viable for housing development. The first is a "**Workforce Housing Overlay**", which will be applied to three sites within the Business Park district, totaling 38.43 acres. The second is a "**Mixed-Use Housing**" land use and zoning designation, which will be applied to 12 sites (13 parcels) in the City's central core, totaling 26.54 acres. These sites are illustrated on Figure H-3, summarized in Table H-59: RHNA Sites Summary, and detailed in Appendix A, Sites Inventory. None of the sites identified to accommodate the City's 6th Cycle RHNA (at any income level) were identified in any prior planning period.

The City must complete its rezoning effort to accommodate its RHNA, including its lower income RHNA requirements. The City has included Program 1 (Shortfall Program) to specifically commit to acreage, allowable densities, and anticipated units to accommodate its RHNA for all income levels. In addition, to accommodate the housing needs of lower-income households, the program specifically commits to rezoning pursuant to Government Code section 65583.2, subdivisions (h) and (i).

HOUSING AFFORDABLE TO LOWER-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

The California Government Code states that if a local government has adopted



density standards consistent with the population-based criteria set by State law (at least 30 units per acre for Rancho Santa Margarita), HCD is obligated to accept sites with those density standards (30 units per acre or higher) as appropriate for accommodating the jurisdictions' share of regional housing need for lower-income households. Per Government Code Section 65583.2(c)(3)(B), the proposed Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing designations, which will allow for densities up to 35 dwelling units per acre, are consistent with the default density standard (30 units per acre) for Rancho Santa Margarita and therefore are considered appropriate to accommodate housing for lower-income households. It should be noted that the City has also assumed that a percentage of the units at these sites will be affordable to moderate and above-moderate income households, proportionate to the City's RHNA household income level distribution.

SUITABILITY OF NONVACANT SITES

Because nonvacant sites comprise more than half of Rancho Santa Margarita's sites inventory, Government Code Section 65583.2(g)(2) requires that the City analyze the extent to which existing uses may constitute an impediment to additional residential development, past experience in converting existing uses to higher density residential development, market trends and conditions, and regulatory or other incentives to encourage redevelopment. Furthermore, the City will make findings based on substantial evidence that the existing use is not an impediment and will likely allow for residential development during the planning period.

City of Rancho Santa Margarita is essentially entirely built out; the only remaining vacant land is located in the very high fire hazard severity zone and home to environmental and governmental constraints which would significantly impede development of residential uses during the planning period. In order to accommodate its fair share of regional housing growth, the City must identify nonvacant sites to accommodate its remaining RHNA for all income levels (not only its lower income requirements).

Property Owner Outreach

The City has conducted outreach to all property owners of sites identified in Appendix A as part of the Housing Element Update process. This process has included sending multiple letters and emails and making phone calls to gauge the property owners' interest in accommodating residential uses at these sites. No property owner has indicated that the anticipated residential capacity identified for their site is unrealistic to achieve during the planning period. Moreover, as described in detail below under the City's Workforce Housing Overlay strategy, all three sites identified for designation with the Workforce Housing Overlay are owned by Applied Medical Resources Corporation (Applied Medical), which has expressed an interest in allowing for the development of residential uses at several of their properties within the City. A letter indicating their support of this proposal is included in Appendix A, Site Inventory.

It is also noted that Staff has received calls from multiple developers since the publication of the Draft Housing Element. These developers sought to learn more about the housing opportunities discussed in the RHNA site strategy. Two of the calls were specifically related to the opportunity for workforce housing in the Business Park on sites 1-3 identified in the Sites Inventory (Figure H-3)

Assessment of Sites (Appendix A)

As part of the process to identify adequate sites to meet the City's 6th Cycle RHNA, the City evaluated dozens of potential sites using nine factors, as described below. These factors were identified based on past development trends in the region and market demand for development in the City. All sites identified in the inventory meet at least six of the nine factors.

1. Site size and ownership patterns. The site is of sufficient size pursuant to HCD guidelines (i.e., between 0.5 acres and 10 acres), or located within a center which meets the size guidelines; single ownership of a center or adjacent property was desired but not required.
2. Property owner interest. The property owner provided a letter of support; note that all property owners were contacted regarding inclusion on the sites inventory; only those for which a letter of support was provided are noted as meeting this factor.
3. Existing/past uses on the site. Existing/past uses are compatible with residential development.
4. Surrounding development and densities. Surrounding development contains uses which are compatible with residential development; adjacent or nearby residential uses are at varying densities, and may include multifamily.
5. Proximity/location outside VHFHSZ. Location relative to the VHFHSZ; 67% of the City is located in the VHFHSZ.
6. Improvement to land value ratio. Improvement to land value ratio of less than 50%; this value indicates that the improvement value is less than the land value and therefore the site may be viable for additional development.



7. Site utilization/lot coverage/floor area ratio. Low lot coverage (less than 30%) and/or low FAR; this value is based on characteristics of similar sites in other areas of the region that have redeveloped with residential uses. Selected sites have between 0.92 and .56 in *additional* capacity based on allowable FAR.
8. Existing vacancies. Office vacancies have increased due to the pandemic; office properties in the Business Park were evaluated for high vacancy rates.
9. Access to infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation facilities. Sufficient infrastructure capacity and walking-distance proximity to shopping, dining, jobs, and transit.

Based on the results of this assessment, the City identified the final sites proposed to accommodate its RHNA at all income levels. As previously described, it is the City's vision that residential uses will be accommodated at locations with existing nonresidential development in a horizontal mixed-use format, where existing nonresidential uses can remain and new residential uses can be developed alongside nonresidential development. In order to accommodate new residential development in this pattern, the City specifically considered sites with very low lot coverage (below 30%) and where the FAR allowed for at least twice the amount of existing development.

Appendix A includes a detailed inventory of each site and the potential for redevelopment based on these factors. Specifically, the profile for each site includes the following information (see Appendix A):

- Site Inventory Map Number Reference
- Acreage
- Accessor Parcel Number
- Ownership
- Existing Use (including size)
- Existing Lot Coverage
- Existing Floor Area Ratio
- Existing General Plan
- Existing Zoning
- Proposed General Plan
- Proposed Zoning
- Potential Capacity by Household Income Level
- Factors Supporting Development based on the nine factors described above
- Site Boundary Photo (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)
- Photograph of the Site

Development Trend: Workforce Housing (Workforce Housing Overlay Sites)

As described by the Brookings Institute in their article titled "Workforce housing and middle-income housing subsidies: a Primer", affording a safe and secure home is not just a challenge for low-income families. As stated in the article, "as housing affordability increasingly creates stress on middle-income families, local governments, philanthropies, and even employers are debating new strategies to address the problem. In the past year, Facebook, Google, Microsoft, and the Chan-Zuckerburg Initiative have pledged contributions ranging from $500 million to $1 billion to help build more middle-income housing in their respective backyards (literally for Google, which is proposing to convert some of its Mountain View campus to housing)".

The term "workforce housing" is most often used to indicate a program designed for households that earn too much to qualify for traditional affordable housing subsidies. This generally means targeting households earning between 60% and 120% of AMI, but can include support for lower-income households as well. Workforce housing seeks to provide an alternative housing option that is affordable to working professionals, and has the opportunity to bring housing and jobs closer together by providing more attainable housing options near a City's jobs base.

1) As described in the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Assessment section of this Background Report, lack of access to jobs and lack of access to affordable housing options are both contributing factors to fair housing issues in the City. By promoting the opportunity for infill workforce housing within the City's business park through development and implementation of a new Workforce Housing Overlay, the City is seeking to address both contributing factors by:supporting the City's existing businesses by allowing them to provide attainable housing options near jobs thereby attracting and retaining employees and potentially expanding their operations and
2) allow for the development of new affordable housing options near existing jobs so the City's workforce can live closer to their place of employment.

The State of California has recently recognized the important of workforce housing in helping to solve the State's housing shortage. On September 28, 2021, Governor Newsom signed a package of bills to boost housing production. Included as part of this package was a focus on promoting and recognizing the importance of workforce housing. The City seeks to support this Statewide effort and address local contributing factors through the development and implementation of its new Workforce Housing Overlay.

Development Trend: Opportunity for Infill Development (Mixed-Use Housing Sites)

The retail areas in Town Center along the El Paseo Corridor, which are dominated by big-box retailers and abundant surface parking, have been impacted by changing consumer preferences in shopping with the explosion of e-commerce facilities. According to a report from CBRE Group, e-commerce will account for 26% of all retail sales in the US by 2025. At this location, the City anticipates that existing retail uses can and will stay, and new residential development can be accommodated at the location without demolishing existing uses.

As part of the City's recent General Plan Update (adopted in 2020), the community expressed support for new mixed-use development in the City although, at the time, the location of where this new mixed-use development would occur was still to be determined. Through this Housing Element Update process, the City was able to identify specific locations within the Town Center as the most appropriate to accommodate new residential development in a mixed-use horizontal format where existing nonresidential development could remain and new residential development could be developed.

Mixed-use development can provide the following benefits:

- Promotes a village-style mix of retail, restaurant, office, civic uses and housing
- Promotes walking/biking and decreased automobile trips
- Encourages high-quality design
- Promotes a sense of place
- Promotes a sense of community – increased activity and opportunities for interaction
- Promotes efficient use of land and infrastructure
- Guides development toward established areas

Examples of mixed-use development in the region that are similar to the City's plan to accommodate residential uses in a mixed-use format within the Town Center include:

- San Sebastian Housing, City of Laguna Hills. This project includes three stories of senior apartments over subterranean parking and storage next to a successful shopping center with a grocery store, bank, pharmacy, office uses, and other residential development. The 134-unit project was developed on a surface parking lot; after its development, sufficient parking was maintained for the commercial center and parking for the residential project is provided in a subterranean parking structure. The Town Center sites (sites 5-7 and 10-15) exhibit similar characteristics; they also include surface parking areas that can be developed with residential uses while maintaining adequate commercial parking and can employ new parking strategies to support residential development. Similarly, the Town Center sites are in/adjacent to successful commercial uses, and as exhibited by San Sebastian, commercial uses can continue to thrive in proximity to new residential development.

- Vantis, City of Aliso Viejo. This project includes live/work units with small retail/office uses on the first floor and two stories of residential above. The 435-unit Vantis project is located in a mixed-use area, adjacent to the successful Aliso Viejo Town Center commercial center, other multifamily residential uses, multi-story office uses, and hotel developments. Adjacent nonresidential uses are served by both surface parking and parking structures (above-ground) and residential uses have parking provided on-site, either vertically integrated into the unit (podium parking) or as part of a parking structure that is wrapped by residential units. Store-front parking is provided for live/work units, thereby providing easy access to the small retail/office uses on the ground floor. Similarly, the Town Center sites (sites 5-7 and 10-15) are in/adjacent to a mix of uses similar to those near Vantis, including successful commercial centers, multifamily residential uses, and multi-story office uses. The Vantis project illustrates how parking can be provided in different ways to accommodate commercial and residential development (i.e., surface parking, structures, or integrated parking) in ways similar to those that can be used at the Town Center.
- Westminster Mall, City of Westminster. This proposed project includes developing residential uses on the surface parking areas of Westminster Mall and creating a horizontal-mixed use development in a previously exclusive commercial center. The development is expected to include approximately 2,550 multifamily units primarily on portions of the approximately 100-acre property currently used for surface parking. In the summer of 2022, Shopoff Realty purchased 14 acres with plans to develop it a mix of for-sale and rental residential units. In addition to residential development, Shopoff is exploring the viability of developing complementary uses at the site, including office, retail, and hospitality uses. Similar to the Town Center sites, Westminster Mall is an example of how a commercial center with surface parking areas can accommodate infill residential development adjacent to commercial uses.
- La Placita Cinco, City of Santa Ana. This mixed-use project includes 51 affordable apartments and retail spaces at a site previously developed with a strip commercial center and gas station. The project is served by a parking garage and also has a number of successful retail businesses, including a restaurant, bakery, market, butcher, salon and laundromat. Existing commercial development at this location did not impede the redevelopment of the site into a vibrant mixed-use development. While sites in the Town Center (sites 5-7 and 10-15) were selected due, in part, to low lot coverages which allow residential to develop at these locations without the need to displace commercial uses, La Placita Cinco illustrates that the presence of existing commercial development does not preclude development.

Suitability of Nonvacant Sites Findings

The City has specifically analyzed whether existing uses constitute an impediment for residential uses on the sites in the Inventory. Additional information provided in Appendix A demonstrates that existing uses on the sites identified to accommodate a portion of the City's RHNA do not constitute an impediment for residential uses on the site, specifically because existing uses need not be discontinued or replaced for residential development to occur. For the three Workforce Housing Overlay sites, Applied Medical (the property owner for all three sites), has expressed interested in developing workforce housing in a "campus" format where residential uses would coexist with the existing nonresidential uses. For the Mixed-Use Housing sites, existing low lot coverage and floor area ratios create conditions where new residential development can happen as part of a mixed-use retail center where residential and commercial uses can work together in a horizonal mixed-use format, a development trend seen in other similar and neighboring cities. The City has considered each site individually and has concluded that based on the substantial evidence provided, current uses are not an impediment to the sites redevelopment for residential uses.

As new residential development occurs at the City's commercial centers (via the new Mixed-Use Housing designation) and in the City's Business Park (via the Workforce Housing Overlay), the City will continue to ensure that sufficient parking is available to support the existing uses while accommodating new residential development. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including thoughtful site design and development standards. Specifically, existing parking spaces could be integrated into the footprint of new buildings (ie: podium or tuck under parking), essentially preserving the existing surface parking spaces. The City would also consider a centralized parking structure shared among various uses, if one was to be proposed by future project developers. To further support development in the Business Park, the City will evaluate a campus parking standard as part of its ongoing work to create development standards for the Workforce Housing Overlay and consulted with RRM's Architects to ensure that these parking types are reasonable (the City is currently under contract with RRM Design to prepare these standards). This standard would more realistically capture the complement of uses and parking demand efficiencies in the Business Park. Moreover, as the development standards to facilitate the City's new Mixed-Use Housing designation and Workforce Housing Overlay are developed, the City and its consultant team will include standards to support new by-right residential development. For example, the City will propose ministerial approval of lot splits that comply with State law to allow for residential development at Workforce Housing Overlay sites.

REALISTIC CAPACITY

In order to determine a realistic development capacity estimate for the new Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing areas, the City assumed that these sites will only develop at **35% of their development potential**. This conservative estimate considers the following capacity factors, as identified in housing element statute (Gov. Code section 65583.2(c)(2)): land use controls and site improvements, realistic capacity of the site, and typical densities. Of the five factors only land use controls and site improvements, realistic capacity of the site, and typical densities are relevant when considering the capacity of sites in Rancho Santa Margarita; infrastructure constraints and environmental constraints are not applicable. **It should be clearly noted that for all sites, the City anticipates that existing uses will remain and that new residential development will occur in a horizontal mixed-use format whereby existing uses would not need to be discontinued in order for residential development to occur.**

Table H-55 summarizes how the various factors identified in housing element statute (Gov. Code section 65583.2(c)(2)) result in an adjusted site capacity of 35 percent the maximum densities in the new Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing designations.

TABLE H-55: CAPACITY ADJUSTMENT FACTORS

Capacity Factor	Adjustment	Reasoning
Land use controls and site improvements	90%	For net acreage due to on-site improvements (sidewalks, easements)
Realistic capacity of the site	60%	As previously described, existing uses are expected to remain on the site. All sites have an existing lot coverage of less than 30%, leaving at least 70% of the lot available for development. To be conservative, the City has adjusted the realistic capacity of the site to 60% of the available site.
Typical densities	85%	Limited new development has occurred in Rancho Santa Margarita recently to establish typical densities; however, based on a review of projects in neighboring and nearby jurisdictions, the City finds that mixed-use projects are developing at densities within 85% of their maximum allowable density.
Infrastructure availability	No adjustment	Not applicable, no constraint
Environmental constraints	No adjustment	Not applicable, no constraint

SMALL SITES

The City has identified 12 sites (13 parcels) currently designated as Commercial General or Business Park viable for redevelopment with residential uses, either as a stand-alone use or as part of a mixed-use project. One parcel (22012 El Paseo) located at the corner of El Paseo and Santa Margarita Parkway is 0.46 acres (identified as "Site 6"); this parcel serves as the corner piece to the existing commercial area and is a part of the redevelopment potential of the site if combined. However, the State finds that sites smaller than 0.50 acres are generally unsuitable to accommodate the City's RHNA. While the City continues to propose that 22012 El Paseo be redesignated as Mixed-Use Housing to create consistent land use direction with adjacent parcels that are part of the same commercial center, the City has not included any development capacity at this "small site" as part of its strategy to accommodate its 6th Cycle RHNA, consistent with State guidance. Therefore, the realistic capacity of 22012 El Paseo is identified as zero units as shown in Table H-59.

LARGE SITES

Per State guidance, sites larger than 10 acres are generally not suitable to accommodate a portion of a City's RHNA unless evidence is provided to support the capacity assumptions identified for such sites. Two of the sites identified for the future Workforce Housing Overlay ("Site 2" and "Site 3") are larger than 10 acres (24.53 acres and 10.98 acres, respectively) as shown in Table H-59. Most importantly, the City has a letter of support from the property owner of each site expressing their interest in developing workforce housing as part of a "campus" format. This means that existing uses would remain and new residential development will occur on the site next to existing nonresidential development on the generously sized parking lots

The existing lot coverage for "Site 2" (29977 Avenida de las Banderas) is 20 percent and the existing floor area ratio is 0.28. The allowable FAR under the current Business Park designation is 1.0. The site is significantly underutilized and surface parking comprises over two-thirds of the site.

The existing lot coverage for "Site 3" (30200 Avenida de las Banderas) is 27 percent and the existing floor area ratio is 0.26. The allowable FAR under the current Business Park designation is 1.0. The site is significantly underutilized and surface parking comprises nearly three-quarters of the site.

The City and property owner are committed to allowing for the development of residential uses at sites designated with the Workforce Housing Overlay, including sites that are larger than 10 acres. The City has included Program 16, Large Sites, to clearly articulate the City's commitment to ensuring that these sites are available for residential development at the capacity levels and income distributions identified in Appendix A. The City will provide a number of incentives to facilitate development of the large sites, as provided in Program 16. With these incentives and support and commitment from the property owner, the City finds with substantial evidence that these sites are suitable to accommodate a portion of the City's 6th Cycle RHNA.

WORKFORCE HOUSING OVERLAY (NEW)

The City will adopt and implement a new Workforce Housing Overlay within three years of Housing Element adoption, and no later than October 2024, to accommodate a portion of its RHNA. The Workforce Housing Overlay will allow for residential development in the Business Park at a density of up to 35 dwelling units per acre. The intent of the Workforce Housing Overlay is to allow for the development of attainable housing options closer to jobs, thereby supporting the City's business community.

The City worked closely with property owners in the Business Park district to identify the most viable sites. The City has identified three candidate sites viable for residential development in the Business Park. All three sites identified for designation with the Workforce Housing Overlay are owned by Applied Medical Resources Corporation, which has expressed an interest in allowing for the development of residential uses at several of their properties within the City. A letter indicating their support of this proposal is included in Appendix A, Site Inventory. Appendix A also includes specific information regarding existing uses at the sites, existing floor area ratio, current land use and zoning information, and development assumptions. Applied Medical anticipated working closely with the City to accommodate future workforce housing at their sites in a "campus" setting, where residential uses are developed at these sites ***without*** displacing existing business park development; rather, the "campus" vision reflects the company's intent to allow for residential uses in a horizontal mixed-use format.

In total, the three sites identified have the potential to accommodate 344 units (54% of the City's remaining RHNA) at all income levels. Only 35% of the development potential at Workforce Housing Overlay sites has been considered to accommodate the City's RHNA allocation, which allows for the existing use to remain (with adequate parking) and for a portion of the site to develop as residential uses. For example, a three-acre parcel designated with the Workforce Housing Overlay, which allows a density of up to 35 dwelling units per acre, is assumed to yield 37 units for purposes of meeting the RHNA allocation (3 acres x 35 du/ac x 0.35). The capacity of Workforce Housing Overlay sites is included in Table H-56.

TABLE H-56: WORKFORCE HOUSING OVERLAY CAPACITY

Income Category	Potential Capacity	Remaining RHNA (Table H-54)	Percentage of Remaining RHNA
Extremely/Very Low	107	199	53%
Low	62	103	60%
Moderate	62	114	55%
Above Moderate	113	224	50%
Total	**344**	**640**	**54%**



MIXED-USE HOUSING (NEW)

The City will adopt and implement a new Mixed-Use Housing General Plan Land Use and Zoning designation (separate from the City's existing Mixed-Use designation) within three years of Housing Element adoption, and no later than October 2024, to accommodate a portion of its RHNA. The Mixed-Use Housing land use/zone will allow for residential development at locations currently developed with commercial and business park uses at a density of up to 35 dwelling units per acre. The intent of the Mixed-Use Housing designation is to allow for mixed-use development in vertical or horizontal formats within the City's existing activity centers.

The City has identified 12 sites (13 parcels) currently designated as Commercial General or Business Park viable for redevelopment with residential uses, either as a stand-alone use or as part of a mixed-use project. These sites total 26.62 acres. Twelve of the 13 parcels are over 0.50 acres in size and less than 10 acres in size. One parcel (22012 El Paseo) located at the corner of El Paseo and Santa Margarita Parkway is 0.46 acres; this parcel serves as the corner piece to the existing commercial area and is a part of the redevelopment potential of the site if combined. However, as described previously under the "small sites" analysis, while the site continues to be proposed for designation as Mixed-Use Housing, the City has not included any development capacity at this "small site" as part of its strategy to accommodate its 6th Cycle RHNA, consistent with State guidance (i.e., the realistic capacity of 22012 El Paseo is identified as zero units).

In total, the 13 parcels identified have the potential to accommodate 320 units (50% of the City's remaining RHNA) at all income levels. Only 35% of the development potential at Mixed-Use Housing sites has been considered to accommodate the City's RHNA allocation. For example, a five-acre parcel designated as Mixed-Use Housing, which allows a density of up to 35 dwelling units per acre, is assumed to yield 61 units for purposes of meeting the RHNA allocation (5 acres x 35 du/ac x 0.35). The capacity of Mixed-Use Housing sites is included in Table H-57.

TABLE H-57: MIXED-USE HOUSING CAPACITY

Income Category	Potential Capacity	Remaining RHNA (Table H-54)	Percentage of Remaining RHNA
Extremely/Very Low	95	199	48%
Low	57	103	55%
Moderate	57	114	50%
Above Moderate	111	224	50%
Total	**320**	**640**	**50%**

5D. Summary of RHNA Strategies

As previously discussed, ADUs and the proposed Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing designation can increase the City's housing stock to accommodate the RHNA. Table H-58 reflects Rancho Santa Margarita's total potential increase in housing units. It assumes housing densities of up to 35 dwelling units per acre for all sites, 35% of maximum capacity at Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing sites.

TABLE H-58: RHNA SITES STRATEGY

	Extremely/ Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
RHNA	209	120	125	226	680
Credits (ADUs)	10	17	11	2	40
Workforce Housing Overlay Capacity	107	62	62	113	344
Mixed-Use Housing Capacity	95	57	57	111	320
Total	**212**	**136**	**130**	**226**	**704**
Surplus[1]	**3**	**16**	**5**	**0**	**24**
Percentage of Total Sites that are Surplus	**1.5%**	**13%**	**4%**	**0%**	**3.5%**

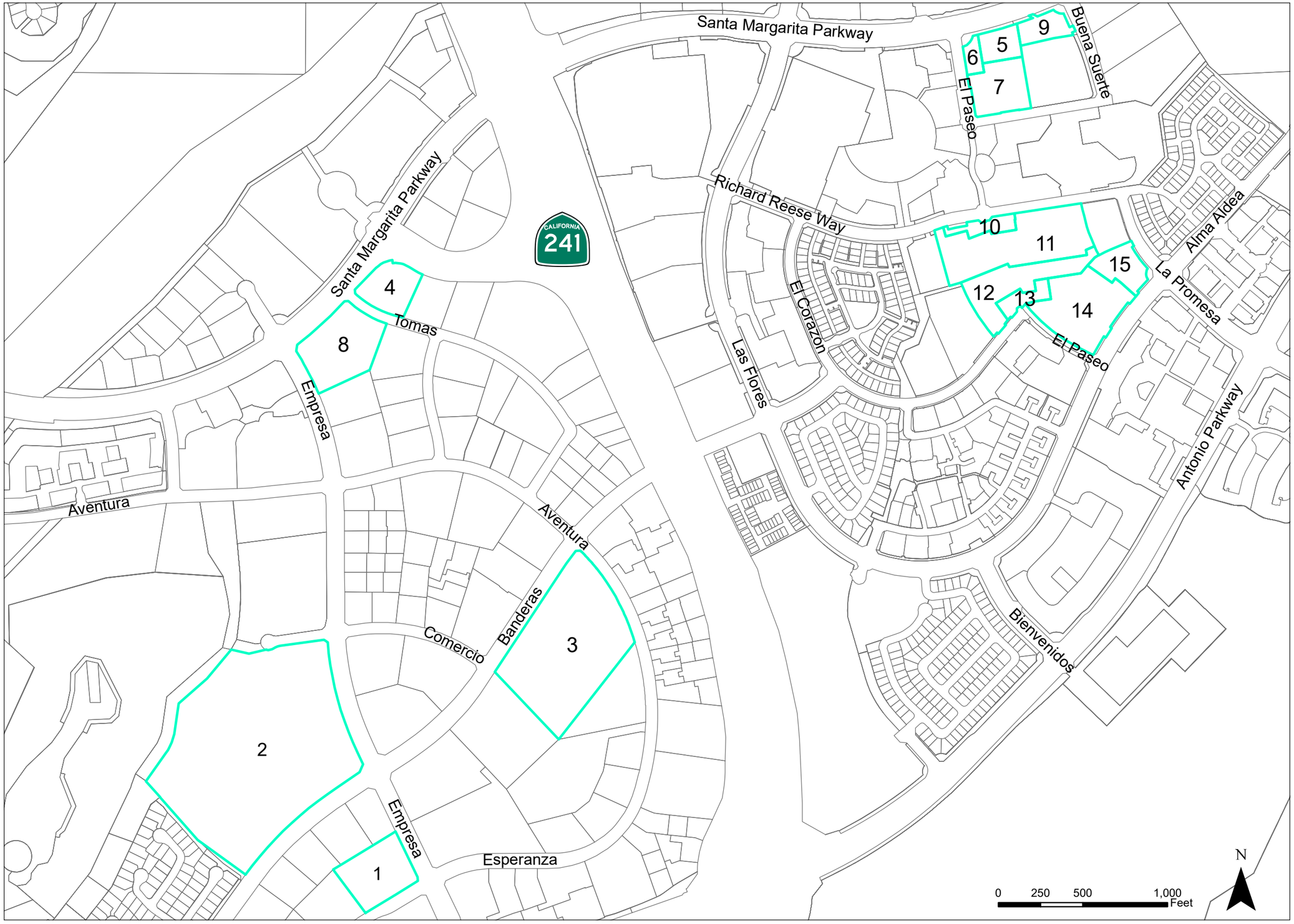
1. HCD recommends buffer in the housing element inventory of at least 15 to 30 percent capacity more than required, especially to accommodate the lower income RHNA. A modest surplus also allows various sites identified in the Housing Element to identify at different income levels than those anticipated, while still maintaining an adequate supply of available sites.

The 40 ADUs, the potential 344 units resulting from implementation of the Workforce Housing Overlay, and the potential of 320 resulting from implementation of the Mixed-Use Housing designation/zone, could result in 704 units, exceeding the total RHNA allocation for Rancho Santa Margarita by 24 units, which represents a buffer of 3.5% of the total unit capacity. This buffer is necessary to address the No Net Loss (SB 166) requirement of maintaining an inventory of sites adequate to accommodate the City's remaining RHNA throughout the planning period as development occurs on the selected sites that may result in fewer units (or units at different income levels) than assumed in this inventory. A detailed description of the sites identified for the Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing designation is included in Appendix A.

TABLE H-59: RHNA SITES SUMMARY

Map Reference (Figure H-3)	Address	APN	Acres	Proposed Designation	Potential Capacity
1	22931 Arroyo Vista	805-062-06	2.92	Workforce Housing Overlay (WHO)	34
2	29977 Avenida De Las Banderas	805-061-01	24.53	Workforce Housing Overlay (WHO)	212
3	30200 Avenida De Las Banderas	805-042-02	10.98	Workforce Housing Overlay (WHO)	98
4	30021 Tomas	805-222-01	1.92	Mixed-Use Housing	24
5	22022 El Paseo	814-153-05	1.00	Mixed-Use Housing	12
6	22012 El Paseo	814-153-06	0.46	Mixed-Use Housing	0*
7a	22032 El Paseo	814-153-07	0.67	Mixed-Use Housing	8
7b	22032 El Paseo	814-153-14	2.23	Mixed-Use Housing	27
8	22342 Avenida Empresa	805-052-09	3.88	Mixed-Use Housing	46
9	30832 Santa Margarita Pky	814-153-04	1.03	Mixed-Use Housing	13
10	22205 El Paseo	814-172-10	0.70	Mixed-Use Housing	9
11	22215 El Paseo	814-172-11	5.54	Mixed-Use Housing	70
12	22235 El Paseo	814-172-12	2.98	Mixed-Use Housing	35
13	22245 El Paseo	824-172-25	0.71	Mixed-Use Housing	9
14	22342 El Paseo	814-172-26	4.11	Mixed-Use Housing	50
15	22372 El Paseo	814-172-27	1.39	Mixed-Use Housing	17
Total			**65.05**		**664**

**Per State guidance, sites smaller than 0.50 acres are found to be inadequate to accommodate the City's 6th Cycle RHNA; while Site 6 is proposed to be redesignated consistent with surrounding uses, the capacity for this site is shown as zero units.*



Legend

Site No. 1
22931 Arroyo Vista

Site No. 2
29977 Avenida De Las Banderas

Site No. 3
30200 Avenida De Las Banderas

Site No. 4
30021 Tomas

Site No. 5
22022 El Paseo

Site No. 6
22012 El Paseo

Site No. 7
22032 El Paseo

Site No. 8
22342 Avenida Empresa

Site No. 9
30832 Santa Margarita Parkway

Site No. 10
22205 El Paseo

Site No. 11
22215 El Paseo

Site No. 12
22235 El Paseo

Site No. 13
22245 El Paseo

Site No. 14
22342 El Paseo

Site No. 15
22372 El Paseo

Figure H-3: Proposed 2021-2029 Housing Element Inventory

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5E. Housing, Financial, and Administrative Resources

STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

Federal funding for housing programs is available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City's use of federal funds is described in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. As an Entitlement City, Rancho Santa Margarita participates in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). CDBG funds are used by the City to fund a variety of community services available to assist low and moderate income residents and those with special housing needs. Targeted assistance includes owner-occupied home repair for the elderly or others with disabilities, homeless assistance and prevention, and emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence.

Housing Choice Voucher Program Rental Assistance (Formerly "Section 8")

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita works cooperatively with the Orange County Housing Authority, which administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The program assists very-low-income, elderly and disabled households by paying the difference between 30% of an eligible household's income and the actual cost of renting a unit. The City facilitates use of the voucher program within its jurisdiction by encouraging apartment owners to list available rental units with the County Housing Authority for potential occupancy by tenants receiving vouchers.

Project Based Housing Voucher program is a component of the former Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program funded through HUD. The program's objective is to induce property owners to make standard housing available to low-income families at rents within the program limits. In return, the Housing Authority or HUD enters into a contract with the owner that guarantees a certain level of rents.

Section 811/202 Program (Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities/Elderly) – Non- profit and consumer cooperatives can receive no interest capital advances from HUD under the Section 202 program for the construction of very-low income rental housing for seniors and persons with disabilities. These funds can be used in conjunction with Section 811, which can be used to develop group homes, independent living facilities and immediate care facilities. Eligible activities include acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction and rental assistance.

California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) Multi-family Programs

Provides permanent financing for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and preservation or new construction of rental housing that includes affordable rents for low and moderate income families and individuals. One of the programs is the Preservation Acquisition Finance Program that is designed to facilitate the acquisition of at-risk affordable housing developments and provide low-cost funding to preserve affordability.



CalHOME Program

Provides grants to local public agencies and non-profit developers to assist households in becoming homeowners. CalHome funds may be used for predevelopment, development, acquisition, and rehabilitation costs as well as down payment assistance. While CalHOME funding has been limited to disaster assistance in recent years, this would be an appropriate program for the City to pursue to begin to develop a local portfolio of housing assistance programs and funds.

California Housing Finance Agency (CHFA)

Offers permanent financing for acquisition and rehabilitation to for-profit, non-profit, and public agency developers seeking to preserve "at-risk" housing units. In addition, CHFA offers low interest predevelopment loans to nonprofit sponsors through its acquisition/rehabilitation program.

Emergency Housing and Assistance Program (EHAP)

Provides funds to local government agencies and non-profit corporations for capital development activities and facility operation for emergency shelters, transitional housing and safe havens that provide shelter and supportive services for homeless individuals and families.

Federal Home Loan Bank System

Facilitates Affordable Housing Programs (AHP), which subsidize the interest rates for affordable housing. The San Francisco Federal Home Loan Bank District provides local service within California. Interest rate subsidies under the AHP can be used to finance the purchase, construction, and/or rehabilitation of rental housing. Very low-income households must occupy at least 20% of the units for the useful life of the housing or the mortgage term.

Housing for a Healthy California (HHC)

Provides funding on a competitive basis to deliver supportive housing opportunities to developers using the federal National Housing Trust Funds (NHTF) allocations for operating reserve grants and capital loans. The Department will also utilize from a portion of moneys that was collected in calendar year 2018 and deposited into the Building Homes and Jobs Trust Fund to provide funding through grants to counties for capital and operating assistance. Funds will be announced through a Notice of Funding Availability.

Infill Infrastructure Grant Program (IIG)

Funds infrastructure improvements to facilitate new housing development with an affordable component in residential or mixed-use infill projects and infill areas.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC)

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program was created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 to provide an alternate method of funding low-and moderate-income

housing. Each State receives a tax credit, based upon population, toward funding housing that meets program guidelines. The tax credits are then used to leverage private capital into new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing. Limitations on projects funded under the Tax Credit programs include minimum requirements that a certain percentage of units remain rent-restricted, based upon median income, for a term of 15 years.

Low-income Housing Preservation and Residential Home Ownership Act (LIHPRHA)

Requires that all eligible HUD Section 236 and Section 221(d) projects "at-risk" of conversion to market-rate rental housing through the mortgage prepayment option be subject to LIHPRHA Incentives. The incentives to owners include HUD subsidies which guarantee owners an 8% annual return on equity. Owners must file a Plan of Action to obtain incentives or offer the project for sale to a) non-profit organizations, b) tenants, or c) public bodies for a 12 month period followed by an additional three-month sale to other purchasers. Only then are owners eligible to prepay the subsidized mortgages.

National Housing Trust Fund

A permanent federal program with dedicated sources of funding not subject to the annual appropriations. The funds can be used to increase and preserve the supply of affordable housing, with an emphasis on rental housing for extremely low income households. California received approximately $10.1 Million for the program in 2019. Funds are made available through a competitive process and will be announced through a Notice of Funding Availability.

SB 2 Planning Grants Program

Provides funding and technical assistance to all eligible local governments in California to adopt and implement plans and process improvements that streamline housing approvals and accelerate housing production. Eligible activities include updating a variety of planning documents and processes such as general plans and zoning ordinances, conducting environmental analyses, and process improvements that expedite local planning and permitting. The planning grants program is funded through the Building Homes and Jobs Act Trust Fund (SB 2, Chapter 364, Statutes of 2017). This program has several funding components known as Local Emergency Assistance Program (LEAP), Regional Emergency Assistance Program (REAP), and Permanent Local Housing Assistance (PLHA). The City of Rancho Santa Margarita has applied for and received PLHA and LEAP funds and is participating in a sub-regional program with the Orange County Council of Government (OCCOG) funded by REAP.

California Community Reinvestment Corporation (CCRC)

CCRC is a multi-family affordable housing lender whose mission is to increase the availability of affordable housing for low-income families, seniors and residents with special needs by facilitating private capital flow from its investors for debt and equity to developers of affordable housing. Eligible activities include new construction, rehabilitation, and acquisition of properties.

Southern California Housing Finance Agency (SCHFA) Mortgage Financing for First-Time Homebuyers

The SCHFA raises funds for mortgage financing through the sale of tax-exempt revenue bonds. Cities can cooperate with lenders and the County in advertising the availability of the SCHFA program.

Supplement Security Income (SSI)

A federal welfare program for persons 65 and over and for blind or disabled persons of any age. "Disabled" means that you have a physical or mental disability that is expected to keep you from working for 12 months or longer, or will result in death. Medicare is a federal health insurance program for people who are 65 and over, for some younger people with permanent disabilities, and for people with end-stage kidney disease. SSI may provide total monthly income or it may supplement a low income. In addition to cash payments, SSI recipients are automatically covered by Medi-Cal, the State health insurance plan.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

Agencies with administrative capacity to implement programs contained in the Housing Element include the City of Rancho Santa Margarita and local and regional nonprofit private developers. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita Development Services Department takes the lead in implementing Housing Element programs and policies.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Development Services Department consists of four divisions: Building and Safety, Code Enforcement, Economic Development, and Planning. The Department coordinates development activity within the City to ensure planned orderly growth. The Planning Division administers the General Plan and Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code (RSMZC), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other environmental regulations, and provides primary staff assistance to the Planning Commission. The Planning Department also manages the City's Community Development Block Grant.

NON-PROFIT DEVELOPERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

The City can collaborate with affordable housing developers and service providers to accommodate the housing needs of Rancho Santa Margarita residents. The following are housing developers and service providers active in the region; several are included in the State's list of entities with the legal and managerial capacity to acquire and manage at-risk projects.

- C&C Development
- The Waterford Group
- Community Housing Works
- National Community Renaissance (National CORE)
- South County Outreach

5F. Energy Conservation Opportunities

State of California Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings were established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. The standards are codified in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. California's building efficiency standards (along with those for energy efficient appliances) have saved the State of California nearly $80 billion in electricity and natural gas costs since 1978.

Title 24 sets forth mandatory energy standards and requires the adoption of an "energy budget" for all new residential buildings and additions to residential buildings. Separate requirements are adopted for "low-rise" residential construction (i.e., no more than 3 stories) and non-residential buildings, which includes hotels, motels, and multi-family residential buildings with four or more habitable stories. The standards specify energy saving design for lighting, walls, ceilings and floor installations, as well as heating and cooling equipment and systems, gas cooling devices, conservation standards and the use of non-depleting energy sources, such as solar energy or wind power. The home building industry must comply with these standards while localities are responsible for enforcing the energy conservation regulations through the plan check and building inspection processes.

In addition to the requirements of Title 24, the City encourages energy conservation through its land use planning policies. Rancho Santa Margarita was conceived as a balanced community with a mix of housing, employment, commercial, recreation, educational and other community facilities. The City's General Plan and zoning provide a blueprint for compact development with higher-density attached housing located along major transportation routes and near the Town Center where commercial facilities are concentrated. Program 13 included in the City's Housing Plan (Part 1 of the Housing Element) supports the continued promotion of energy conservation.

Examples of techniques for reducing residential energy use include the following:

- Glazing – Glazing on south facing exterior walls allows for winter sunrays to warm the structure. Reducing glazing and regulating sunlight penetration on the west side of the unit prevents afternoon sunrays from overheating the unit.
- Landscaping – Strategically placed vegetation reduces the amount of direct sunlight on the windows. The incorporation of deciduous trees in the landscaping plans along the southern exposure of units reduces summer sunrays, while allowing penetration of winter sunrays to warm the units.
- Building Design – The implementation of roof overhangs above southerly facing windows shield the structure from solar rays during the summer months.
- Cooling/Heating Systems – The use of attic ventilation systems reduces attic temperatures during the summer months. Solar heating systems for

swimming pool facilities saves on energy costs. Natural gas is conserved with the use of flow restrictors on all hot water faucets and showerheads.

- Weatherizing Techniques – Weatherization techniques such as insulation, caulking, and weather stripping can reduce energy use for air-conditioning up to 55% and for heating as much as 40%. Weatherization measures seal a dwelling unit to guard against heat gain in the summer and prevent heat loss in the winter.
- Efficient Use of Appliances – Appliances can be used in ways that increase their energy efficiency. Unnecessary appliances can be eliminated. Proper maintenance and use of stove, oven, clothes dryer, washer, dishwasher, and refrigerator can also reduce energy consumption. New appliance purchases can be made on the basis of efficiency ratings.
- In addition to the requirements of Title 24, the City encourages energy conservation through its land use planning policies. Rancho Santa Margarita contains a mix of housing, employment, commercial, recreation, educational and other community facilities.
- The City's existing network of on- and off-road bicycle trails link residential areas to employment centers within Rancho Santa Margarita and surrounding cities.

5G. General Plan Consistency

The housing element affects a locality's policies for growth and residential land uses. The goals, policies and objectives of an updated housing element may conflict with those of the land-use, circulation, open space elements as well as zoning plans. The General Plan is required to be "internally consistent." As part of the Housing Element Update, the City has reviewed the General Plan and has identified the need to update the City's Land Use Element to create internal consistency with the updated Housing Element by creating at least one, but potentially two, new land use designations to accommodate residential development at densities of up to 35 du/ac. Program 14 of the Housing Plan specifies this commitment. In addition, the City will complete an internal consistency review as part of its annual general plan implementation report required under Government Code section 65400 to maintain consistency during the planning period.

6. Assessment of Fair Housing

All Housing Elements due on or after January 1, 2021 must contain an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) consistent with the core elements of the analysis required by the federal Affirmatively Further Fair Housing Final Rule of July 16, 2015. Under State law, to affirmatively further fair housing means "taking meaningful actions, in addition to combatting discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics". These characteristics can include, but are not limited to: race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability.

The AFFH analysis must contain the following:

A: Outreach

B: Assessment of Fair Housing

- Key Data and Background Information
- Fair Housing Enforcement and Outreach Capacity
- Integration and Segregation Patterns and Trends
- Racially or Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty
- Disparities in Access to Opportunity
- Disproportionate Housing Needs in the Jurisdiction
- Displacement Risk

C: Sites Inventory

D: Identification of Contributing Factors

E: Goals and Actions

While this section provides a focused analysis of fair housing issues in Rancho Santa Margarita, several other sections of the Housing Element address the issue and are included in this section by reference.

6A. Outreach

Appendix B of the Housing Element details the public participation that was undertaken as part of the Housing Element preparation process. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is committed to a transparent process for updating the Housing Element and has made every effort to involve the public in the update of its Housing Element and has solicited input from the public throughout the year-long Housing Element process. Staff logged all comment letters, emails, and e-comments submitted to the Planning Commission and City Council. Staff did not receive any requests for accommodation by special needs groups. Staff responded to all requests for meetings and additional information. Appendix B to the Housing Element provides a summary of the key comments received during the Housing Element update process, and how they have been considered and addressed in the Element. The City implemented the following public outreach program.

PROJECT WEBSITE

A dedicated project webpage (https://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021https://lakeforest.generalplan.org/) serves as the main conduit of information for individuals who can access material online. The webpage includes the following components:

- Frequently asked questions/factsheets
- Planning Commission and City Council Staff Reports and Presentations
- Project timeline
- Community surveys/results
- Background information
- Educational videos
- Links to outside organizations and programs
- Contact information

HOUSING ELEMENT SURVEYS

As part of the community outreach, two surveys were conducted online using the SurveyMonkey platform. The two surveys work together to gather information on housing-related issues. Survey #1, which was posted on January 29, 2021, and closed on March 3, 2021, focused on existing conditions to better understand the characteristics of households in Rancho Santa Margarita, identify the community's housing needs and priorities, and uncover real or perceived fair housing concerns in the City. Survey #1 expressly discussed fair housing issues and sought community input on fair housing priorities, as included below. Survey #2, which was posted on February 21, 2021, and closed on March 29, 2021, focused on types of development that should be further explored as the City plans to meet the State-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). An overview of the survey results is provided in this section. The results are broken down among the groups of respondents which constitute residents and workers. The complete survey results are included in Appendix B.

When asked, "How important are the following factors in your housing choice?" respondents were most likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

Resident responses:

- Housing I can afford (92%)
- Housing large enough for my household (85%)
- Housing was available in the neighborhood I chose at the time I needed it (77%)
- The amount of money I have/had for deposit (75%)
- My credit history and/or credit score (65%)

While still important for some individuals, resident respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Housing that accommodates disability of household member (24%)
- Concern that I would not be welcome in that neighborhood (22%)

Worker responses:

- Housing I can afford (94%)
- Housing large enough for my household (88%)
- Housing was available in the neighborhood I chose at the time I needed it (84%)
- The amount of money I have/had for deposit (79%)
- My credit history and/or credit score (53%)

While still important for some individuals, worker respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Concern that I would not be welcome in that neighborhood (35%)
- Housing that accommodates disability of household member (29%)

When asked, "How important are the following housing priorities to you and your household?" respondents were most likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

Resident responses:

- Support programs to help neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures (75%)
- Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults (73%)
- Rehabilitate existing housing (67%)
- Promote affordable housing for working families (65%)
- Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs (64%)
- Build more single-family housing (63%)
- Support fair/equitable housing opportunities (62%)
- Encourage more senior housing (51%)

While still important for some individuals, resident respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Provide ADA-accessible housing (48%)
- Provide more housing for all income levels (45%)
- Create mixed-use projects to bring different land uses closer together (45%)
- Integrate affordable housing throughout the community to create mixed-income neighborhoods (29%)
- Build more multi-family housing such as apartments and condos (28%)
- Provide housing for the homeless (26%)

Worker responses:

- Promote affordable housing for working families (85%)
- Provide more housing for all income levels (83%)
- Support fair/equitable housing opportunities (82%)
- Build more single-family housing (81%)
- Support programs to help neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures (81%)
- Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults (78%)
- Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs (78%)
- Create mixed-use projects to bring different land uses closer together (64%)
- Rehabilitate existing housing (61%)
- Integrate affordable housing throughout the community to create mixed-income neighborhoods (58%)
- Build more multi-family housing such as apartments and condos (55%)
- Encourage more senior housing (53%)
- Provide housing for the homeless (52%)

While still important for some individuals, worker respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Provide ADA-accessible housing (49%)

When asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of affirmative statements respondents were most likely to strongly agree or somewhat agree with the following statements:

Resident responses:

- The condition of the homes in my neighborhood are acceptable (96%)
- There is a pharmacy close to my house (96%)
- There are grocery stores close to my neighborhood (96%)
- There are banks and credit unions near where I live (93%)
- The streets and sidewalks near my home are well kept (93%)
- There is a public library close to my house (91%)
- There are plenty of parks, playgrounds, or green space near me (87%)
- There are plenty of other public spaces near my home (84%)
- The streets and sidewalks in my neighborhood have adequate lighting (79%)
- I am satisfied with the schools in my area (76%)

Resident respondents were less likely to agree with the following statements:

- There is enough parking in my area of town (60%)
- There are quality jobs in my neighborhood (52%)
- There is access to public transit close to my neighborhood (39%)

Worker responses:

- The condition of the homes in my neighborhood are acceptable (85%)
- There are grocery stores close to my neighborhood (85%)
- There are banks and credit unions near where I live (85%)
- There is a pharmacy close to my house (84%)
- The streets and sidewalks near my home are well kept (84%)
- The streets and sidewalks in my neighborhood have adequate lighting (78%)
- There are plenty of parks, playgrounds, or green space near me (77%)
- There is a public library close to my house (75%)
- There are plenty of other public spaces near my home (73%)
- I am satisfied with the schools in my area (62%)

Worker respondents were less likely to agree with the following statements:

- There is enough parking in my area of town (56%)
- There are quality jobs in my neighborhood (54%)
- There is access to public transit close to my neighborhood (37%)

When asked to identify what they thought the biggest problem with housing discrimination is in Rancho Santa Margarita, responses varied amongst groups with a greater proportion of residents than non-residents indicating that no problems exist or that they are unaware of any problem (indicated by the response "other"). The responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- Other (please specify) (52%)
- Race/Ethnicity (18%)
- Color (physical appearance (9%)
- Disability (8%)
- Familial status (8%)
- National Origin (3%)
- Religion (2%)
- Sex (less than 1%)

Worker responses:

- Race/Ethnicity (41%)
- Other (please specify) (30%)
- Familial status (20%)



- Color (physical appearance) (5%)
- National Origin (2%)
- Disability (2%)

Of worker responses, nobody indicated housing discrimination was due to religion or sex.

Of all respondents who selected "Other (please specify)" over 90% specified that no problems with housing discrimination existed or that they are aware of any problem.

When asked whether they had experienced or witnessed housing discrimination in Rancho Santa Margarita the majority of respondents answered "No." The responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- Yes (4% or 15 responses)
- No (86% or 320 responses)
- I don't know (10% or 38 responses)

Of those respondents that answered "yes" to the prior question, the discriminatory factors identified (in order of affirmative responses) were:

- Race/Ethnicity (12 responses)
- Color (physical appearance) (3 responses)
- Age (3 responses)
- Familial status (3 responses)
- Political Ideas (3 responses)
- Language spoken (3 responses)
- Level/source of Income (2 responses)
- National Origin (2 responses)
- Marital status (1 response)
- Citizenship status (1 response)
- Use of Housing Choice Voucher or other assistance (1 response)
- Criminal background (1 response)
- Other (1 response)

Worker responses:

- Yes (3% or 2 responses)
- No (61% or 36 responses)
- I don't know (36% or 21 responses)

Of those respondents that answered "yes" to the prior question, the discriminatory factors identified (in order of affirmative responses, where respondents could select as many factors they thought applied) were:

- Race/Ethnicity (2 responses)
- Familial status (2 responses)
- Color (physical appearance) (1 response)
- Age (1 response)
- Marital status (1 response)
- Political Ideas (1 response)
- Religion (1 response)
- National Origin (1 response)
- Sex (1 response)
- Disability (1 response)
- Level/source of Income (1 response)
- Use of Housing Choice Voucher or other assistance (1 response)

When asked whether they knew of anyone in Rancho Santa Margarita who experienced unfair real estate or lending practices respondents provided the following responses:

Resident responses:

- The majority (96%) didn't know of anyone who had encountered these unfair practices
- 2% knew of someone who was unfairly refused a rental or sale agreement
- 1% reported knowing someone who was not shown all housing options
- 1% knew of someone who was offered unfair terms when buying or selling
- Less than 1% reported knowing someone who was unfairly directed to a certain neighborhood and/or location, was not given reasonable accommodations for a disability, or was falsely denied available housing options

Worker responses:

- The majority (94%) didn't know of anyone who had encountered these unfair practices
- 4% knew of someone who was unfairly refused a rental or sale agreement
- 4% reported knowing someone who was not shown all housing options

Many respondents (28% of residents and 54% of workers) would not know where to refer someone (or themselves) if they felt that their fair housing rights were violated. Of those who responded that they might know where to go, most would refer someone to the local, State or federal government or the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Familiarity with Fair Housing laws varied between groups. The majority of residents (61%) felt somewhat familiar or very familiar with fair housing laws, while just under half of non-resident workers (46%) felt the same. Additionally, many (24% of residents and 26% of workers) felt that federal and/or State Fair Housing laws are difficult to understand or follow.

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The City hosted five focus groups with residents, affordable housing service providers, the business community, and other stakeholders to gain insight into housing issues facing the City, including issues related to fair housing. The first four focus groups included discussions with: Community Associations of Rancho (CAR) members; CAR Alternates; Applied Medical Representatives; and Housing Advocates. This information is further summarized in Appendix B. After analyzing the data collected in the first four focus groups, City staff felt that it was important to reach out to certain areas in the City in order to balance out the responses, feedback, and data received. Specifically, Census Tract 0320.51 contains a concentration of Hispanic residents (35.5%) and is identified as cost-burdened, and Census Tract 0320.54 is identified as cost-burdened.[9] Therefore, the City added a fifth focus group, and a question-and-answer session to specifically target feedback from these areas.

The City created a post on the City's Instagram and Facebook pages requesting volunteers to be on an "At-Large Community Members" Focus Group. The City conducted all focus groups via Zoom and in order to ensure that all participants had enough time to provide feedback, attendance was limited to two representatives from each of the following three neighborhoods (Central Rancho Santa Margarita, Arroyo Vista/Tijeras Creek, and Melinda Heights). Central Rancho Santa Margarita contains the concentration of multi-family residential homes including apartment homes and is located within Census Tract 0320.51, as mentioned above. This fifth focus group had the exact same content as the previous four focus groups. There are Spanish speaking employees at the City who were available to provide translation services if needed, but none were requested or needed throughout the duration of Housing Element work efforts.

EMAILS

The project team complied a database of community members and stakeholders who registered to be notified via email of future public engagement opportunities and key deliverables. Direct emails were sent to these individuals to publicize the Housing Element Surveys, new web-page content, public meetings/hearings, and will be used to advertise the Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element and future public hearings for adoption of the Housing Element Update. An e-newsletter goes out to over 9,500 people at the first of each month; each newsletter includes a summary of all efforts relating to the Housing Element Update.

[9] Source: City of Rancho Santa Margarita 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020-2021 Action Plan

6B. Fair Housing Needs Assessment

This section presents an overview of available federal, State, and local data to analyze fair housing issues in Rancho Santa Margarita. This data is supplemented with local knowledge of existing conditions in the community to present a more accurate depiction of fair housing issues in Rancho Santa Margarita, and a more informed perspective from which to base goals, policies and programs to affirmatively further fair housing.

KEY DATA AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2020, Rancho Santa Margarita participated with 15 other Orange County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement cities to prepare a regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) to fulfill their HUD requirement and remove barriers to fair housing choice for all their residents. The AI examined policies, procedures, and practices within the region that may limit a person's ability to choose their residence free from discrimination. The AI provided an overview of laws, regulations, conditions, or other possible obstacles that may affect an individual or a household's access to housing in the region. It also presented local and regional demographic profiles, assessed the extent of housing needs among specific groups, identified existing barriers or impediments that may limit housing choice, and proposed actions to overcome those barriers.

The City's demographic and income profile, household and housing characteristics, housing cost and availability, and special needs populations are discussed in previous sections of this Background Report. Barriers to fair housing choice specific to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita that were identified in the County AI and the commitments of the City to address identified barriers were incorporated into this AFH. Supplemental data analysis was conducted to further understand potential fair housing issues, within the context of AFH topics, at the city-level. Rancho Santa Margarita is comprised of 10 Census Tracts, although several are only partially located in Rancho Santa Margarita. Figure H-4 shows the Tract boundaries.

FAIR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT AND OUTREACH CAPACITY

The Orange County Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (County AI) was adopted by the Rancho Santa Margarita City Council in 2020 and "is a thorough examination of structural barriers to fair housing choice and access to opportunity for members of historically marginalized groups protected from discrimination by the federal Fair Housing Act (FHA)."[10]

The City's participation in the County AI allows for staff to evaluate and compare Rancho Santa Margarita's needs and services with those throughout the County. Rancho Santa Margarita operates on the "contract city" model, which utilizes a very small staff and contracts out for many specialized services such as law enforcement, building and safety, maintenance, and others. The City maintains a full-time staff of approximately 25 employees. Given the staffing levels and in-house expertise, it is beneficial for the City to contract with other entities to provide important public services. Fair Housing Council of Orange County (FHCOC) is one of the service providers the City uses to ensure that fair housing services and expertise are available to the City's residents.

For the County AI, a variety of tools were used for the community participation process, including community meetings, focus groups and public hearings. The AI preparers also reached out to tenants, landlords, homeowners, fair housing organizations, civil rights and advocacy organizations, legal services providers, social services providers, housing developers, and industry groups to hear directly about fair housing issues affecting residents of Orange County. Evening community meetings were held in Mission Viejo, Westminster/Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and Fullerton. Additional outreach was conducted for members of protected classes, including the Latino and Vietnamese communities. All community meetings had translation services available if requested in Spanish and Vietnamese. In addition, all meetings were held in locations accessible to people with mobility issues. [11]

[10] *Orange County Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice*, Prepared by the Orange County Jurisdictions and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, August 6, 2020.
[11] *Orange County Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice*, Prepared by the Orange County Jurisdictions and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, August 6, 2020.

The County AI describes the departments and organizations that handle fair housing enforcement and outreach in Rancho Santa Margarita. The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) investigates complaints of employment and housing discrimination. The Fair Housing Council of Orange County (FHCOC) provides services throughout the County, including Rancho Santa Margarita, to ensure equal access to housing. The Council's services include outreach and education, homebuyer education, mortgage default counseling, landlord-tenant mediation, and limited low-cost advocacy. The Fair Housing Council investigates claims of housing discrimination and assists with referrals to DFEH. The City's website features a link to the FHCOC website which provides information regarding housing related issues and an on-line housing discrimination complaint reporting tool. Community Legal Aid SoCal is a legal service provider serving low-income people in Orange County and Southeast Los Angeles County.

FHCOC services are funded by the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The CDBG program also includes an allocation of up to 15% of the City's grant that may be provided by the City directly to public service providers; this amounts to approximately $30,000 per year. The City Council appoints a CDBG Public Service Grant Advisory Committee which reviews annual applications for Public Service Grants. Public Service Grants must be used to meet one of HUD's national objectives, and most grants in Rancho Santa Margarita serve the goal to benefit low- and moderate-income persons. Through this effort, funding has been provided to organizations which benefit a variety of low-income residents throughout the City, including seniors. Examples of services provided include case management and meals for home-bound seniors, food banks, organizations which provide payments to avoid utility shut-off and/or evictions, rapid rehousing, and job training for disabled persons. Due to the long-standing relationship between the City and the public service providers, staff is able to refer residents to a variety of important services including fair housing counseling, services to prevent homelessness, and meal and foodbank services which contribute to the ability for persons and families of all income levels to live in Rancho Santa Margarita to remain housed.

As described above, fair housing services are provided by FHCOC through the City's CDBG Program. Information regarding FHCOC is provided on the City's website, and residents are referred to FHCOC by staff when calls are received. During most years staff receives fewer than five calls regarding fair housing issues. The City tracks the number of Rancho Santa Margarita households assisted annually by FHCOC. A total of 403 households have been assisted from 2015 through 2020, with an average of 67 households assisted per year. The highest number of households assisted was 171 in 2017-18, and the lowest number of households assisted was 38 in 2018-19. The characteristics of the housing discrimination complaints are confidential.



FHCOC conducts monitoring of discriminatory advertising for rental housing. During 2019 and 2020, they found that the most common discriminatory ad content is related to age restrictions for children under the age of 18 or seniors. Overt racial or national origin discrimination was not observed. When any discriminatory language is observed, FHCOC notifies the rental site to facilitate its removal. FHCOC also conducted fair housing testing throughout the region with two tests occurring in Rancho Santa Margarita in 2019 and one test in 2020. No discriminatory practices were reported as a result.

While CDBG funding is used to provide important services to benefit low- and moderate-income persons, the City also uses grant funds to assist persons experiencing homelessness. A portion of the City's Permanent Local Housing Assistance (PLHA) fund has been allocated to a local homeless service provider, Mercy House. Mercy House provides street outreach to persons experiencing homelessness in Rancho Santa Margarita. This provider works in other nearby jurisdictions, which gives them unique access and knowledge of the homeless population in south Orange County. Mercy House works with City staff and the Orange County Sherriff's Department (OCSD) deputies and homeless liaison officers to identify those in need of services. Mercy House provides the City with monthly reports of activities in the City: clients served so far that year, new clients served during the month, clients active in the program, hours of engagement provided by Mercy House in the City during the month, services provided so far that year, resources/referrals, and linkages provided so far that year. Anecdotal information from Mercy House indicates that they are very well versed with each of the City's homeless persons, their unique circumstances, and what resources are likely to be successful with each of them. They are very hands-on and responsive to requests for assistance by City staff and the OCSD. Staff is in frequent contact with Mercy House's homeless liaisons.

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita complies with fair housing laws and regulations as described in Table H-60.

TABLE H-60: COMPLIANCE WITH FAIR HOUSING LAWS

Law	Description	Compliance
California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA)	The Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) applies to public and private employers, labor organizations and employment agencies. It is illegal for employers of 5 or more employees to discriminate against job applicants and employees because of a protected category or retaliate against them because they have asserted their rights under the law. The FEHA prohibits harassment based on a protected category against an employee, an applicant, an unpaid intern or volunteer, or a contractor. Harassment is prohibited in all workplaces, even those with fewer than five employees.	Compliance is achieved through strict enforcement in hiring practices and regular training of and by Human Resources staff.
Government Code Section 65008	Covers actions of a city, county, city and county, or other local government agency, and makes those actions null and void if the action denies an individual or group of individuals the enjoyment of residence, landownership, tenancy, or other land use in the State because of membership in a protected class, the method of financing, and/or the intended occupancy. For example, a violation under Government Code section 65008 may occur if a jurisdiction applied more scrutiny to reviewing and approving an affordable development as compared to market-rate developments, or multi-family housing as compared to single family homes.	Compliance is achieved by uniform application of the City's codes, regulations, policies and practices, including development standards, application submittal requirements, fees and approval findings.
Government Code Section 8899.50	Requires all public agencies to administer programs and activities relating to housing and community development in a manner to affirmatively further fair housing and to avoid any action that is materially inconsistent with its obligation to affirmatively further fair housing.	Compliance is achieved through consultations with community stakeholders and support agencies as part of program evaluating and funding decisions. The 6th Cycle Housing Element Housing Plan describes how each Program addresses fair housing issues and contributing factors.

Government Code Section 11135 et seq.	Requires full and equal access to all programs and activities operated, administered, or funded with financial assistance from the State, regardless of one's membership or perceived membership in a protected class.	Compliance is achieved through promotion/availability of activities and programs to all persons of all backgrounds to participate equally in community programs and activities.
Density Bonus Law (Gov. Code, § 65915.)	Density bonus law is intended to support the construction of affordable housing by offering developers the ability to construct additional housing units above an agency's otherwise applicable density range, in exchange for offering to build or donate land for affordable or senior units. Density Bonus Law also provides for incentives intended to help make the development of affordable and senior housing economically feasible.	Compliance is achieved by administration of RSMZC Section 9.05.040 Density Bonus and Section 9.08.120 Density Bonus Process which provides for compliance with Government Code Section 65915 et seq.
Housing Accountability Act (Gov. Code, § 65589.5.)	Provides that a local agency shall not disapprove a housing development project, for very low, low-, or moderate-income households, or an emergency shelter, or condition approval in a manner that renders the housing development project infeasible for development for the use of very low, low-, or moderate-income households, or an emergency shelter, including through the use of design review standards, unless it makes certain written findings, based upon a preponderance of the evidence in the record.	Compliance is achieved through the development review process consistent with the Housing Accountability Act. Additionally, the City is in the process of preparing objective development standards to facilitate an objective and equitable review of applicable projects.
No-Net-Loss Law (Gov. Code, § 65863)	Ensures development opportunities remain available throughout the planning period to accommodate a jurisdiction's regional housing need assessment (RHNA) allocation, especially for lower- and moderate-income households.	The City's Housing Element identifies a surplus of sites with a capacity to accommodate the City's RHNA allocation.
Least Cost Zoning Law (Gov. Code, § 65913.1)	Provides that, in exercising its authority to zone for land uses and in revising its housing element, a city, county, or city and county shall designate and zone sufficient vacant land for residential use with appropriate standards, in relation to zoning for nonresidential use, and in relation to growth projections of the general plan to meet housing needs for all income categories as identified in the housing	Compliance is achieved through adoption of the City's comprehensive General Plan Update (2020) and the implementation of Housing Element

	element of the general plan.	Housing Plan Program 1 which commits the City to completing the rezoning of sites identified to accommodate the City's RHNA at densities and intensities consistent with those specified by site in Appendix A.
Excessive Subdivision Standards (Gov. Code, § 65913.2.)	Provides that, in exercising its authority to regulate subdivisions a city, county, or city and county shall: (a) Refrain from imposing criteria for design, as defined in Section 66418, or improvements, as defined in Section 66419, for the purpose of rendering infeasible the development of housing for any and all economic segments of the community. However, nothing in this section shall be construed to enlarge or diminish the authority of a city, county, or city and county under other provisions of law to permit a developer to construct such housing. (b) Consider the effect of ordinances adopted and actions taken by it with respect to the housing needs of the region in which the local jurisdiction is situated. (c) Refrain from imposing standards and criteria for public improvements including, but not limited to, streets, sewers, fire stations, schools, or parks, which exceed the standards and criteria being applied by the city, county, or city and county at that time to its publicly financed improvements located in similarly zoned districts within that city, county, or city and county.	Compliance is achieved through the implementation of a fair and equitable development review process which is administrated consistent with the Excessive Subdivision Standards Act.

Limits on Growth Controls (Gov. Code, § 65302.8.)	Provides that, if a county or city, including a charter city, adopts or amends a mandatory general plan element which operates to limit the number of housing units which may be constructed on an annual basis, such adoption or amendment shall contain findings which justify reducing the housing opportunities of the region. The findings shall include all of the following: (a) A description of the city's or county's appropriate share of the regional need for housing. (b) A description of the specific housing programs and activities being undertaken by the local jurisdiction to fulfill the requirements of subdivision (c) of Section 65302. (c) A description of how the public health, safety, and welfare would be promoted by such adoption or amendment. (d) The fiscal and environmental resources available to the local jurisdiction	The City's Housing Element and the elements in the City's adopted General Plan do not include any provisions which further limits (relative to the current Housing Element and General Plan) the development of housing, except such provisions as may be required by State or federal laws.
Housing Element Law (Gov. Code, § 65583, esp. subds. (c)(5), (c)(10).)	Section 65583 stipulates that the housing element shall consist of an identification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs and a statement of goals, policies, quantified objectives, financial resources, and scheduled programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. The housing element shall identify adequate sites for housing, including rental housing, factory-built housing, mobilehomes, and emergency shelters, and shall make adequate provision for the existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community. Subdivision (c)(5) provides that, in order to make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community, the program shall promote and affirmatively further fair housing opportunities and promote housing throughout the community or communities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability, and other characteristics protected by the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (Part 2.8 (commencing with Section 12900) of Division 3 of Title 2), Section 65008, and any other state and federal fair housing and planning law.	Compliance is achieved through preparation and adoption of a Housing Element found to be in substantial compliance with State Housing Element law by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

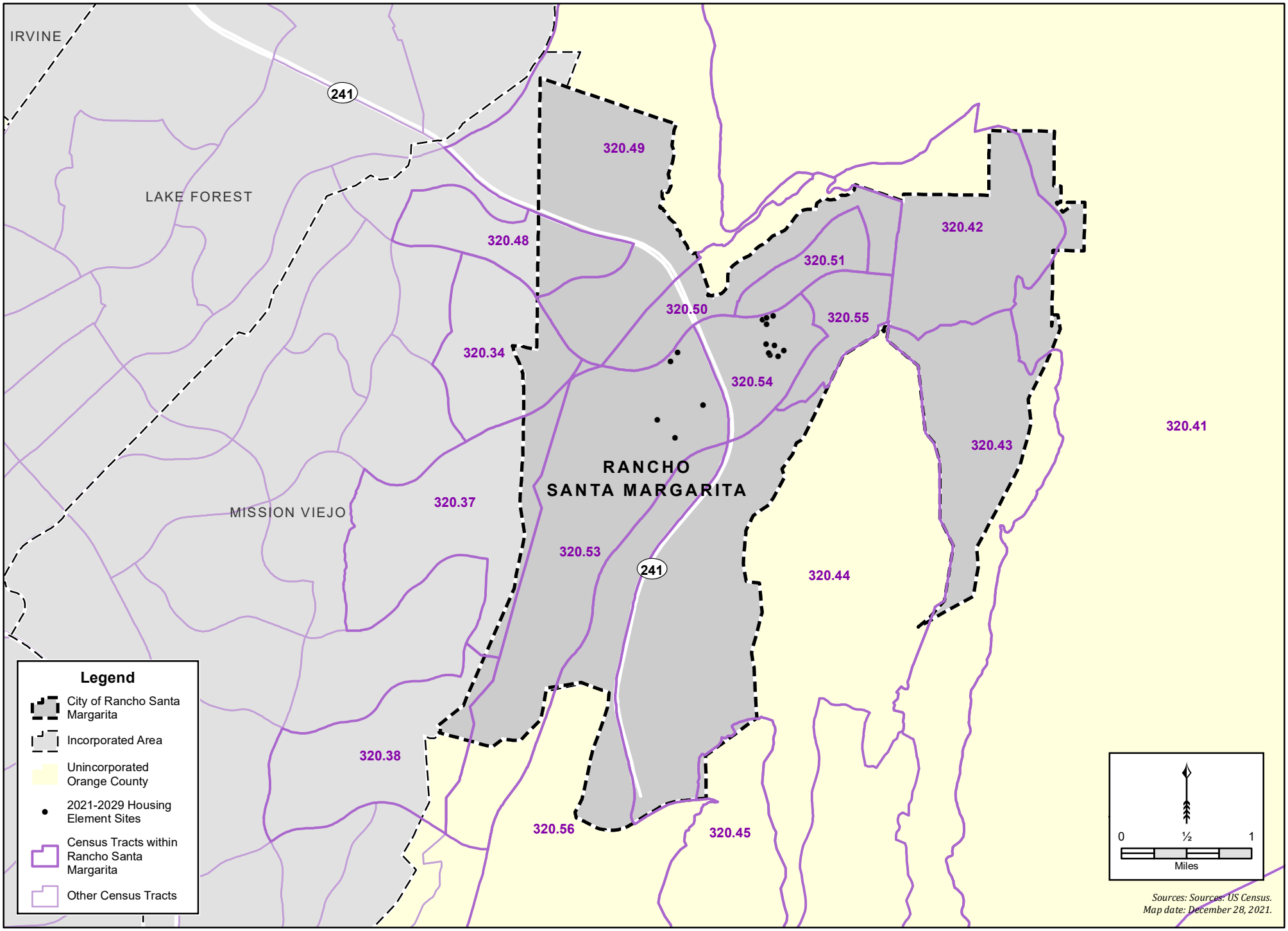

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Figure H-4. Census Tracts

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ANALYSIS OF AVAILABLE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL DATA AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

This section presents an overview of available federal, State, and local data to analyze fair housing issues in Rancho Santa Margarita. These data sources are supplemented with local knowledge of existing conditions in the community to present a more realistic picture of fair housing concerns in Rancho Santa Margarita and a more informed perspective from which to base goals, policies, and programs to affirmatively further fair housing.

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita works cooperatively with the Orange County Housing Authority, which administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The program assists very low-income, elderly and disabled households by paying the difference between 30% of an eligible household's income and the actual cost of renting a unit. Figure H-5 shows housing choice vouchers as a percent of renter occupied housing by census tract. As shown in Figure H-5, the highest percentage was in two census tracts located in central Rancho Santa Margarita. The highest concentration of housing choice vouchers is located in census tract 320.55, which includes a number of multi-family apartments and census tract 320.53, which primarily consists of commercial uses. In both areas, between five and 15 percent of renters utilize vouchers.

Integration and Segregation

To inform priorities, policies, and actions, Rancho Santa Margarita has included an analysis of integration and segregation, including patterns and trends, related to people with protected characteristics. Segregation generally means a condition in which there is a high concentration of persons of a particular race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, or having a disability or a particular type of disability when compared to a broader geographic area. Conversely, integration refers to a condition in which there is a not a high concentration of persons of a particular race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, or having a disability when compared to a broader geographic area. The following sections will analyze levels of segregation and integration for race and ethnicity, persons with disabilities, familial status, age, and income to identify the groups in Rancho Santa Margarita that experience the highest levels of segregation.

Dissimilarity Index

The dissimilarity index is the most commonly used measure of segregation between two groups, reflecting their relative distributions across neighborhoods (as defined by census tracts). The index represents the percentage of the minority group that would have to move to new neighborhoods to achieve perfect integration of that group. An index score can range in value from 0 percent, indicating complete integration, to 100 percent, indicating complete segregation. An index number between 30 and 60 indicates moderate similarity and community segregation while an index number above 60 is considered to show high similarity and a segregated community.

There are a number of reasons why patterns of racial segregation exist (or don't exist) within a community. Some of these reasons may be institutional (discriminatory lending practices) while others can be cultural (persons of similar backgrounds or lifestyles choosing to live near one another to provide support and familiarity). As such, discussions regarding segregation are complicated and there

is not a "one size fits all" approach to addressing patterns of racial segregation.

Figure H-6 shows the dissimilarity between each of the identified race and ethnic groups and White population for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita and the Orange County metropolitan region. The White (not Hispanic or Latino) population within Rancho Santa Margarita makes up approximately 74% of the City's population. The higher scores indicate higher levels of segregation among those race and ethnic groups. The City does not have any racial or ethnic groups with scores higher than 60 (indicating high similarity and segregation). Several race and ethnic groups (American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Other) exhibit moderate levels of dissimilarity and segregation in Rancho Santa Margarita (scores between 30 and 60), although the sample size for these groups is relatively small (131, 90, and 91 persons, respectively).

The highest levels of segregation within Rancho Santa Margarita are Other Races (45.4%) and Native Hawaiian (41.9%), both of which fall within the moderate similarity and segregation range. However, it should be noted that only 91 individuals identified as "Other Race" and only 91 individuals identified as "Native Hawaiian", and such small populations can indicate a pattern of segregation that is not of significant concern. These scores correlate directly with the percentage of people within that racial or ethnic group that would need to move into a predominately White census tract in order to achieve a more integrated community. For instance, 41.9% of the Native Hawaiian population would need to move into predominately White census tract areas to achieve "perfect" integration.

When compared to the Orange County metropolitan region, Rancho Santa Margarita exhibits lower levels of dissimilarity and segregation than the region as a whole for all race and ethnic groups, except for Other Races, where the City's index is slightly higher (45.4 in the City and 44.7 in the County). For the categories previously identified as showing moderate levels of segregation in Rancho Santa Margarita, the American Indian dissimilarity index is 10 points lower in the City than in the region, while the Native American category is 14 points lower in the City than the region.

These patterns indicate that in general, Rancho Santa Margarita is less dissimilar and more integrated for most of the identified racial and ethnic groups, and the community's most dissimilar community (its Native Hawaiian and Other Race populations) reflect trends seen throughout the region. This analysis suggested that patterns of segregation at the local level reflect those at the regional level as well, and that partnerships with regional agencies and advocates may be an effective way to address local issues of moderate segregation.

While not evident based on the Dissimilarity Index discussed above, the County AI does identify some patterns of White isolation throughout the County (where White residents comprise a majority of a census tract), including in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The County AI points out that White residents have especially high Isolation values in eight Orange County cities (Aliso Viejo, Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach, Laguna Niguel, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, and San Clemente) and that while some of these cities have lower non-White populations, Rancho Santa Margarita's Hispanic population *suggests* that

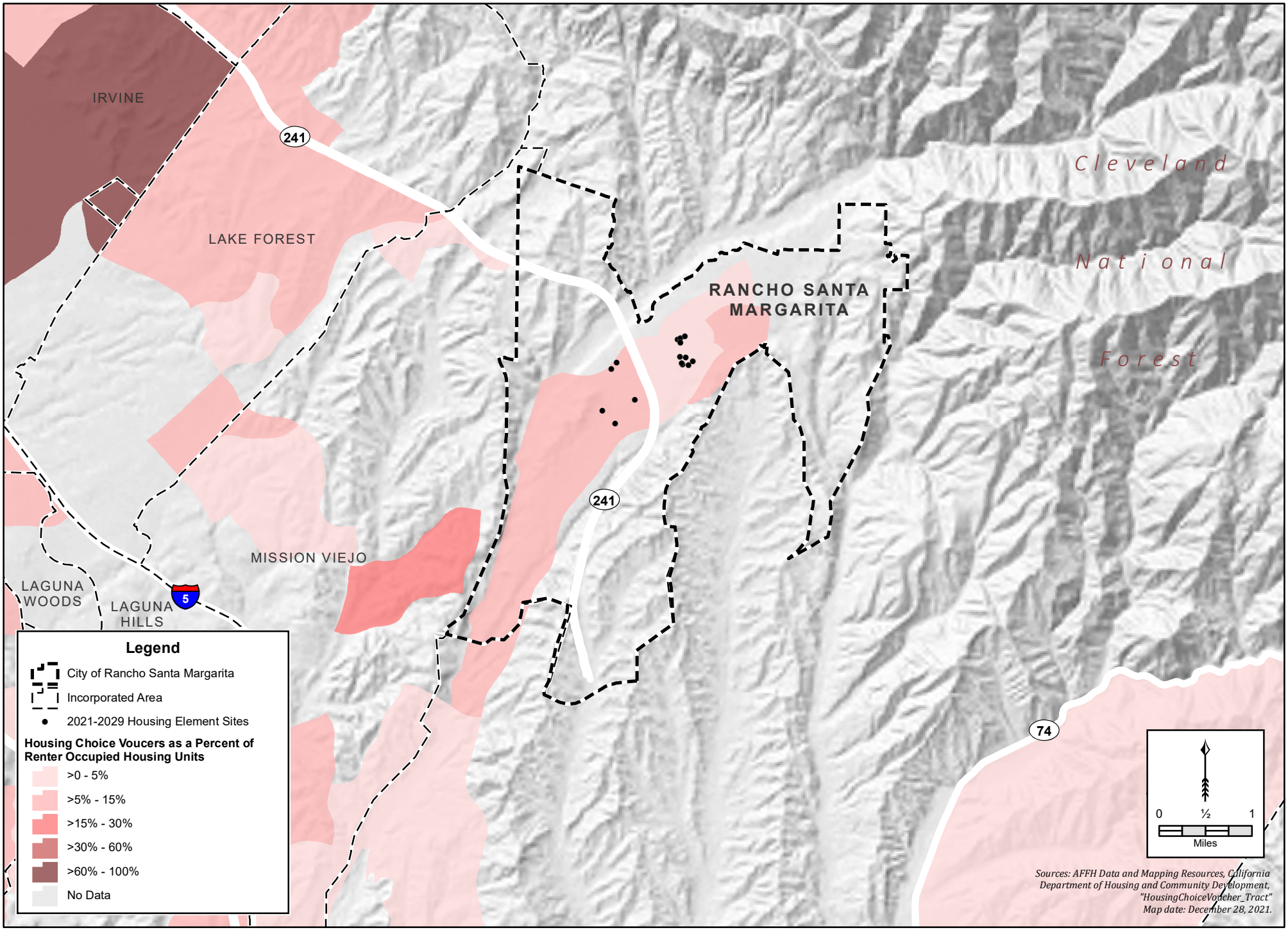

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Figure H- 5. Housing Choice Vouchers

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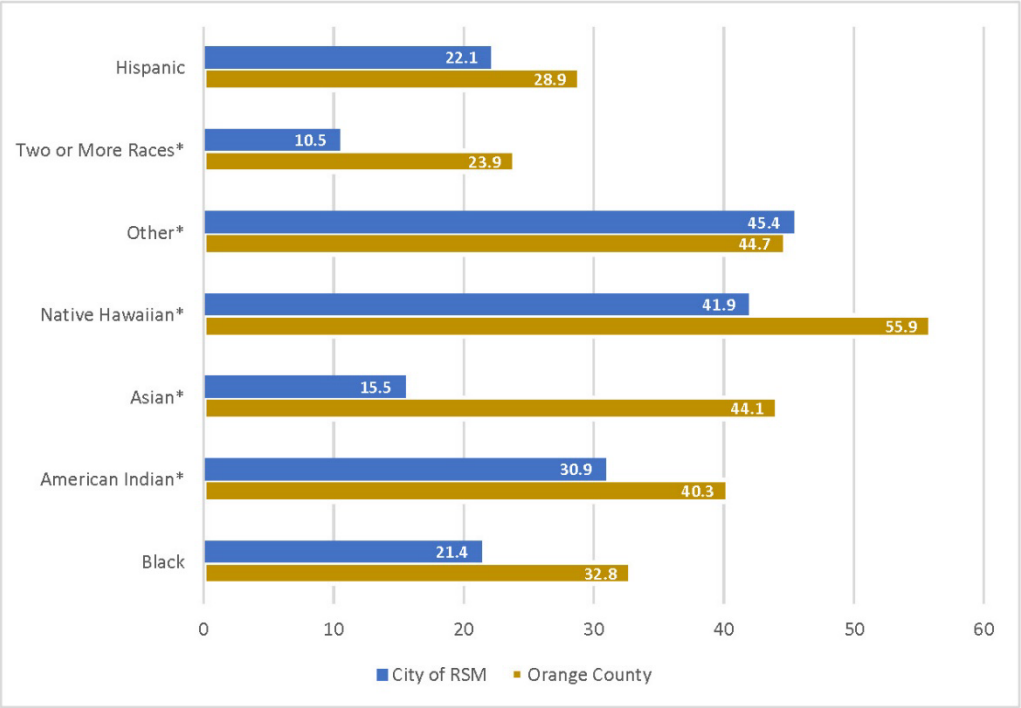
FIGURE H-6: DISSIMILARITY INDEX



	Black	American Indian*	Asian*	Native Hawaiian*	Other*	Two or More Races*	Hispanic
Orange County	32.8	40.3	44.1	55.9	44.7	23.9	28.9
City of RSM	21.4	30.9	15.5	41.9	45.4	10.5	22.1

Source: Census Scope, Social Science Data Analysis Network

** Not Hispanic or Latino*

Racial/Ethnic Concentrations

Rancho Santa Margarita is majority White residents (77.1%) with significant minority populations of Hispanic (20.7%) and Asian (10.7%) residents. This is a significantly larger White population than the County as a whole (61.7%). According to the County AI, the most common country of origin for Rancho Santa Margarita residents is Mexico, with 2.81% of the City population comprised of residents from Mexico. The remaining common countries of origin in the City are, in order, Philippines, El Salvador, Iran, China (excluding Hong Kong and Taiwan), India, Vietnam, German, Korea, and Argentina.

Figure H-7 presents the majority ethnic groups by census tract, illustrating that eastern Rancho Santa Margarita is mostly comprised of White residents and a mix of Latinx and White residents, whereas western Rancho Santa Margarita is comprised of three or more ethnic groups with no simple majority, and one census tract that is partially located in Mission Viejo is a more even mix of Asian and White residents. As shown in Figure H-8Figure H-6 this pattern is largely consistent with other communities to the south and east of Rancho Santa Margarita, including

unincorporated Orange County, but somewhat dissimilar to communities to the west and north of the City which have a higher concentration of Latinx/White majority census tracts as well as a greater number of White/Asian majority census tracts.

Table H-61 shows the demographic trends over time for the City and the larger region. Since 1990, the percentage of population that are Hispanic residents has increased at a greater rate in the City from 9.81% to 18.24% compared to the region which has increased from 34.74% to 44.44%. In comparison, the increase of Asian or Pacific Islander residents has been slower in the City compared to the larger region, increasing from 7.73% to 9.19% in the City and from 10.18% to 14.72% in the region.

TABLE H-61: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Racial/Ethnic	1990	2000	2010	Current
Rancho Santa Margarita				
White	80.59%	74.82%	67.28%	67.28%
Black	1.22%	2.12%	2.29%	1.60%
Hispanic	9.81%	12.60%	18.24%	18.24%
Asian or Pacific Islander	7.73%	9.11%	11.38%	9.19%
Native American	0.36%	0.68%	0.56%	0.18%
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA Region				
White	45.86%	35.72%	31.62%	31.62%
Black	8.62%	8.10%	7.27%	6.70%
Hispanic	34.74%	41.38%	44.44%	44.44%
Asian or Pacific Islander	10.18%	13.35%	15.95%	14.72%
Native American	0.32%	0.53%	0.42%	0.20%

Source: *HUD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Database, 2020.*

Diversity Index

Tracking the diversity of cities and counties throughout California is crucial to understanding the shifting demographics of race and ethnicity in California and the United States. The Environmental Systems Research Institute's (Esri) Diversity Index captures the racial and ethnic diversity of a geographic area in a single number, from 0 to 100. Scores less than 40 represent lower diversity in the jurisdiction while scores of greater than 85 represent higher diversity. Additionally, scores between 40-55 represent low diversity, 55-70 represent moderate diversity, and 70-85 represent high diversity. As shown in Figure H-9 there generally appears to be consistent to higher diversity index scores throughout the City of Rancho Santa Margarita (compared to its neighbors), with the highest diversity index scores (>85) located along Santa Margarita Parkway. The lower diversity index scores include census block groups that border Coto de Caza. The portion of the City with the lowest diversity index, located along the western border of the City adjacent to Coto de Caza, is unpopulated and part of O'Neill Regional Park. Figure H-10 shows the diversity index scores for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita in 2010. Comparing Figure H-9 and Figure H-10 several census tracts located along the border of Mission Viejo and along Santa Margarita Parkway and SR-241 have

higher density index scores in 2018 compared to 2010. As shown in Figure H-11, communities in Orange County with higher diversity scores are somewhat more likely to be located in the more racially and ethnically diverse north Orange County than they are in south Orange County.

Mapped Patterns of Integration and Segregation

Patterns of integration and segregation are also considered for people with disabilities, familial status, and income groups. Relying primarily on data available from the US Census, it is possible to map and consider existing patterns which may indicate historical influences and future trends by census tract and census block groups.

As shown in Figure H-15, persons with disabilities are present throughout the Rancho Santa Margarita community, with a higher concentration in the Town Center area. This area is composed of a mix of nonresidential uses and single-family attached and multi-family uses, including senior housing. The presence of senior housing facilities may be a contributing factor in the higher percentage of persons reporting disabilities. The other two areas of the City with higher concentrations of persons with disabilities includes two census tracts along the City's western boundary with the City of Mission Viejo; these census tracts cross City boundaries and do not indicate a pattern of isolation of persons with disabilities. As described in the County AI and illustrated in Figure H-13, communities with higher concentrations of persons with disabilities are somewhat more likely to be located in the more racially and ethnically diverse northern portion of the County than they are in the southern portion of the county. Six out of the eight cities that have higher concentrations of persons with disabilities across most types of disabilities are located in the northern part of the county. The AI also finds that the age of residents is related to the proportion of the population with disabilities, with communities with younger residents less likely to have high proportions of persons with disabilities and communities with older residents to have more residents with disabilities. In comparison, diverse cities in northern Orange County, like Santa Ana and Tustin, have relatively low concentrations of persons with disabilities. This may stem in part from the fact that these communities have relatively youthful populations and disability status is highly correlated with age. In comparison, less diverse cities in southern Orange County, like Laguna Woods with a large retirement community, have high concentrations of persons with disabilities. In 2018, the median age in Rancho Santa Margarita (37.6 years) was slightly lower than that of Orange County (37.8 years). Based on this analysis, the City finds that there are not significant patterns of segregation impacting persons with disabilities living in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Family makeup, including married couples (with or without children), persons over the age of 18 living alone and female headed households can provide insight into potential segregation issues in the community. As shown in Figure H-16 approximately half of the census tracts in the City have 60 to 80 percent of its population in married households. All of the census tracts have 50 percent or greater of its population in married households. Countywide, the areas with higher concentrations of married households are located in less densely developed areas of the County, as illustrated in Figure H-15. Dense communities in Santa Ana, Anaheim and Garden Grove have a lower percentage of married households. As

seen in Figures H-16 and H-17, this pattern continues for married households with children. Rancho Santa Margarita is also home to a limited number of female-headed households, as illustrated on Figure H-18. All census tracts have a consistently low level of female-headed households, which mirrors that of the region. There are no known historic patterns of segregation by familial status, including by householder gender, which the City finds as contributing factors to continued segregation in Rancho Santa Margarita. Figure H-18 indicates that female-headed households are located in a variety of census tracts with different incomes, access to opportunities, and resource levels. As shown in Figure H-19Figure H-16 communities in Orange County with higher concentrations of female-headed households are somewhat more likely to be located in the more racially and ethnically diverse northern portion of the County than they are in the southern portion of the County.

The City's older residents, persons 65 years of age or older, are dispersed throughout the community, as shown in Figure H-20. The concentration of disabled noted on Figure H-12 represents an area where all of the senior housing in the community is concentrated. This area contains a variety of age-restricted and senior living facilities which is conveniently located in the center of town near goods, services, and the City's Bell Tower Regional Community Center (BTRCC). The BTRCC was designed and built as an intergenerational community center to meet the needs of all generations in the community. Programming at the BTRCC includes senior activities and meals, as well as after school care for elementary school aged children, among many other programs specific to certain populations and general for all residents of Rancho Santa Margarita. In this respect, this concentration in the center of town is a benefit to the community because it provides valuable senior housing which is located in proximity to the seniors' families and well served by local stores, services, and recreational opportunities. City Hall is mobility friendly, Public Meeting agendas are posted on the City's website and in public locations, and notifications provide a contact person to request for additional accommodations, as needed. However, such requests for accommodations are rarely received. Additionally, the City's website is ADA compliant. It should be noted that the other two areas on Figure H-12 which show a high concentration of disabled persons are influenced by age restricted communities in Mission Viejo, which are outside of the City and do not represent areas within Rancho Santa Margarita with a concentration of persons with disabilities. As shown in Figure H-21, the patterns in Rancho Santa Margarita do not appear significantly different than those of the region, and the City does not find any trends or existing patterns of isolation based on age.

When considering patterns of segregated economic wealth, as indicated by median household income, there are some notable concentrates of relatively lower levels of median household income in the City's northern neighborhoods, as illustrated on Figure H-19. The census tract block group with the lowest median household income represents the Villa La Paz Apartment Homes, located at the southeast corner of Antonio Parkway and Santa Margarita Parkway. Other census tract block groups with higher concentrations of multi-family projects are also located in this area, specifically along Santa Margarita Parkway, east of SR-241, and the location of these multi-family units generally coincides with lower median household income levels. The City's multi-family units provide more affordable

housing options than the City's single-family housing stock, and it would be expected that median household incomes would be lower in census tracts with higher proportions of multi-family units. As shown in Figure H-19 this pattern appears consistent with the region, where lower levels of median household income also correspond to census tracts with higher proportions of multi-family/rental housing, as seen in the neighboring jurisdiction of Mission Viejo. Communities in Orange County with lower median incomes are somewhat more likely to be located in the more racially and ethnically diverse northern and central portion of the County, than they are in the southern and coastal portion of the County. In comparison, the median income in Rancho Santa Margarita ($115,073) is significantly higher than the Countywide median of $85,398.

The City will continue to monitor trends in the concentration/segregation of lower income households and seek ways to address existing patterns of concentration and prevent further concentration as new development occurs.

Findings

The City has considered trends and patterns related to integration and segregation based on racial and ethnic factors, disability, female-headed households, and median household income. In most cases, there are no distinguishable patterns of segregation, and the community appears to be well-integrated. However, when considering median household income, there is a correlation between lower levels of median household income and the location of multi-family/rental units, which is to be expected given that multi-family units are more affordable than single-family homes. Moreover, when considering patterns of integration and segregation compared to its neighbors (including the cities of Irvine, Mission Viejo, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Aliso Viejo), Rancho Santa Margarita's patterns appear to be consistent with the region. As part of the City's regular participation in the County AI, the City will continue to consider these patterns to determine if there are any changes from current conditions.

The analysis indicates that RSM is one of several areas in Orange County with patterns of White isolation. Interestingly, the other communities with patterns of White isolation include neighboring communities such as Mission Viejo and Lake Forest, and nearby communities Laguna Niguel and Aliso Viejo. Rancho Santa Margarita is a newer master planned community, similar to Aliso Viejo. Both communities are experiencing an increase in integration as the communities age, and as the County becomes more integrated as a whole.

What the data does not show is how much longevity the City's residents have. Staff is aware that a large number of residents have lived in Rancho Santa Margarita since the 1990s. There are a surprising number of original homeowners in the community. Accordingly, it is not unexpected that the City has a large concentration of White residents, because that was a characteristic of south Orange County as new communities developed. As the long-standing residents age and relocate from this community, further integration is expected to occur.

Racially or Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty (R/ECAP)

To assist communities in identifying racially/ethnically concentrated areas of

poverty (R/ECAPs), HUD has developed a census tract-based definition of R/ECAPs. The definition involves a racial/ethnic concentration threshold and a poverty test. The racial/ethnic concentration threshold is straightforward: R/ECAPs must have a non-white population of 50 percent or more. According to the HUD AFFH Data Documentation White Paper of June 2013, regarding the poverty threshold, Wilson (1980) defines neighborhoods of extreme poverty as census tracts with 40 percent or more of individuals living at or below the poverty line. Because overall poverty levels are substantially lower in many parts of the country, HUD supplements this with an alternate criterion. Thus, a neighborhood can be a R/ECAPs if it has a poverty rate that exceeds 40% or is three or more times the average tract poverty rate for the metropolitan/micropolitan area, whichever threshold is lower.

The 2020 AI performed an analysis of R/ECAPs within Orange County. There are four R/ECAPs in Orange County, two of which are found in Santa Ana, two of which are found in Irvine. However, no R/ECAPs were identified in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. Further analysis using the HUD RECAP GIS mapping tool confirms that all census tracts within Rancho Santa Margarita have a RECAP value of 0, indicating that the census tracts within Rancho Santa Margarita do not meet the defined parameters for a racially or ethnically concentrated area of poverty as defined by HUD.

Comparing Figure H-10 (Diversity Index) to Figure H-19 (Median Household Income), there does not appear to be a direct connection between patterns of racial/ethnic diversity and median income levels. The census tract block groups with the lowest level of diversity (40-55) have the highest median household incomes (note that there is one census tract block group shown as the "lowest" level of diversity, but this area is within O'Neill Regional Park and other dedicated open space and is uninhabited). Conversely, areas ranking in the moderate (55-85) and higher (85+) diversity index categories appear to have a range of median household incomes. As discussed in the Findings section, the Housing Plan includes programs to encourage increased diversity and housing opportunities in the City and to provide education related to fair housing rights.

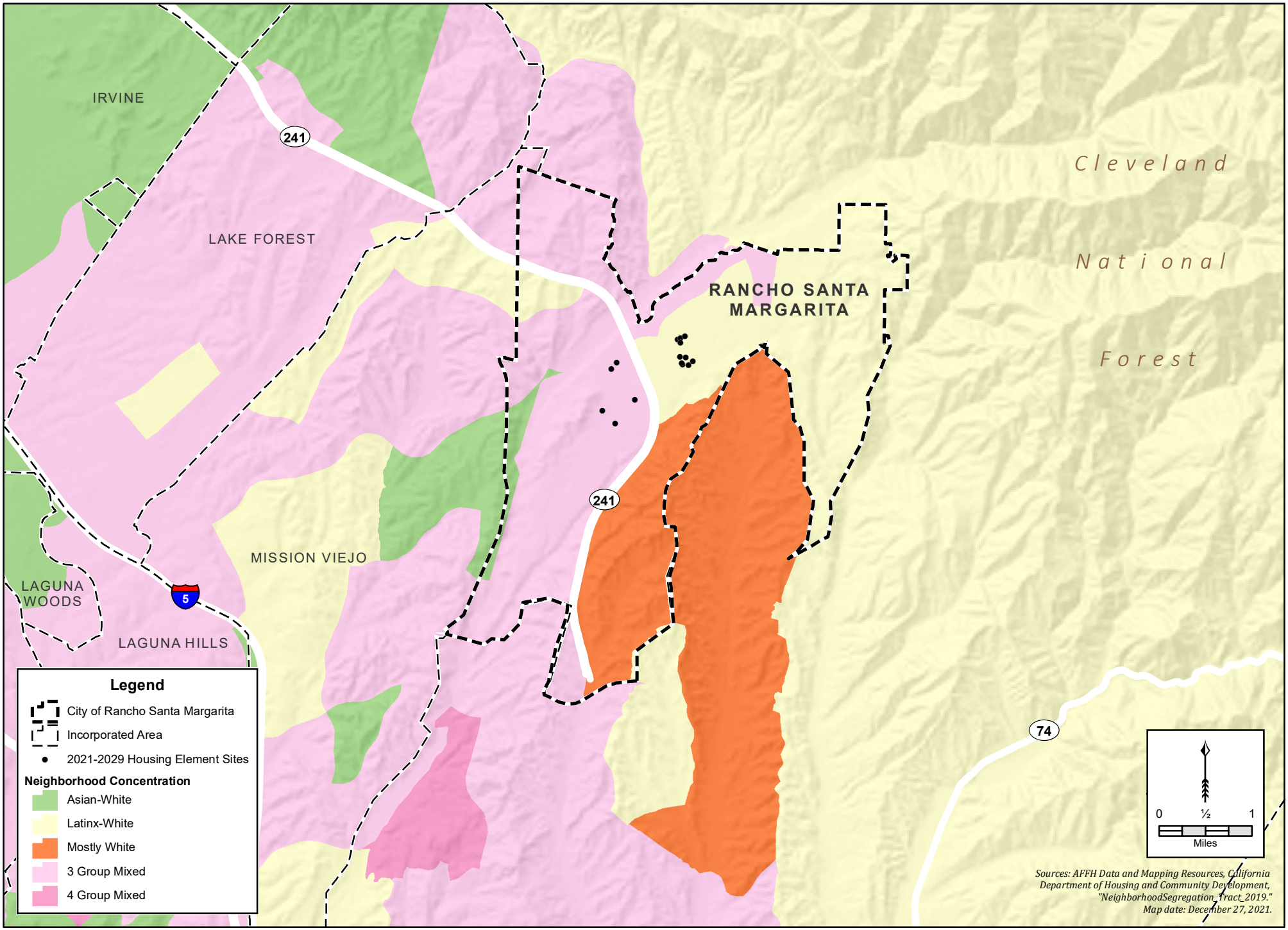


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Figure H-7. Neighborhood Concentration by Census Tract

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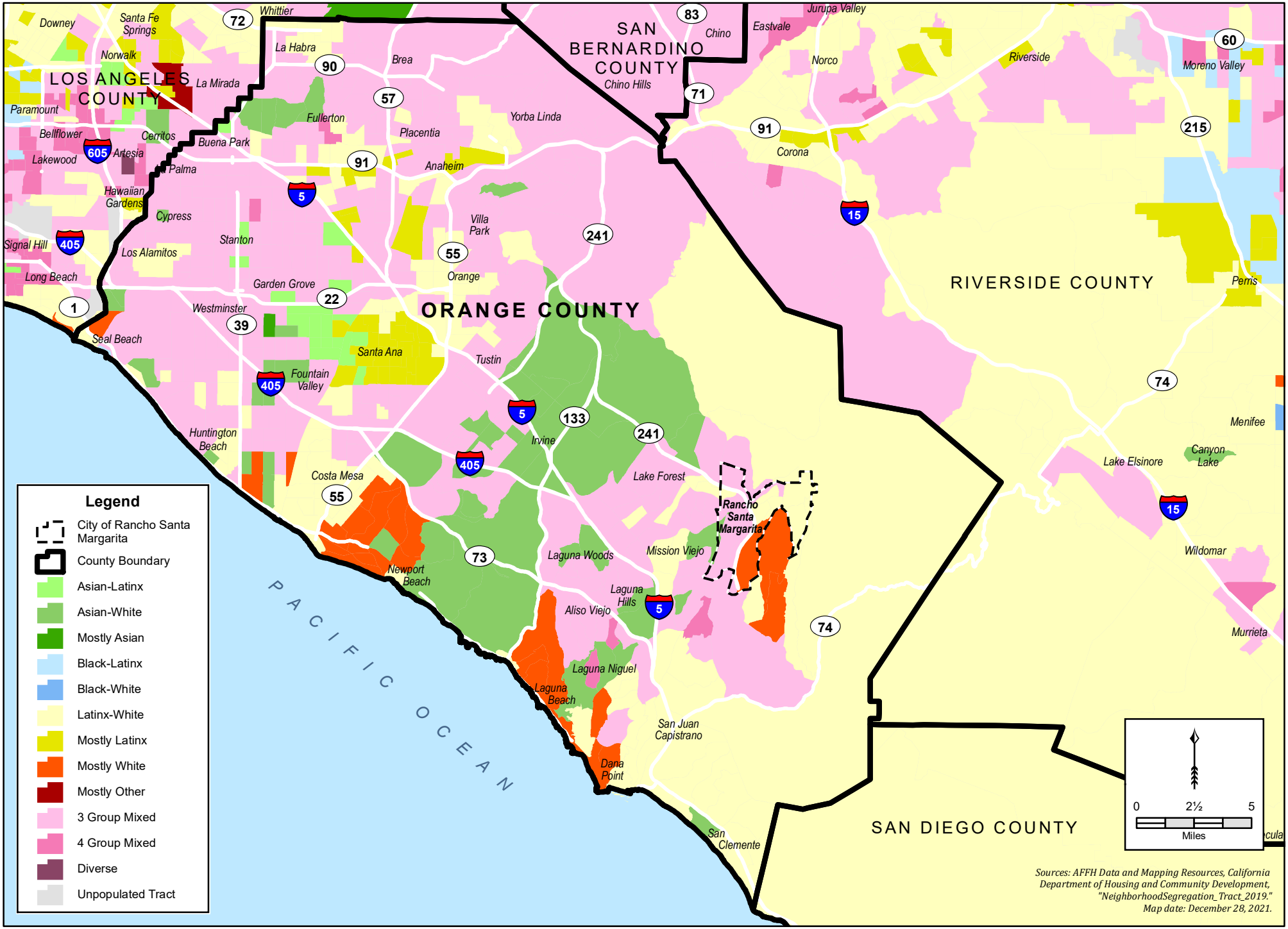

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Figure H-8. Neighborhood Concentration by Census Tract - Countywide

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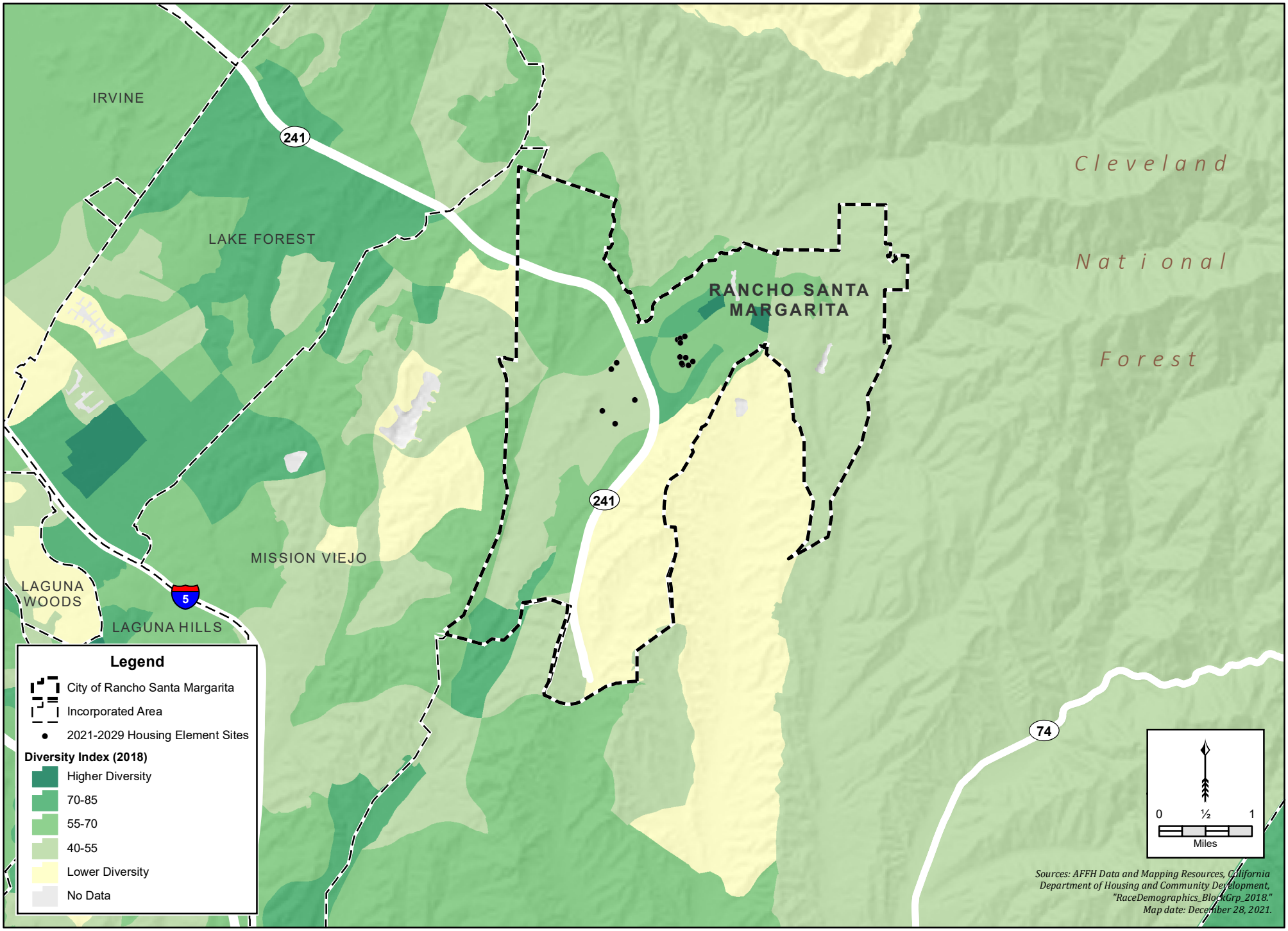

Figure H- 9. Diversity Index by Census Block Group 2018

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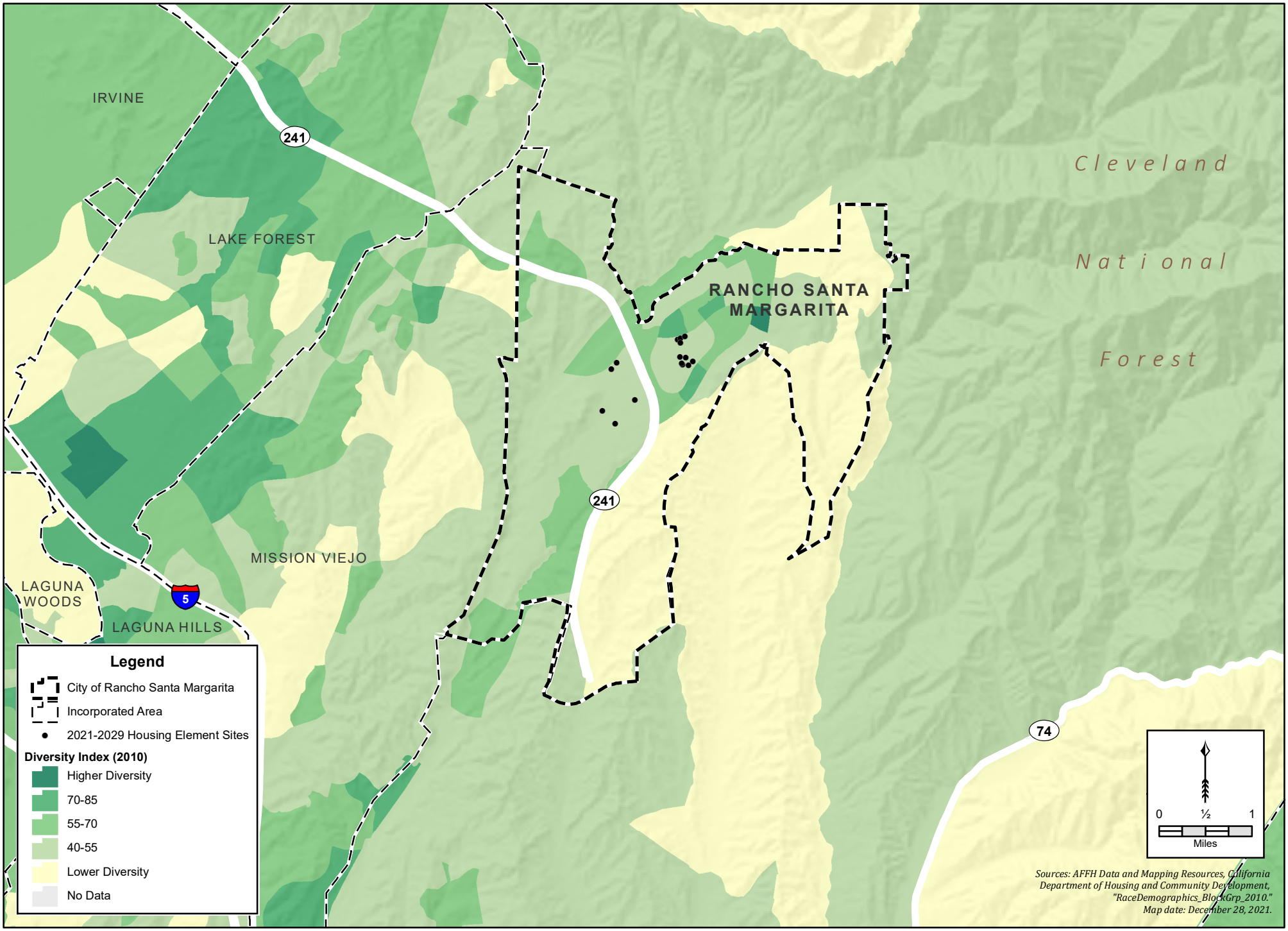

Figure H-10. Diversity Index by Census Block Group 2010

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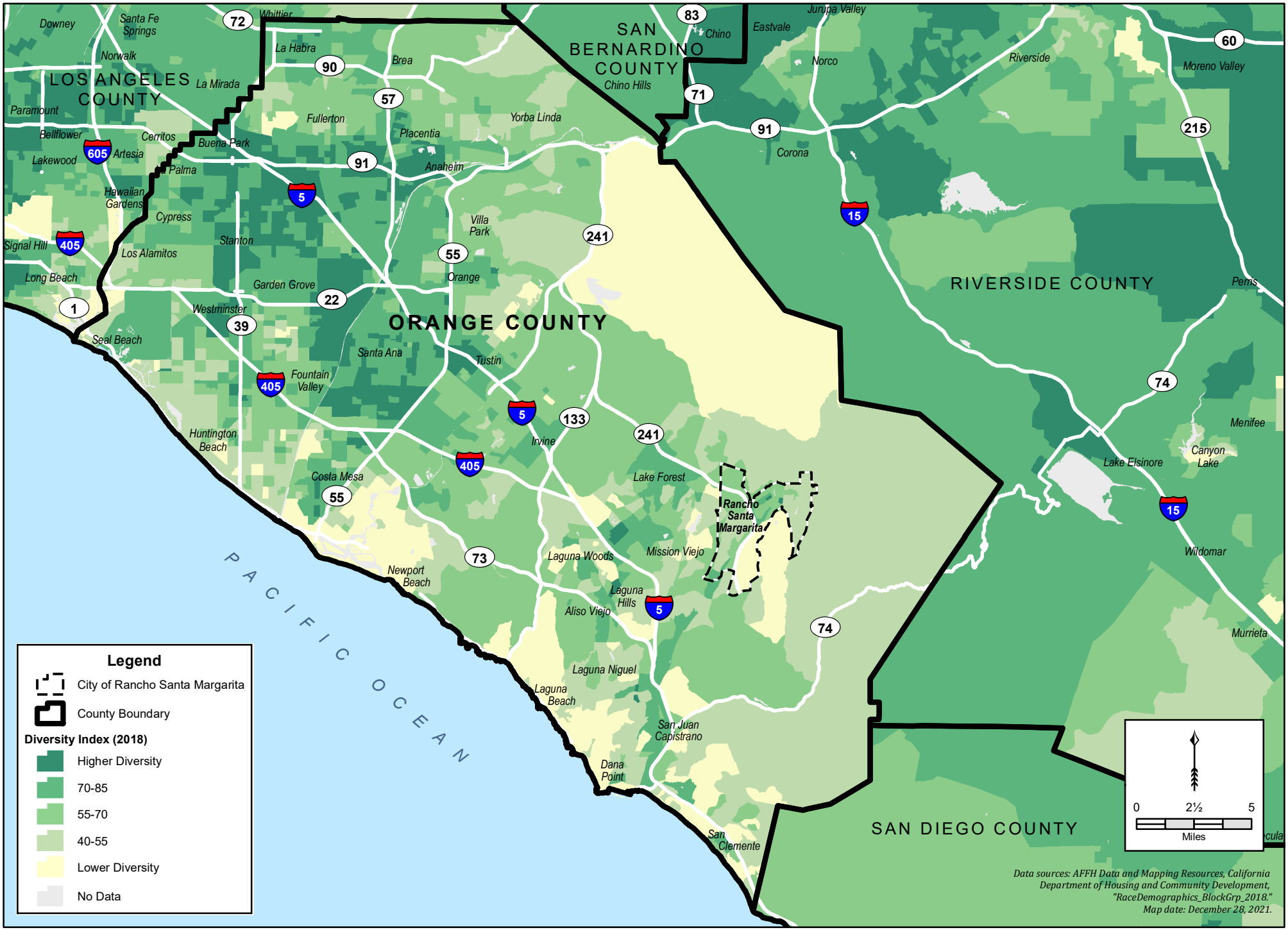

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Figure H-11. Diversity Index by Census Block Group - Countywide

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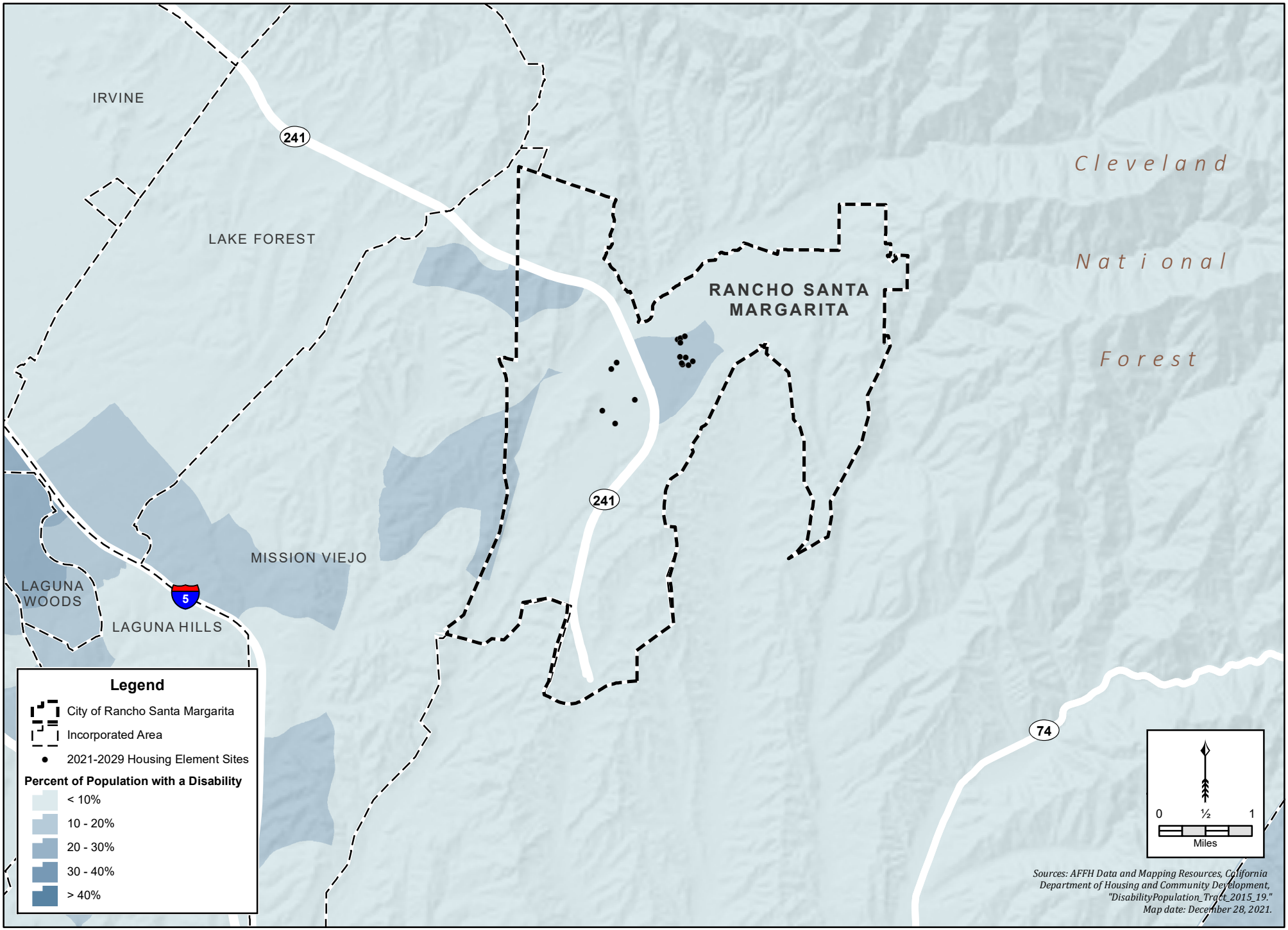

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Figure H-12. Proportion of Population with Disabilities by Census Tract

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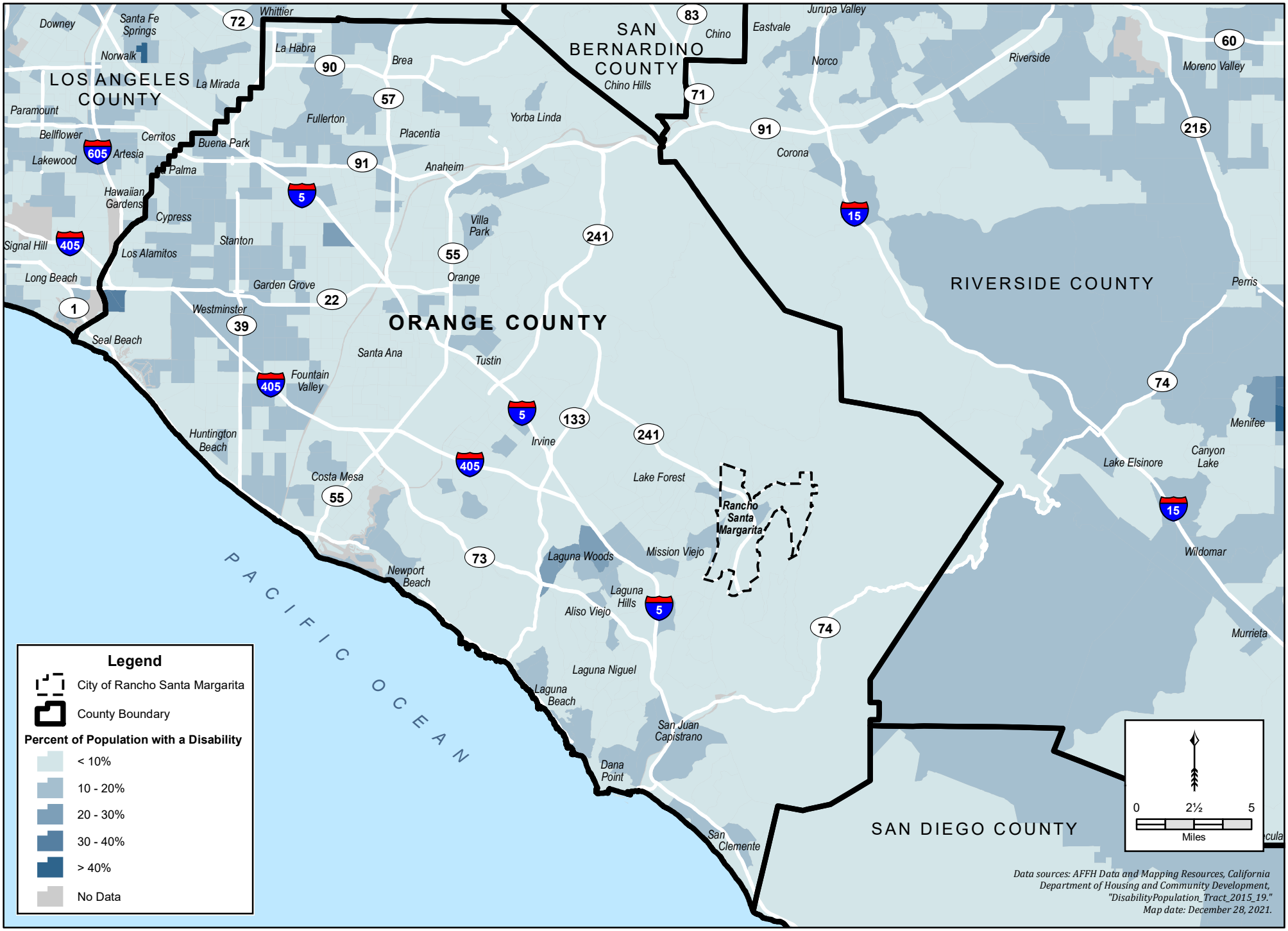

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Figure H-13. Proportion of Population with Disabilities by Census Tract - Countywide

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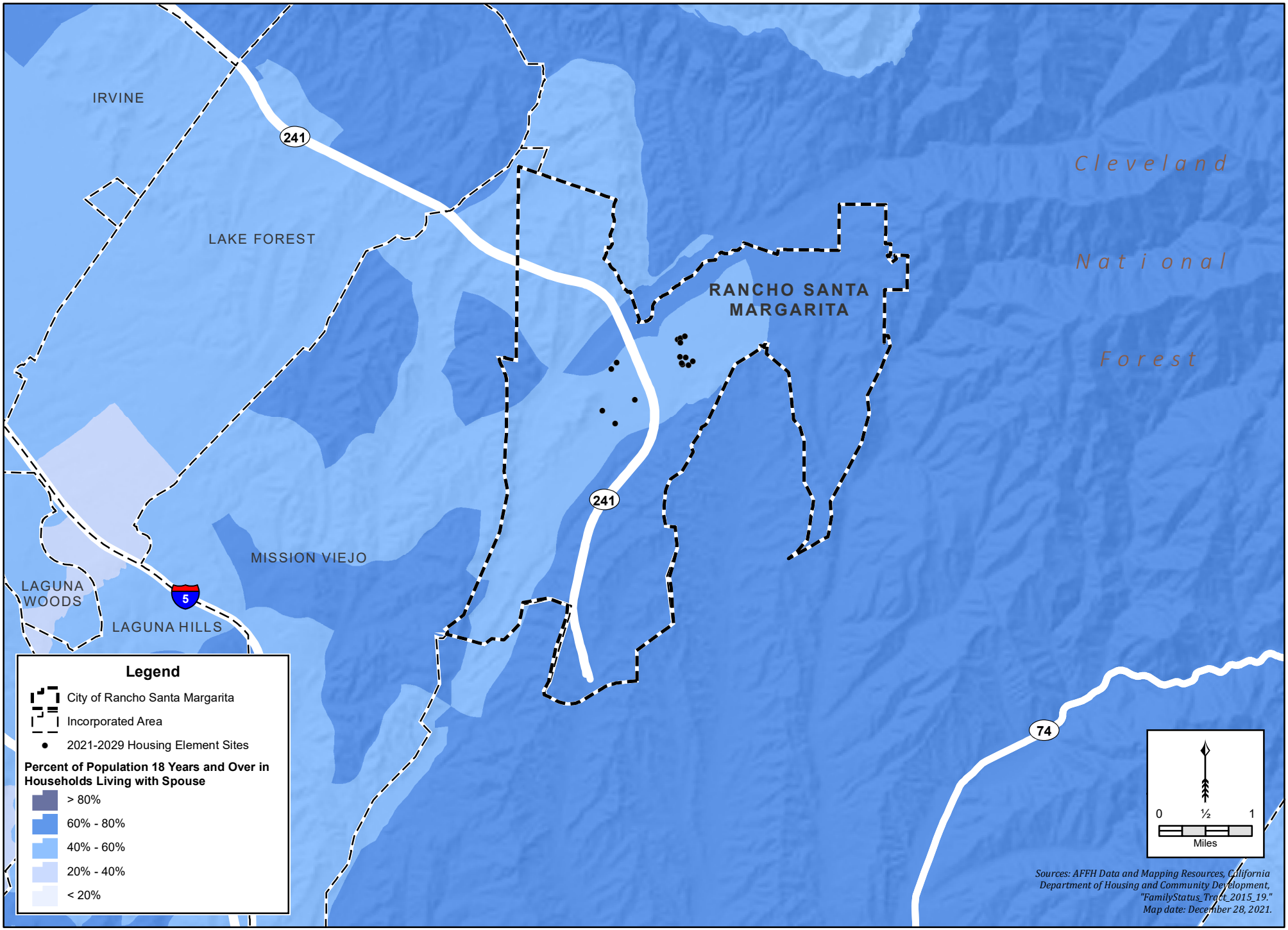

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Figure H-14. Percent of Population 18 Years and Over in Households Living with Spouse

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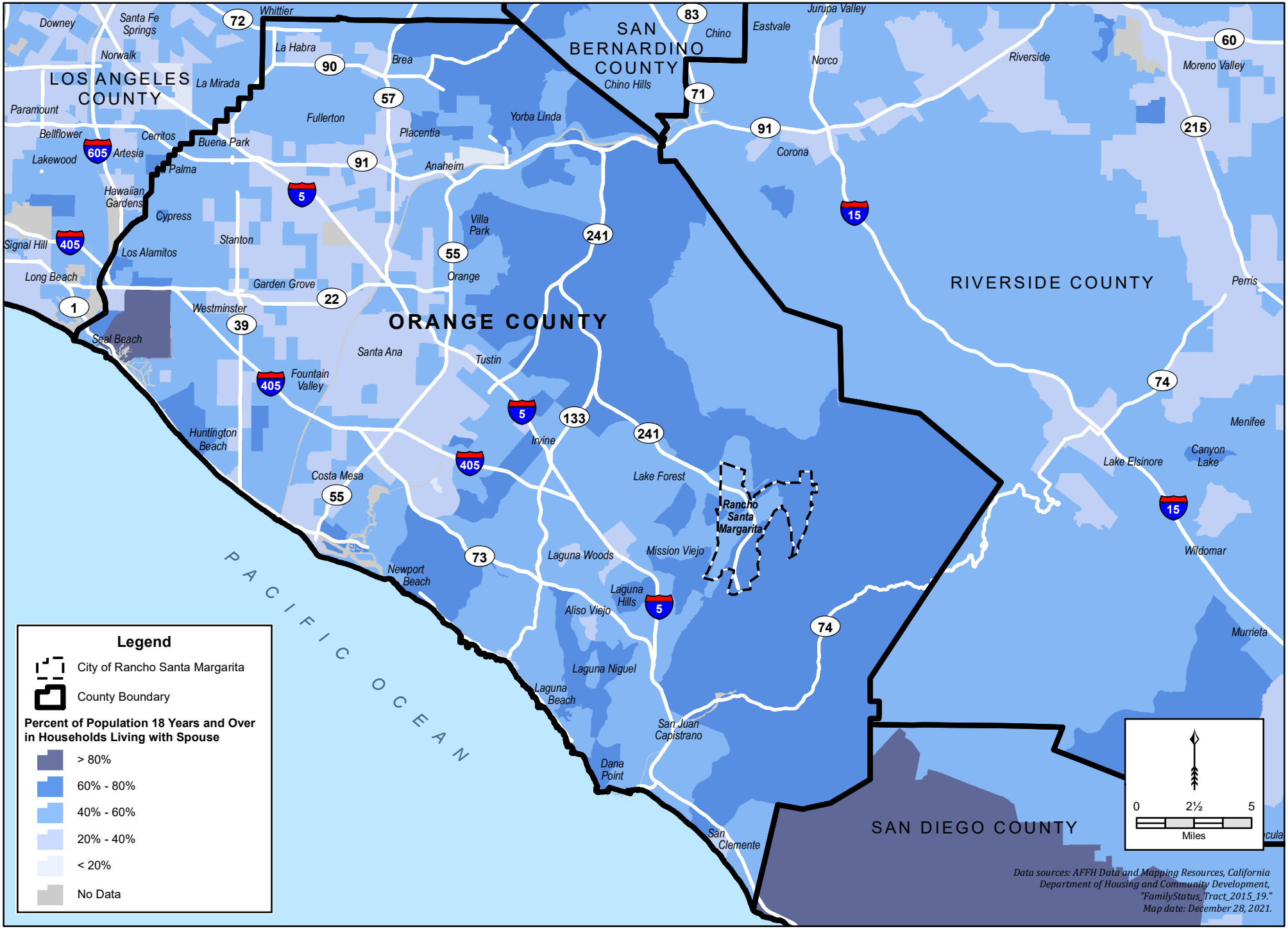

Figure H-15. Percent of Population18 Years and Over in Households Living with Spouse - Countywide

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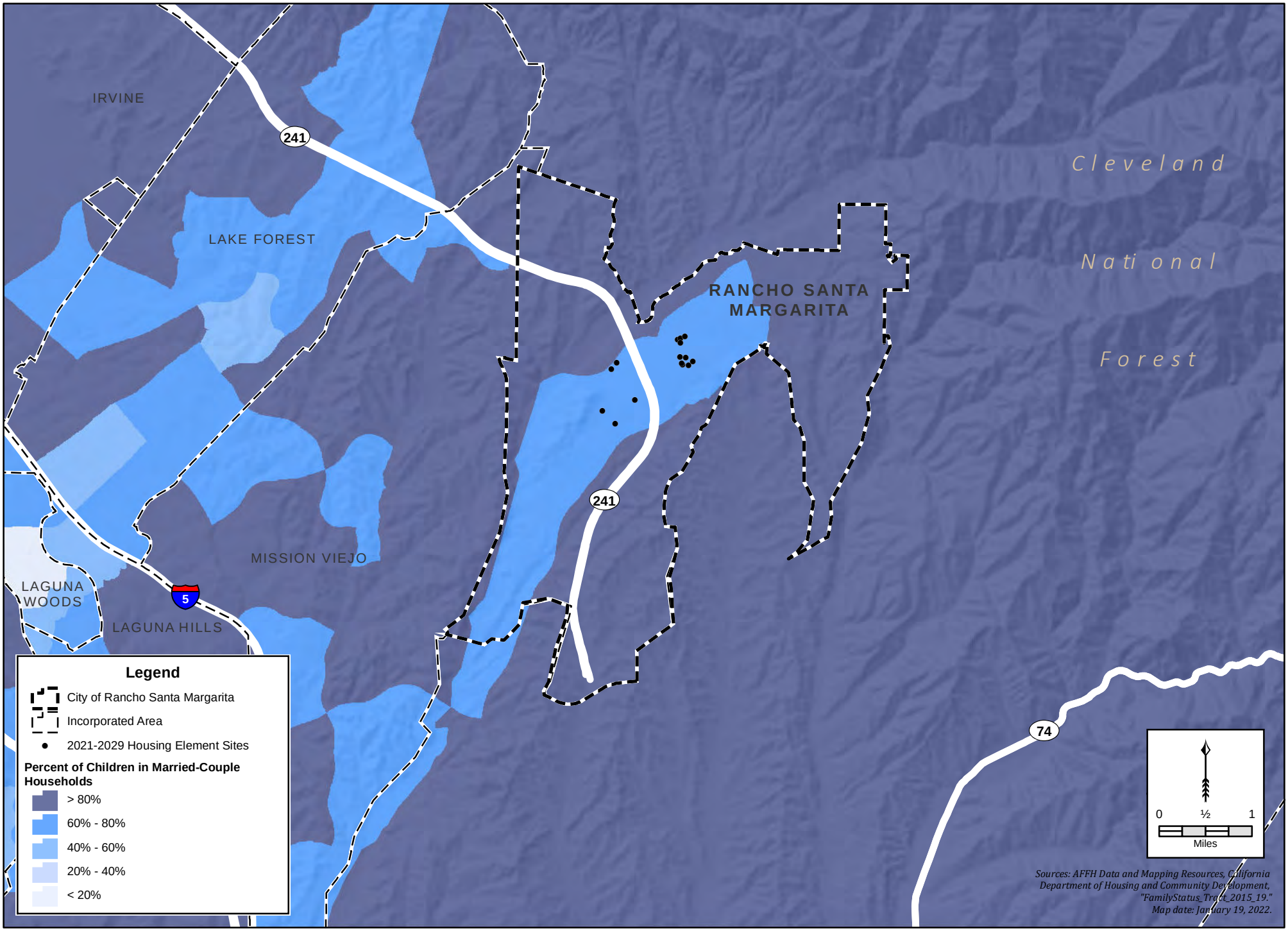

Figure H-16. Percent of Children in Married Couple Households

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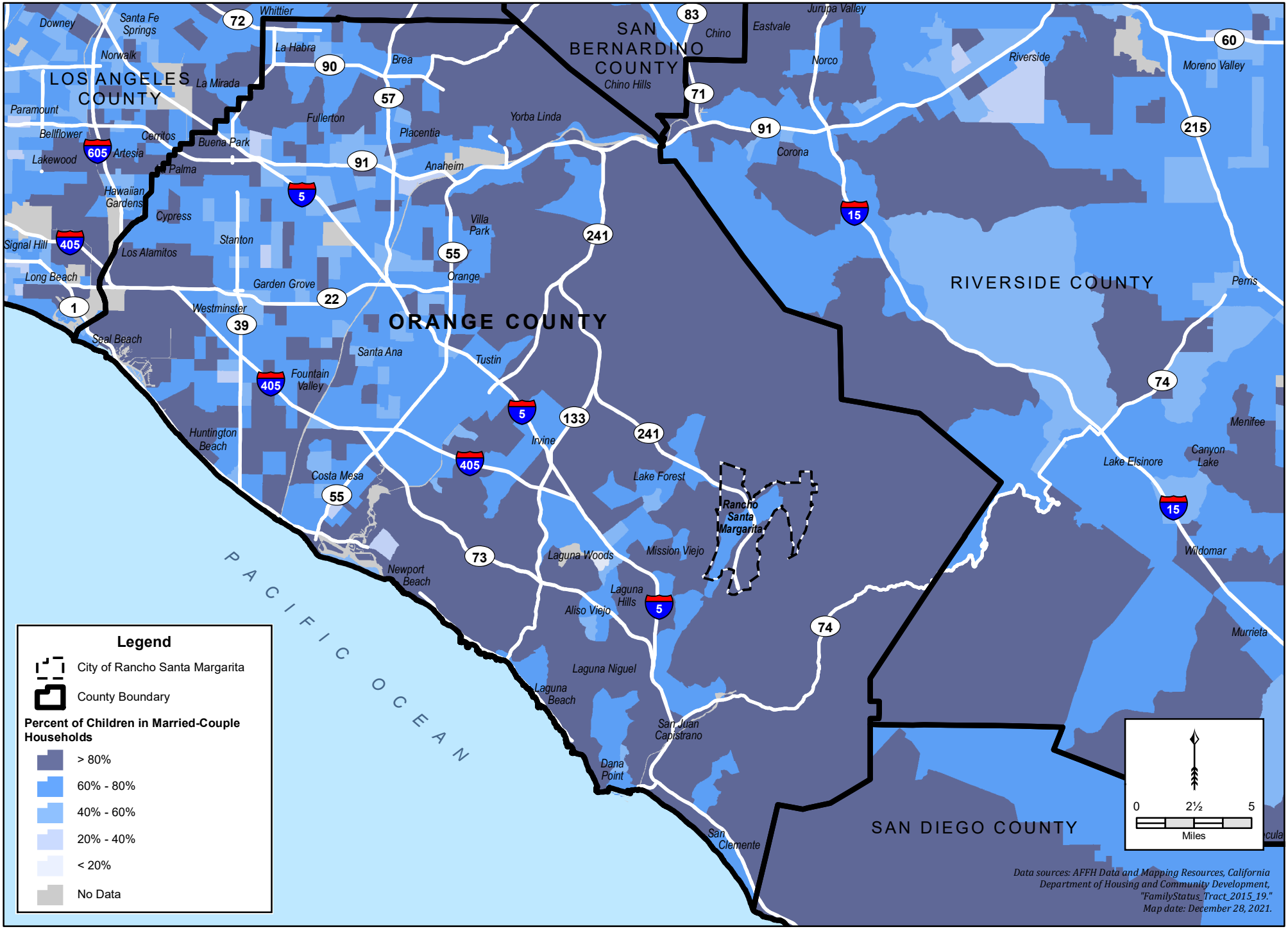

Figure H-17. Percent of Children in Married Couple Households - Countywide

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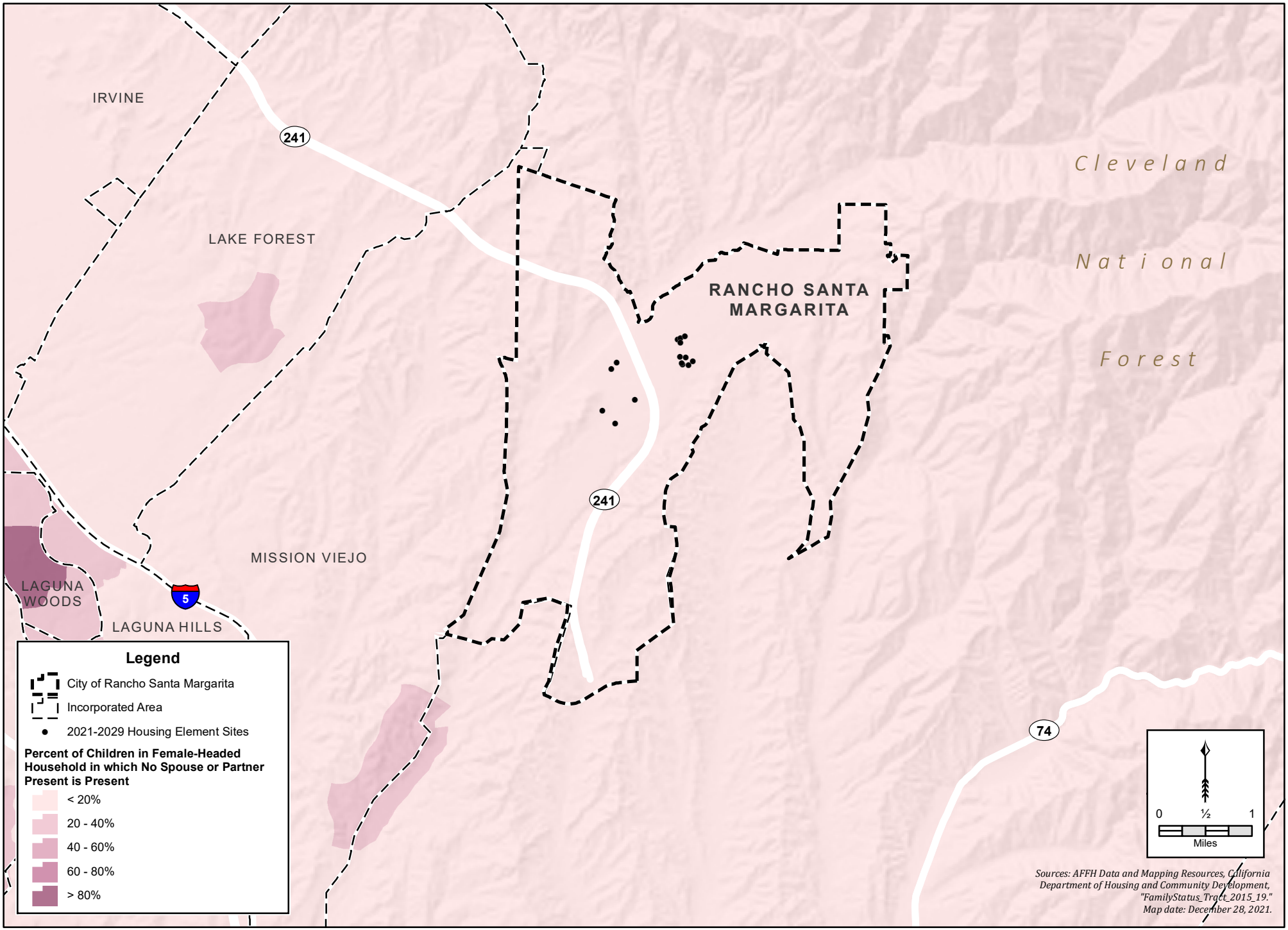

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Figure H-18. Female-Headed Households by Proportion of Children Present by Census Tract

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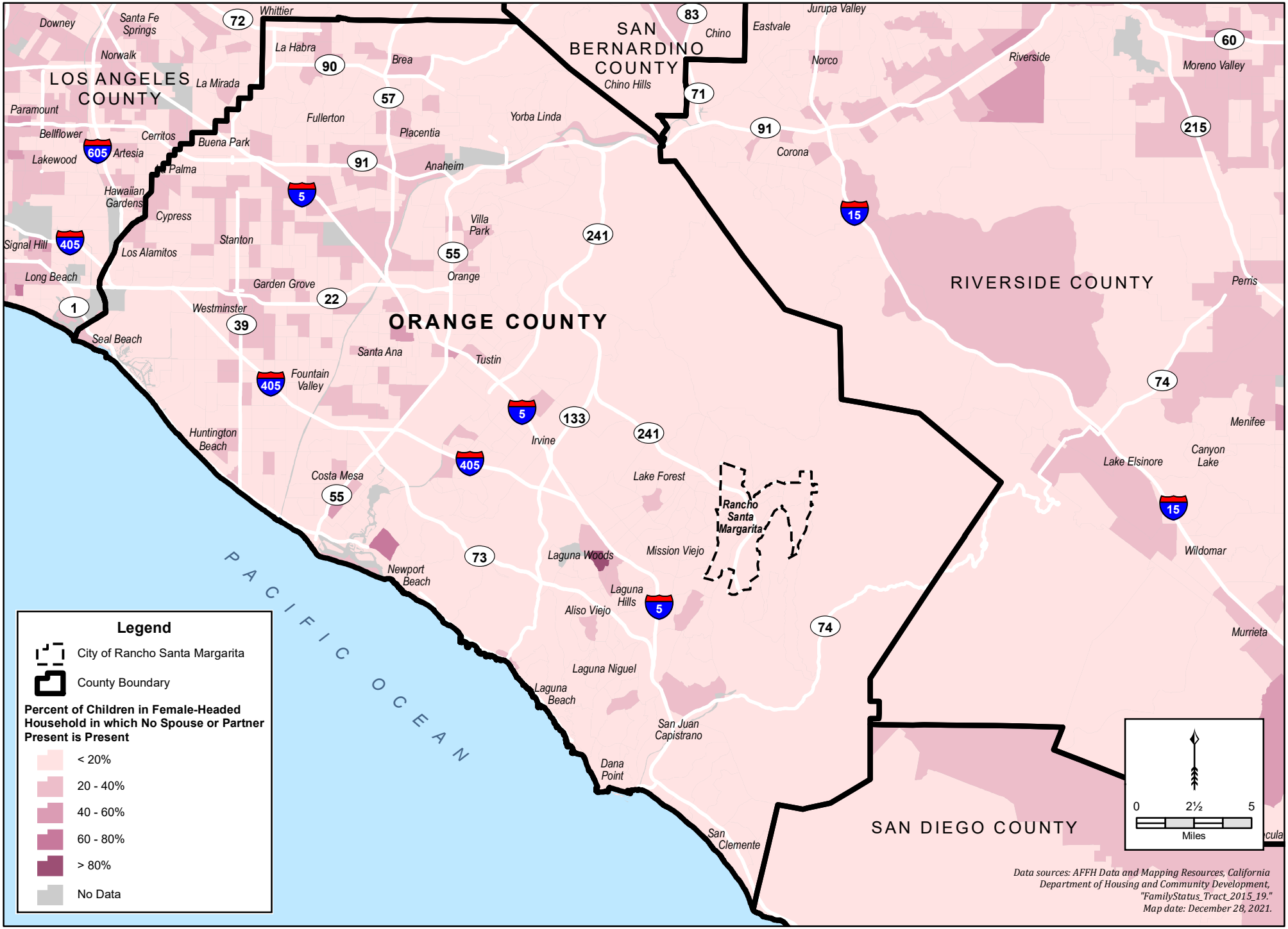

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Figure H-19. Female-Headed Households by Proportion of Children Present by Census Tract - Countywide

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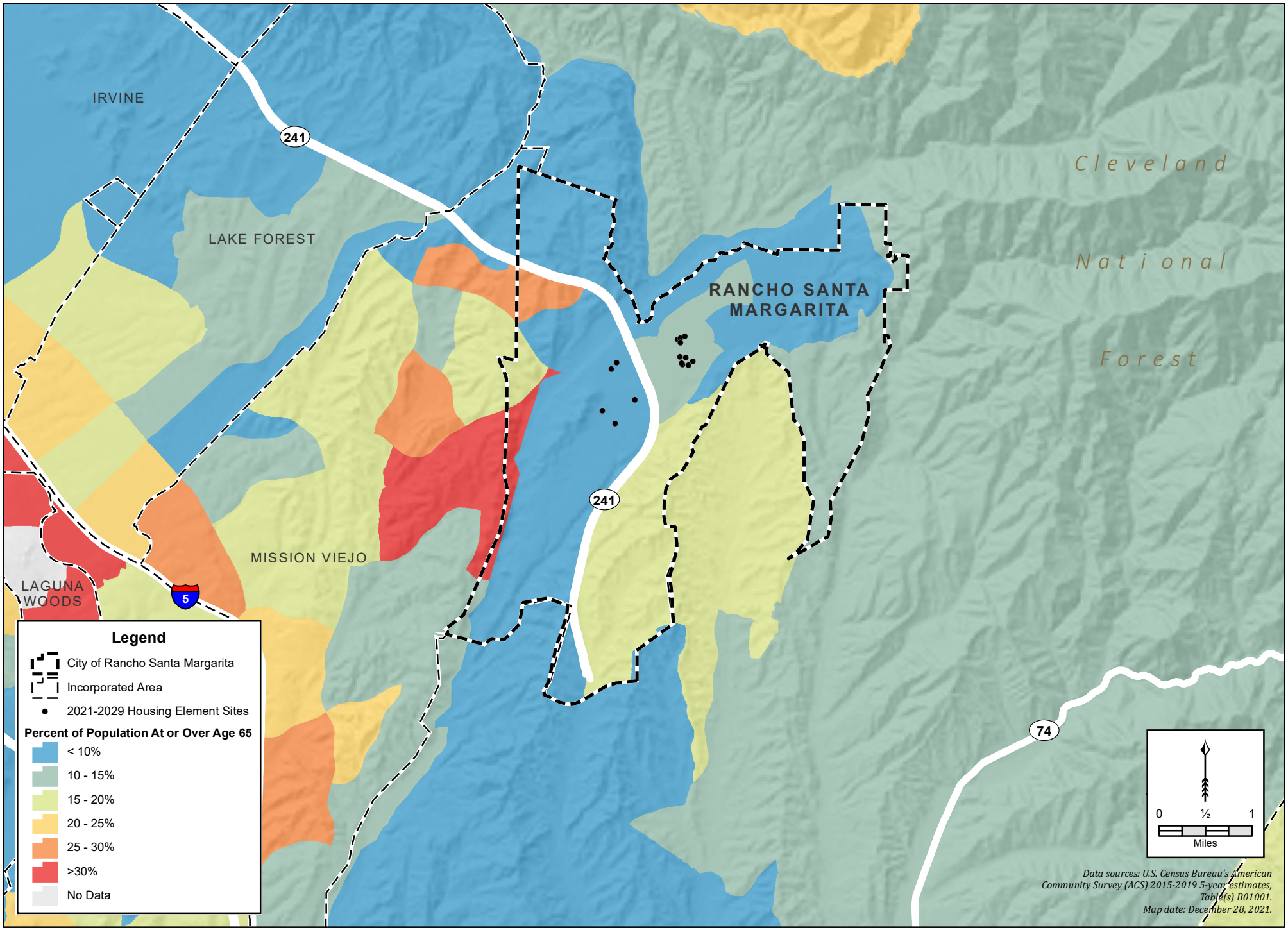

Figure H-20. Proportion of Senior Residents by Census Tract

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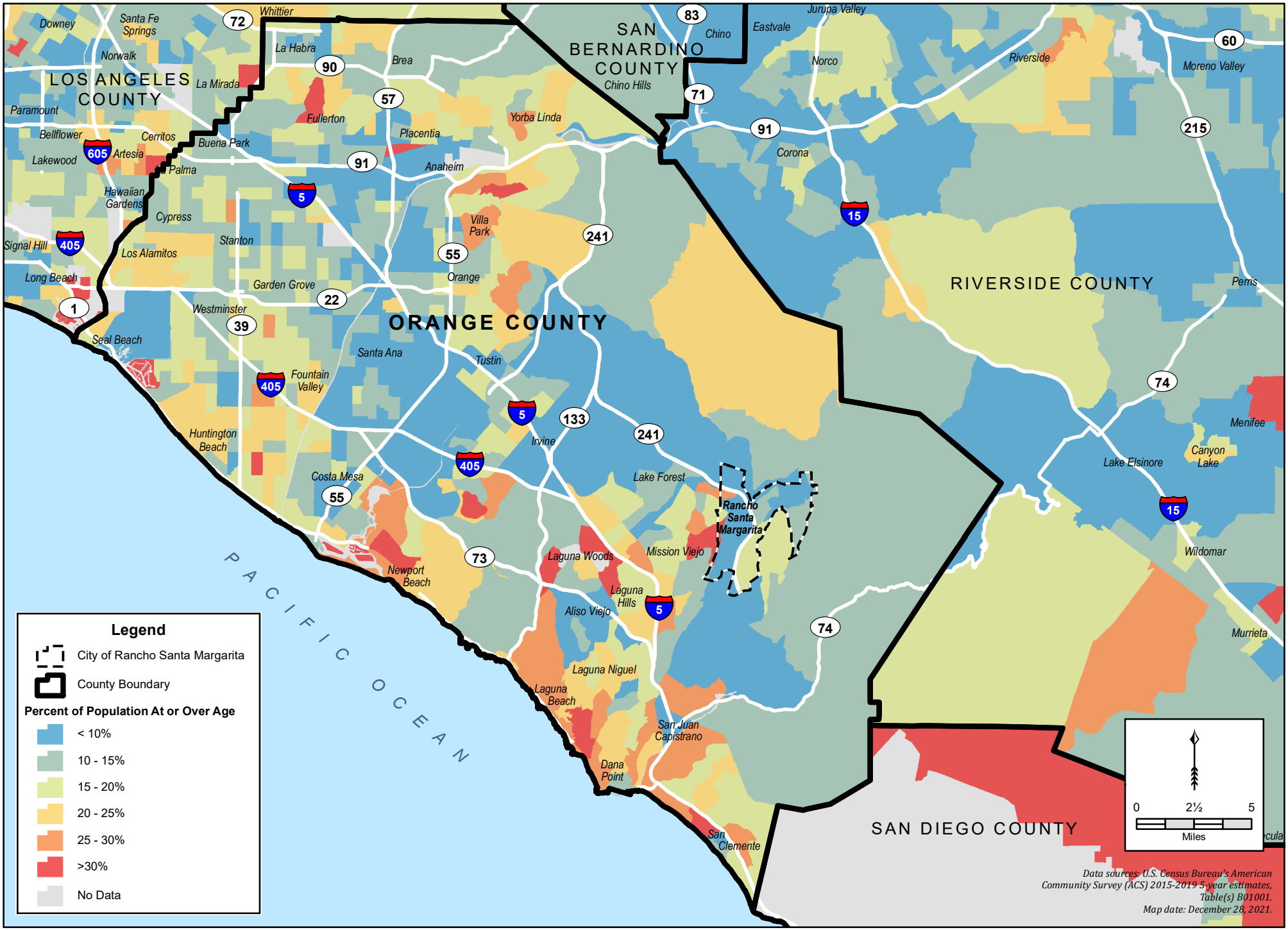

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Figure H-21. Proportion of Senior Residents by Census Tract - Countywide

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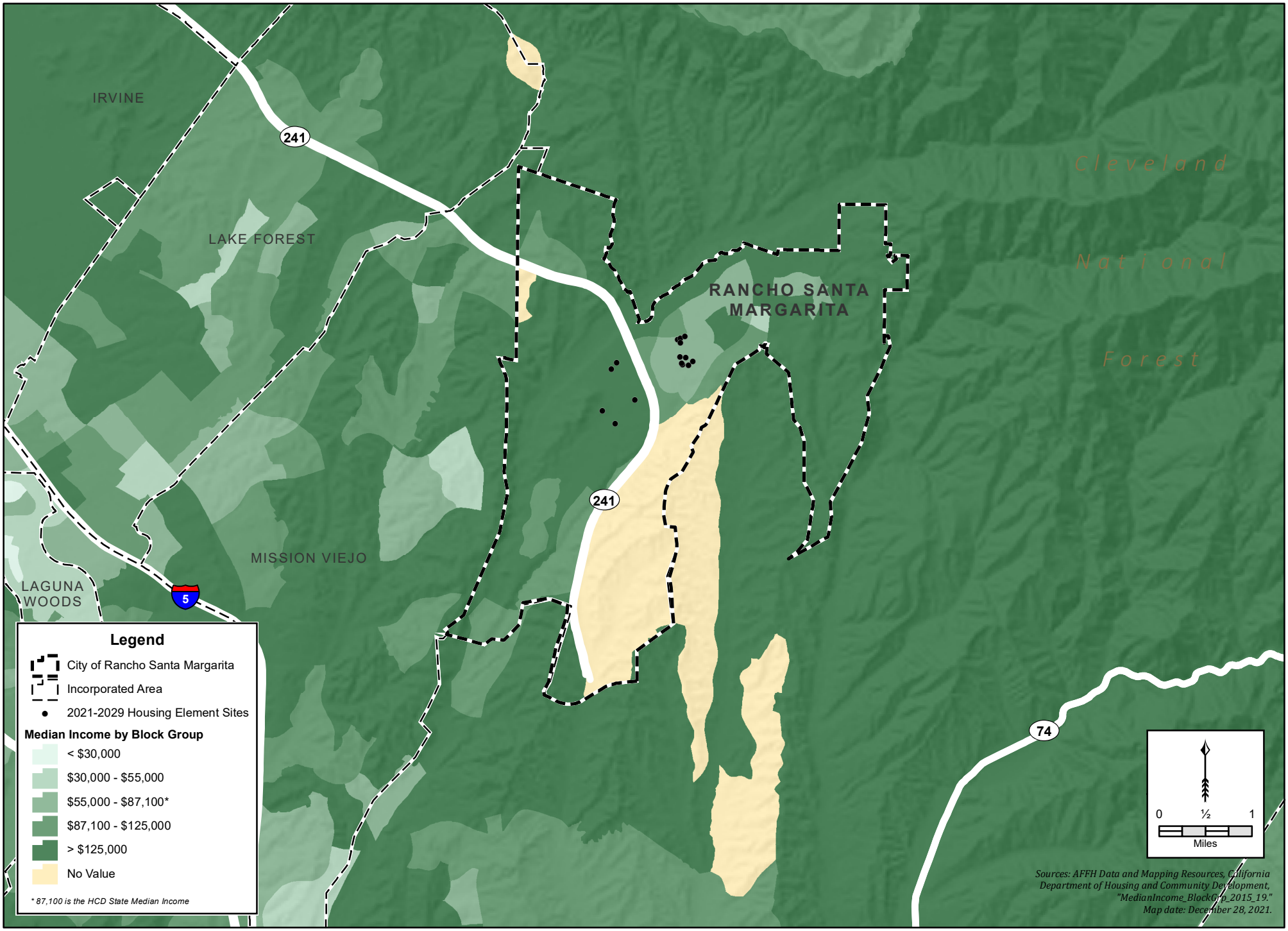

Figure H-22. Median Household Income by Block Group

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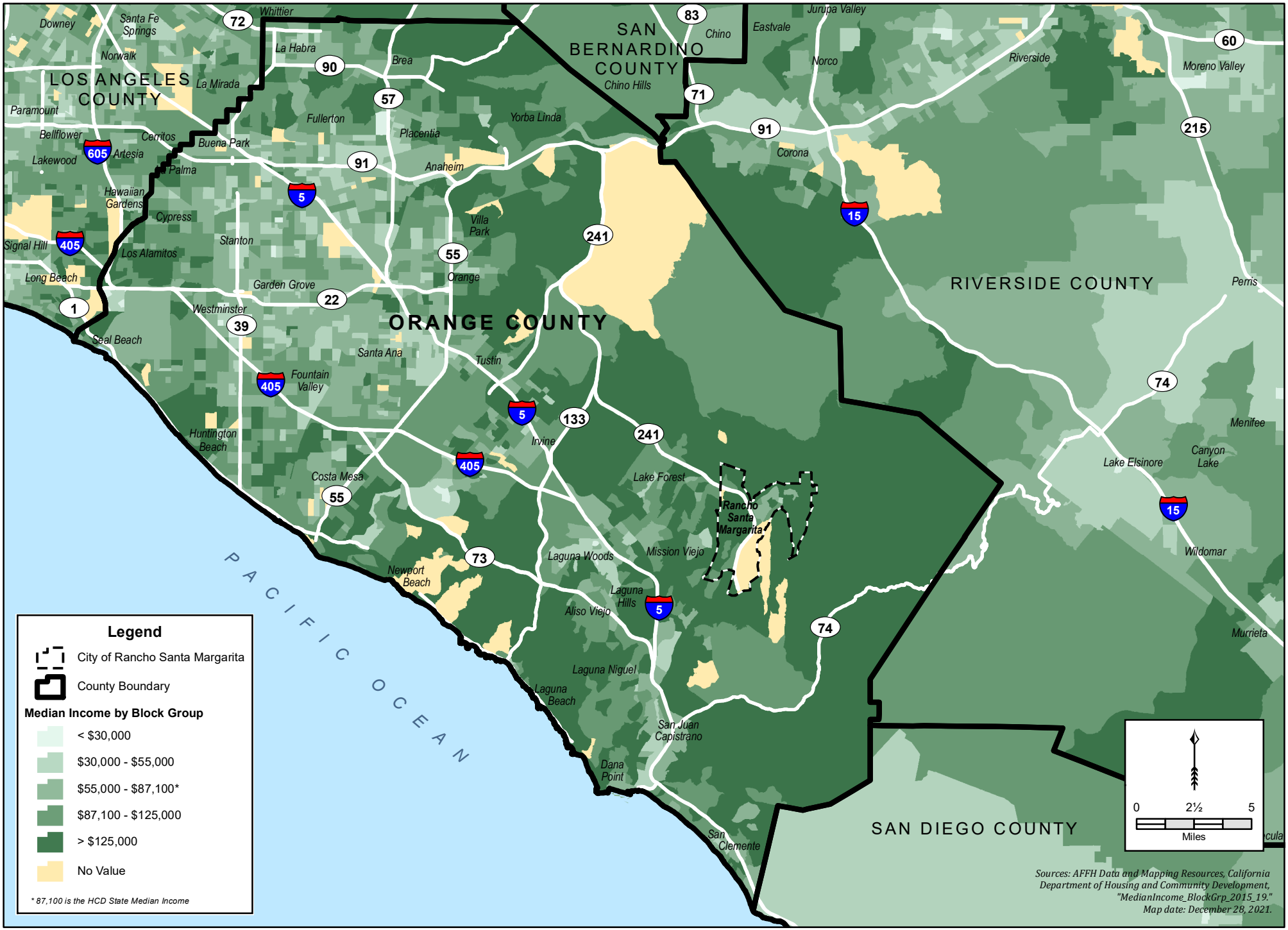

Figure H-23. Median Household Income by Block Group - Countywide

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Racially/Concentrated Areas of Affluence (RCAA)

According to the Housing and Community Development AFFH Guidance Memo, "segregation is a continuum, with polarity between race, poverty, and affluence, which can be a direct product of the same policies and practices". Therefore, both sides of the continuum must be examined. While HCD does not have a standard definition for RCAAs, looking at the percentage of the White population and median household income can provide a good indicator for areas of affluence.

In addition to RECAPs utilized by HUD, scholars at the University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs created the Racially Concentrated Areas of Affluence (RCAAs) metric to more fully tell the story of segregation in the United States[12]. RCAAs are defined as census tracts where 1) 80 percent or more of the population is White, and 2) the median household income is $125,000 or greater (slightly more than double the national median household income in 2016).Table H-62, looks at the median household incomes of White non-Hispanic residents in Rancho Santa Margarita, as well as the County as a whole. The majority of the City contains a White majority racial concentration, and there are census tracts with a median household income of $125,000 or more, as shown on Figure H-19. While the City as a whole is 77.1% White, non-Hispanic residents, and there are census tracts with a median income of greater than $125,000, there is not a specific census tract that both has a population that is greater than 80 percent White and has a median income of $125,000 or greater. As shown in Figure H-19 there is only one census tract that has a mostly White population. However, that census tract is partially in the neighboring community of Coto de Caza, where the entire population of that census tract is located (no residents of Rancho Santa Margarita reside in this tract). While there are no RCAAs located in Rancho Santa Margarita, the presence of this White majority and wealth should be considered as part of the planning process to accommodate new growth in the City in a more economically and ethnically integrated way. This pattern of racially/concentrated areas of affluence is consistent with the surrounding cities and communities in southern Orange County. There are less RCAAs located in the more racially and ethnically diverse northern Orange County.

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[12] Goetz, E. G., Damiano, A., & Williams, R. A. 2019. Racially Concentrated Areas of Affluence: A Preliminary Investigation. Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research, Volume 21(1) [pages 99–124]. Available at: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/cityscpe/vol21num1/ch4.pdf

TABLE H-62: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

Median Household Income	Rancho Santa Margarita	Orange County
White households	$119,206	$97,369
All households	$115,073	$85,398
% of white population	61.9%	65.2%

Source: US Census, 2014-2018 ACS

Disparities in Access to Opportunity

HUD developed opportunity indicators to help inform communities about disparities in access to opportunity, the scores are based on nationally available data sources and assess resident's access to key opportunity assets in the City. Table H-633 provides the index scores (ranging from zero to 100) for the following opportunity indicator indices:

- Low Poverty Index: The low poverty index captures poverty in a given neighborhood. The poverty rate is determined at the census tract level. *The higher the score, the less exposure to poverty in a neighborhood.*
- School Proficiency Index: The school proficiency index uses school-level data on the performance of 4th grade students on State exams to describe which neighborhoods have high-performing elementary schools nearby and which are near lower performing elementary schools. *The higher the score, the higher the school system quality is in a neighborhood.*
- Labor Market Engagement Index: The labor market engagement index provides a summary description of the relative intensity of labor market engagement and human capital in a neighborhood. This is based on the level of employment, labor force participation, and educational attainment in a census tract. *The higher the score, the higher the labor force participation and human capital in a neighborhood.*
- Transit Trips Index: This index is based on estimates of transit trips taken by a family that meets the following description: a three-person single-parent family with income at 50% of the median income for renters for the region (i.e. the Core-Based Statistical Area (CBSA)). *The higher the transit trips index, the more likely residents in that neighborhood utilize public transit.*
- Low Transportation Cost Index: This index is based on estimates of transportation costs for a family that meets the following description: a three-person single-parent family with income at 50% of the median income for renters for the region/CBSA. *The higher the index, the lower the cost of transportation in that neighborhood.*
- Jobs Proximity Index: The jobs proximity index quantifies the accessibility of a given residential neighborhood as a function of its distance to all job locations within a region/CBSA, with larger employment centers weighted more heavily. *The higher the index value, the better the access to employment opportunities for residents in a neighborhood.*
- Environmental Health Index: The environmental health index summarizes potential exposure to harmful toxins at a neighborhood level. The higher

the index value, the less exposure to toxins harmful to human health. Therefore, *the higher the value, the better the environmental quality of a neighborhood, where a neighborhood is a census block group.*

Opportunity indicators were obtained for Rancho Santa Margarita from the HUD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing GIS tool. Table H-63 identifies the opportunity indicators by race and ethnicity for the total population of Rancho Santa Margarita and the larger region of Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim.

TABLE H-63: OPPORTUNITY INDICATORS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Race/ Ethnicity	Low Poverty Index	School Proficiency Index	Labor Market Index	Transit Index	Low Transportation Cost Index	Jobs Proximity Index	Environmental Health Index
Rancho Santa Margarita							
White	87.82	84.08	87.29	19.01	61.49	12.75	54.08
Black	85.22	82.80	86.30	20.39	66.64	13.57	53.73
Hispanic	84.08	80.19	85.16	21.29	69.41	11.83	54.01
Asian or Pacific Islander	86.50	84.59	87.52	19.55	63.25	12.85	53.44
Native American	86.05	82.04	86.50	20.09	66.32	11.54	53.88
Total Average	85.93	82.74	86.55	20.07	65.42	12.51	53.83
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim Region							
White	65.19	68.03	67.43	77.63	73.13	54.59	21.5
Black	36.07	33.82	35.34	87.25	79.02	40.72	11.92
Hispanic	35.53	39.72	35.73	86.48	77.78	43.70	12.36
Asian or Pacific Islander	55.03	61.94	57.64	85.13	75.98	51.11	13.13
Native American	48.40	50.70	48.58	81.04	75.36	45.88	17.68
Total Average	48.04	50.84	48.94	83.51	76.25	47.20	15.32

Source: HUD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing GIS Explorer, https://egis.hud.gov/affht/



As shown in Table H-63, all residents of Rancho Santa Margarita appear to have relatively high access to opportunity (values over 50), except for transit access and jobs proximity. Additionally, all residents appear to have similar index values. Specifically, all residents had values within one point in the transit index, which could indicate residents, regardless of race/ethnicity, are not likely to take public transit. Additionally, all residents had values near within 2 points in the jobs proximity index, indicating that residents of all races/ethnicities have the same limited access to jobs nearby their place of residence. With scores in the lowest quartile, it is important for the City to carefully consider the relationship between jobs and housing in order to help create a more balanced jobs/housing ratio and improve the jobs proximity index for all residents. As such, access to opportunity does not appear to be significantly influenced by race or ethnicity.

Regionally (Orange County), White residents generally have higher levels of access to opportunity for most indicators, but not all. Throughout the County, White residents had the highest levels of opportunity related to the low poverty index, school proficiency index, labor market index, jobs proximity index, and environmental health index. The environmental health index at the regional level indicated the lowest levels of opportunity (with scores for all residents below 25). The County AI found generally, access to opportunity is highest for non-Hispanic White and Asian/Pacific Islander residents in Orange County. By contrast, access to opportunity is generally lower for Black residents than for non-Hispanic White and Asian residents and access is lowest for Hispanic residents.

Regional Opportunity Index

The UC Davis Center for Regional Change and Rabobank, N.A. partnered to develop the Regional Opportunity Index (ROI) intended to help understand social and economic opportunity in California's communities. The goal of the ROI is to help target resources and policies toward people and places with the greatest need to foster thriving communities. The ROI integrates a variety of data topics, including education, economic development, housing, mobility, health/environment, and civic life, and "maps" areas of potential investment by identifying specific areas of urgent need and opportunity. The ROI relies on many of the same data sources analyzed in the Housing Element, including the American Community Survey (ACS), the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) data, the California Department of Education, the California Department of Public Health, among others (data points are from 2014).

There are two ROI "maps"; the "people" ROI illustrates the relative measure of the **people's** assets in education, the economy, housing, mobility/transportation, health/environment, and civic life, while the "place" ROI illustrates the relative measure of a **place's** assets in those same categories. The tool analyzes specific indicators for each of the six data topics, as summarized in Table H-64 below.

TABLE H-64: REGIONAL OPPORTUNITY INDEX (ROI) DATA POINTS

	People-Based Data Points	Place-Based Data Points
Education	• Elementary School Truancy • English Proficiency • Math Proficiency • College Educated Adults	• High School Discipline rate • Teacher Experience • UC/CSU Eligible • High School Graduation Rate
Economic Development	• Minimum Basic Income • Employment Rate	• Bank Accessibility • Job Quality • Job Growth • Job Availability
Housing	• Housing Cost Burden • Homeownership	• Housing Affordability • Housing Adequacy
Mobility	• Internet Access • Commute Time • Vehicle Availability	• N/A
Health/Environment	• Years of Life Lost • Births to Teens • Infant Health	• Air Quality • Health Care Availability • Access to Supermarket • Prenatal Care
Civic Life	• English Speakers • Voting Rates	• Neighborhood Stability • US Citizenship

As shown in Figure H-24 and Figure H-25Figure H-29, Rancho Santa Margarita has a range of opportunity levels throughout the community with notable differences between the relative measure of people-based assets versus place-based assets, with people-based opportunities scoring better than place-based opportunities. All census tracts are shown to have average (yellow) to high (green) levels of **people-based** opportunity, which indicates positive access to opportunities across the six data topics. However, in terms of **place-based** assets, there is one census tract located just outside the City boundary which indicates a lower level of opportunity (shown in red) and two census tracts (partially located within the City) which indicate moderate levels of opportunity (shown in orange). The higher and lower levels of opportunity for these two census tracts, by indicator, are summarized in Table H-65.

TABLE H-65: PLACE-BASED REGIONAL OPPORTUNITY INDEX (ROI) LOW OPPORTUNITY CENSUS TRACTS

Census Tract (Place)	Opportunity Level	Average or Higher Opportunities	Lower Opportunities
320.53	Lowest Opportunity	• Civic Life • Housing • Education	• Health/Environment • Economy
320.44*	Lower Opportunity	• Civic Life • Housing • Education	• Health/Environment • Economy
320.43	Lower Opportunity	• Education • Civic Life • Housing	• Health/Environment • Economy

**The portion of Census Tract 320.44 in Rancho Santa Margarita is uninhabited.*

For census tract 320.53, which runs along Antonio Parkway, there appears to be limited opportunities related to health/environment, and the economy. Upon a deeper dive into the data, the most pressing health/environment issue is limited access to a supermarket (there are no supermarkets in this tract) which can help inform the City's land use planning decisions. In regards to the economy, the concern relates to job availability (but to a much lesser degree than the supermarket access indicator). For census tracts 320.44 (which is adjacent to an uninhabited area) and 320.43, the issues are the same; there appears to be limited opportunities related to health/environment and the economy. The most pressing health/environment issue is limited access to a supermarket and health care. In regard to the economy, the concerns are bank accessibility, job quality, and job availability.

In Orange County, areas with lower people-based and place-based opportunities are concentrated in the central and northern portion of the County, including the Cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove, as illustrated in Figure H-28 and Figure H-28. For the lowest people-based opportunity census tracts in the County, there appears to be limited opportunities related to housing. For the lowest place-based opportunity census tracts in the County, there are a variety of limited opportunities depending on the location related to civic life, health/environment, housing, economy, and education.

In order to better understand access to opportunities for protected classes (persons with disabilities, race, familial status), this section compares potential patterns of isolation and segregation presented in the prior section with the Regional Opportunity Index (people and place) discussed here.

As shown in Figure H-12 and previously discussed, persons with disabilities are located throughout the community. The census tracts with the most significant percentage of its population reporting a disability is located in an area of moderate to high levels of people and place-based opportunities. There does not seem to be a correlation between where persons with disabilities are located and lower levels of opportunity.

As shown in Figure H-16 and previously discussed, female-headed households are evenly distributed throughout the community and represent less than 20% of households in all census tracts. Given that there is no discernable pattern of segregation associated with female-headed households, there does not seem to be a relationship between where female-headed households are more likely to be located and specific resource levels.

As shown in Figure H-22, households with relatively lower median household income levels are more likely to be located in the northern area of the City, in census tracts with higher proportions of multi-family units. When considering median household income and the type of housing stock present, there does not seem to be a correlation between median household income and access to opportunity.

Concentrations of the City's population are shown in Figure H-7. Those census tracts with more limited access to place-based opportunities do not correlate to low or high White population predominance. There does not appear to be a relationship between the level of White concentration and access to opportunity.

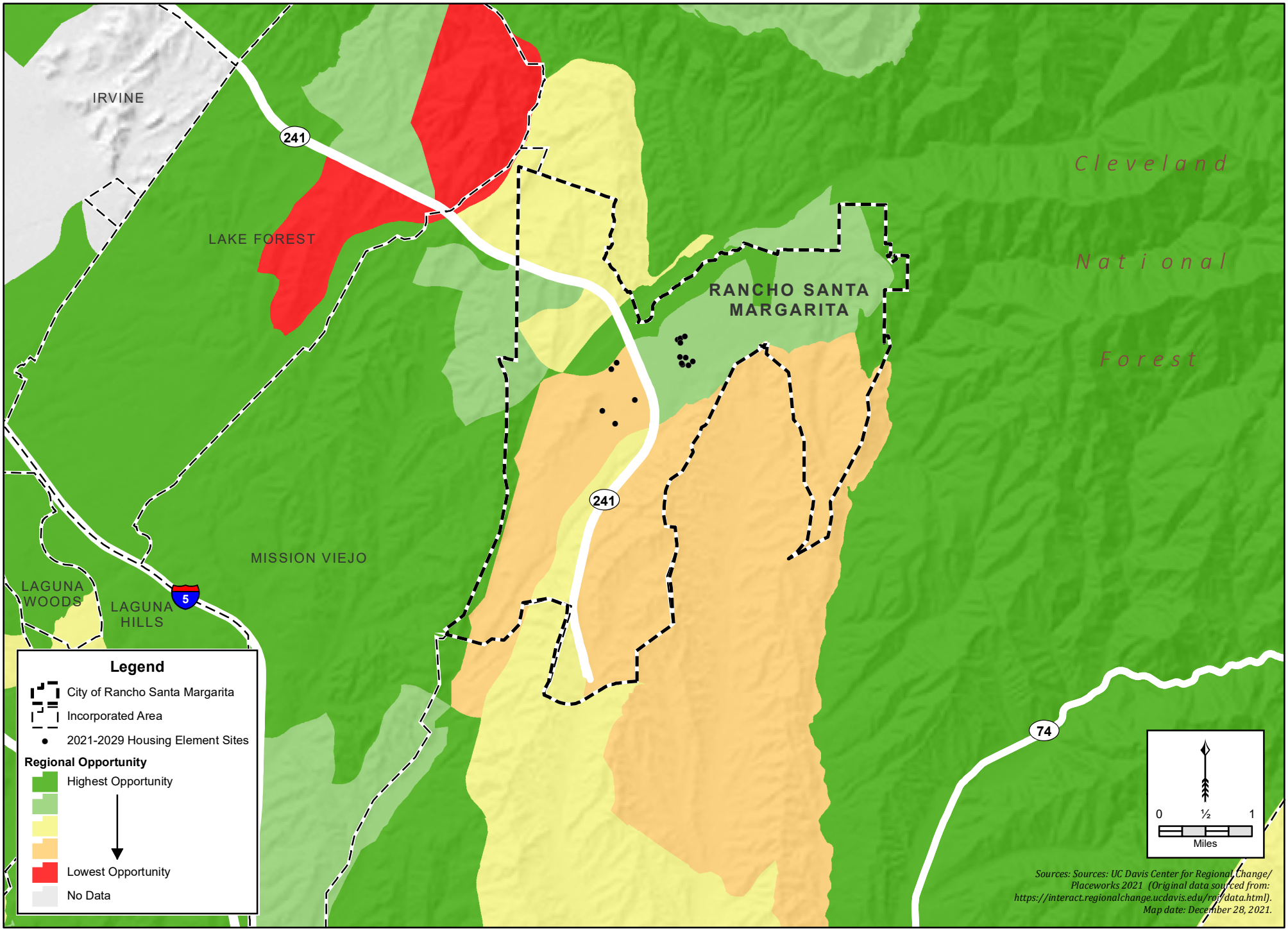

Figure H-24. Place-Based Opportunities by Census Tract

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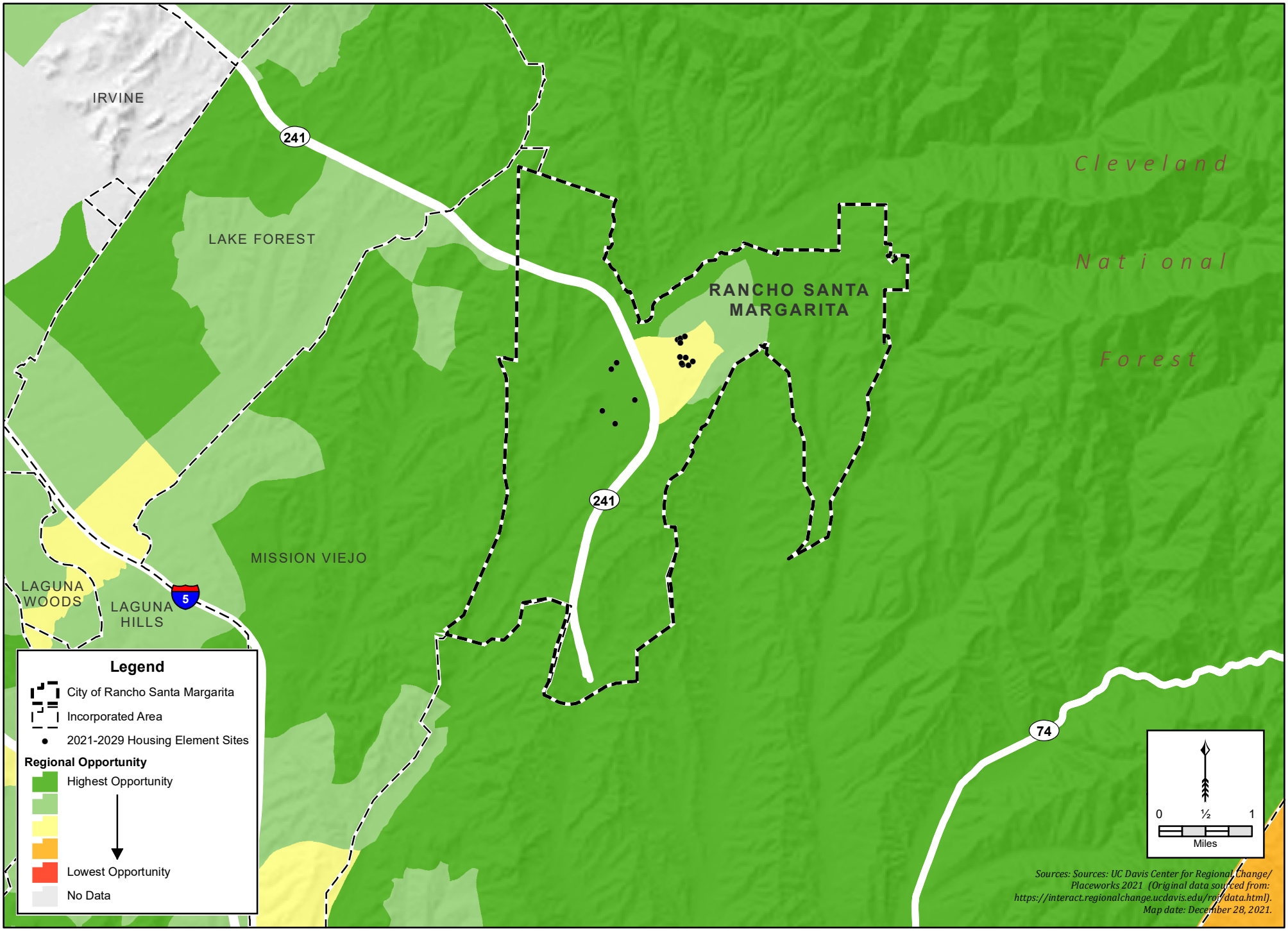

Figure H-25. People-Based Opportunities by Census Tract

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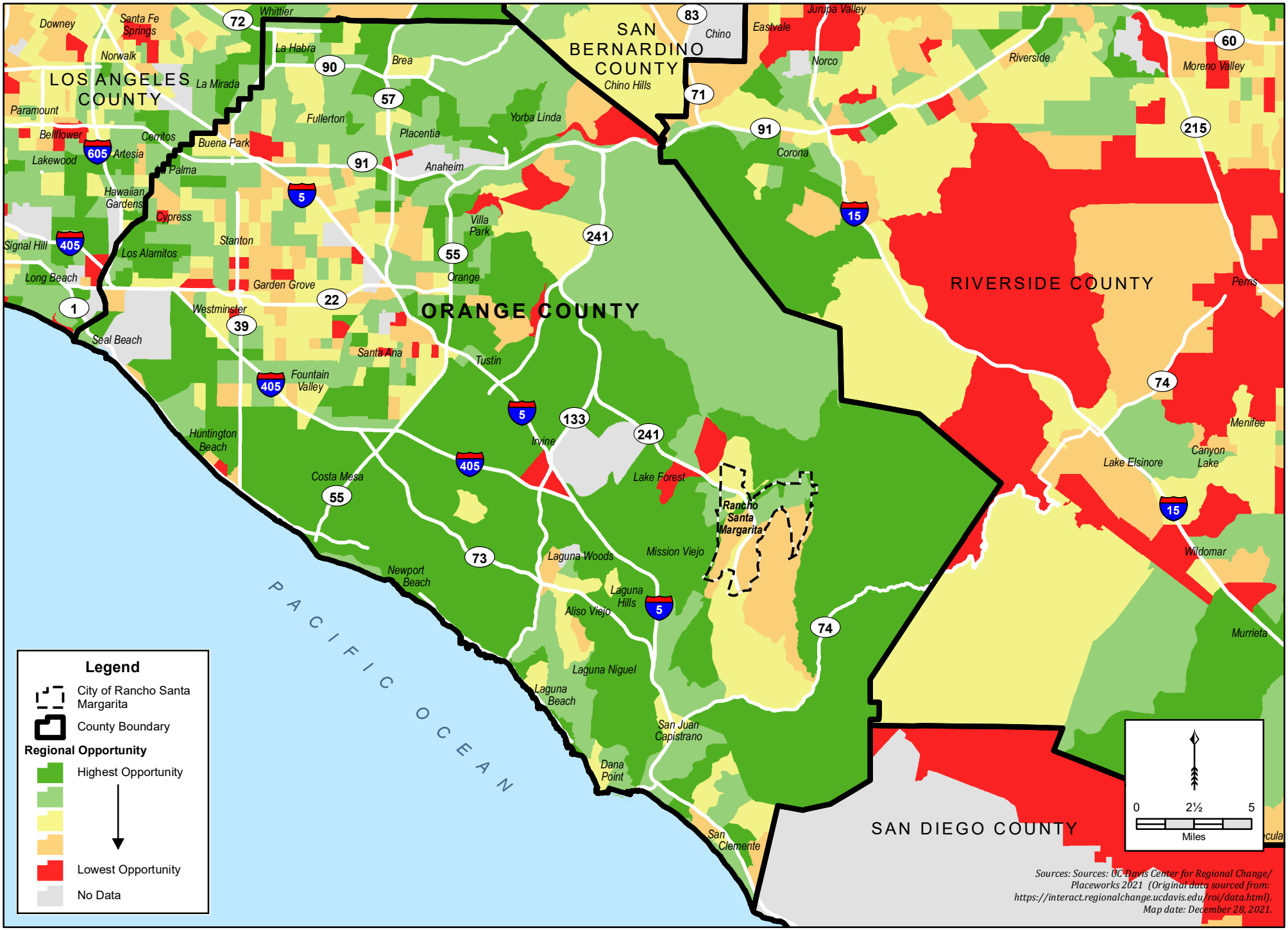

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Figure H-26. Place-Based Opportunities by Census Tract - Countywide

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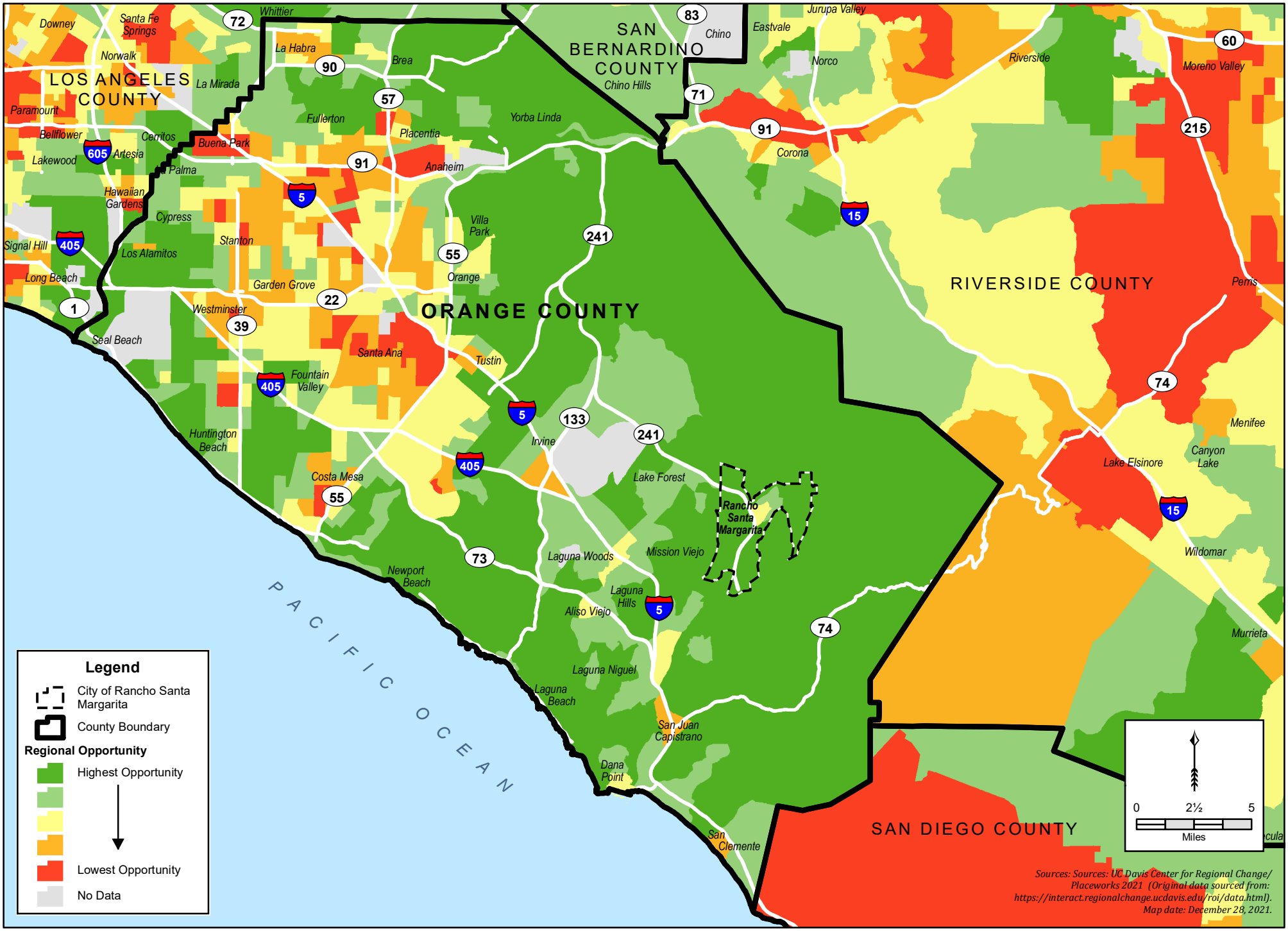

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Figure H-27. People-Based Opportunities by Census Tract - Countywide

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2021 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Area Map

Additionally, the Department of Housing and Community Development together with the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee established the California Fair Housing Task Force to provide research, evidence-based policy recommendations, and other strategic recommendations to HCD and other related State agencies/departments to further the fair housing goals (as defined by HCD). The Task force developed the 2021 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Area Maps to understand how public and private resources are spatially distributed. The Task force defines opportunities as pathways to better lives, including health, education, and employment. Overall, opportunity maps are intended to display which areas, according to research, offer low-income children and adults the best chance at economic advancement, high educational attainment, and good physical and mental health.

According to the Task Force's methodology, the tool allocates the 20 percent of the tracts in each region with the highest relative index scores to the "Highest Resource" designation and the next 20 percent to the "High Resource" designation. Each region then ends up with 40 percent of its total tracts as "Highest" or "High" resource. These two categories are intended to help State decision-makers identify tracts within each region that the research suggests low-income families are most likely to thrive, and where they typically do not have the option to live—but might, if given the choice. The remaining tracts are then evenly divided into "Low Resources" and "Moderate Resource".

The Task Force analyzed three domains (Economic, Environmental, Education) to establish the resource category for each block group. The Economic Domain (Figure H-28) analyzes poverty, level of adult education, employment rates, job proximity, and median home value in each block group, while the Education Domain (Figure H-29) analyzes math/reading proficiency, high school graduation rates, and the student poverty rate. The Environmental Domain (Figure H-30) looks at the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Pollution indicators (Exposures and Environmental Effect indicators) and processed values. Each figure includes the locations of proposed sites to accommodate the 6th Cycle RHNA. Comparatively, Figure H-31 identifies the final resource categories of each census tract, as identified on the TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, as well as the locations of the proposed sites to accommodate the 6th Cycle RHNA.



Table H-66 identifies the resources levels by census tract and the corresponding scores for economic, educational and environmental indicators.

TABLE H-66: OPPORTUNITY RESOURCE LEVELS BY CENSUS TRACT

Census Tract	Resource Level	Economic Score	Environmental Score	Education Score
320.37*	High	0.30	0.93	0.89
320.38*	Highest	0.72	0.92	0.80
320.56*	Highest	0.58	0.63	0.93
320.45*	Highest	0.72	1.00	0.70
320.41*	High	0.84	0.16	0.81
320.34	High	0.69	0.88	0.64
320.42	High	0.54	0.60	0.66
320.43	High	0.62	0.80	0.66
320.44	Highest	0.63	0.83	0.92
320.48	High	0.58	0.91	0.68
320.49	High	0.63	0.57	0.76
320.50	Moderate	0.46	0.75	0.55
320.51	Moderate	0.28	0.87	0.55
320.53	Highest	0.59	0.92	0.86
320.54	High	0.48	0.86	0.62
320.55	Moderate	0.26	0.88	0.66

Source: California Department of Housing and Development, AFFH Data and Mapping Resources Data Viewer, accessed December 29, 2021.

** No residents of Rancho Santa Margarita reside in these census tracts.*

As shown in Figure H-31 and Table H-66, the majority of Rancho Santa Margarita is classified as "High" or "Highest" resource, with the remainder classified as a "Moderate Resource" area. There are no "Low Resource" areas in Rancho Santa Margarita. The census tracts that are classified as a "Moderate Resource" area along Santa Margarita Parkway and west of Plano Trabuco Road have a higher concentration of multi-family housing. Sites to accommodate the City's 6th Cycle RHNA are located in high resource opportunity areas.

Economic Opportunity

As shown in Table H-66 above, the overall economic scores in Rancho Santa Margarita range from 0.26 to 0.84. The economic scores in central Rancho Santa Margarita are slightly lower than the rest of the City, as illustrated in Figure H-28. As shown in Figure H-32, the job proximity index is highest along Antonio Parkway. With respect to the Jobs Proximity Index, the low score is indicative of the City's location. While many cities are located such that commuters can go in any direction for jobs within the region/CBSA, Rancho Santa Margarita is situated adjacent to the canyon communities and the Cleveland National Forest, which do not provide job centers or significant job opportunities when traveling north or east. Rancho Santa Margarita residents have good access to major job centers in Irvine and other communities to the south and west.

Section 3 of the Background Report found that the number of employed residents increased by 1,932 from 2010 to 2018 (Table H-6). Table H-9 identifies travel time to work. Just over half of Rancho Santa Margarita's employed residents, 50.9%, travelled less than 30 minutes to work.

The County AI found that in Orange County, there are significant disparities in access to economic opportunity. White residents have the greatest access to economic opportunity. Asian and Pacific Islander residents, Native Americans, and Black residents have lower index scores. Hispanic residents have the lowest access to economic opportunity of all racial and ethnic groups in Orange County. According to the County AI, there is moderate access to economic opportunity for all racial and ethnic groups in Rancho Santa Margarita. Economic Opportunity Index scores are generally lower in north Orange County than in south Orange County.

Educational Opportunity

As shown in Table H-66 above, the overall education opportunity index scores in Rancho Santa Margarita are high, ranging from 0.55 to 0.93. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is primarily served by the Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) for kindergarten through 12th grade. According to the California Department of Education's California School Dashboard, in 2019 the SVUSD had an enrollment of 26,747 students. The ethnic/racial make-up was: 43.4% White, 35.4% Hispanic, 8.3% Asian, 1.3% African American, 3.7% Filipino, 0.2% Pacific Islander, and 6.7% two or more races. A total of 31.2% of the District's students come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, 17.4% are English learners and 12.4% are students with disabilities. The District has a graduation rate of 93.6%. Capistrano Unified School District also serves Rancho Santa Margarita residents and has three elementary and two middle schools in the City.

The County AI found that Countywide, there are disparities across racial/ethnic groups in access to educational opportunities as measured by the index. Across the County, White residents exhibit the highest exposure to education opportunity and Asian residents the second highest. Hispanic residents have the lowest access to these opportunities. Rancho Santa Margarita scored highly on educational opportunity across all racial categories, compared to other jurisdictions in Orange County.

Environmental Opportunity

As shown in Table H-66 above, the overall environmental scores in Rancho Santa Margarita range from 0.16 to 1.0. Census tract 320.41, which has the lowest environmental opportunity score, is predominately located in unincorporated Orange County, and no Rancho Santa Margarita residents are located within that census tract. All other census tracts in the City have high environmental opportunity index scores.

The County AI found that Countywide, there are disparities across racial/ethnic groups in access to environmental opportunities, measured as lower exposure to and effects from pollution. Countywide, White residents exhibit the highest access to environmentally healthy neighborhoods, while Hispanic residents scored the lowest for access to environmentally healthy neighborhoods. The County AI also found that similar to the nearby jurisdictions of Laguna Niguel, Aliso Viejo, and Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita scored especially high on environmental opportunity across all racial categories.

Transportation

As shown in Table H-63, the transit index score ranges from 19.01 to 21.29 and the low transportation cost index score ranges from 61.49 to 69.41. All Transit, an online resource for transit connectivity, access and frequency data, explores metrics that reveal the social and economic impact of transit, specifically looking at the economy, equity, health, transit quality and mobility network. According to All Transit, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita has a score of 1.4 out of 10, with a score of 10 being high connectivity, access to jobs and frequency of service.[13]

As described above, Table H-63 indicates low opportunity indicator scores on the Transit Index. This is a recognized issue in the City, however, transit is not within the City's control. Transit service in Rancho Santa Margarita is provided by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) who plans and operates transit routes throughout south Orange County. The City is currently served by a single bus route, Route 82, which provides service primarily along Santa Margarita Parkway. OCTA has indicated to City staff that bus routes have been reduced over the years due to low ridership. It is unknown whether demand for transit service has increased since the last study by OCTA. The City has, and will continue to, work with OCTA to encourage the provision of reliable transit to the community, and has provided feedback about the needs of the community, particularly seniors' needs for public transportation. The City's Taxi Voucher program is provided to City residents who are 60 years of age or older. The program operates seven days a week, 24 hours a day, including holidays.

[13] AllTransit, https://alltransit.cnt.org/metrics/?addr=Westminster%2C+CA, accessed December 30, 2021.

The County AI found that in Orange County as a whole, White residents have the lowest scores on the low transportation cost index and Hispanic residents have the highest scores. In Rancho Santa Margarita, White and Asian residents have significantly lower scores on the low transportation cost index compared to Black and Hispanic residents. These patterns are similar to those of Orange County overall. Transit use is extremely low for all residents in Rancho Santa Margarita, similar to other jurisdictions in south Orange County, including Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, San Clemente, and San Juan Capistrano. Low transportation cost index scores as well as transit index scores are generally higher in north Orange County than in south Orange County. Scores are generally higher in jurisdictions with greater levels of density. The County AI found that jurisdictions with greater concentration of White residents tend to have lower transit index scores and transportation cost index scores, as is the case for Rancho Santa Margarita.

Findings

Overall, it appears that residents in Rancho Santa Margarita have varying levels of access to opportunities, and access to opportunity is not correlated to the location of special groups, like female-headed households, or persons with disabilities. While there is some minor correlation between access to opportunities and median household income composition in the northern areas of the City with higher proportions of multi-family units, there are other areas of the City with lower levels of access to opportunity where income is higher and the housing stock is more heavily weighted towards single-family homes. Access to opportunity appears to be consistent and equitable across the community and the pattern generally mirrors the region, where overall White residents do appear to have higher levels of access to opportunities. Sites to accommodate the City's 6th Cycle RHNA, including its lower-income units, are distributed in high resource areas. New mixed-use development in the City is envisioned to provide new residential housing units, new employment opportunities, and new space for the development of commercial projects offering a variety of goods and services.The Workforce Housing Overlay provides a unique opportunity to create housing in an existing office campus which includes a number of amenities and services on-site including a health clinic, childcare, cafeteria/food services, and fitness facilities.

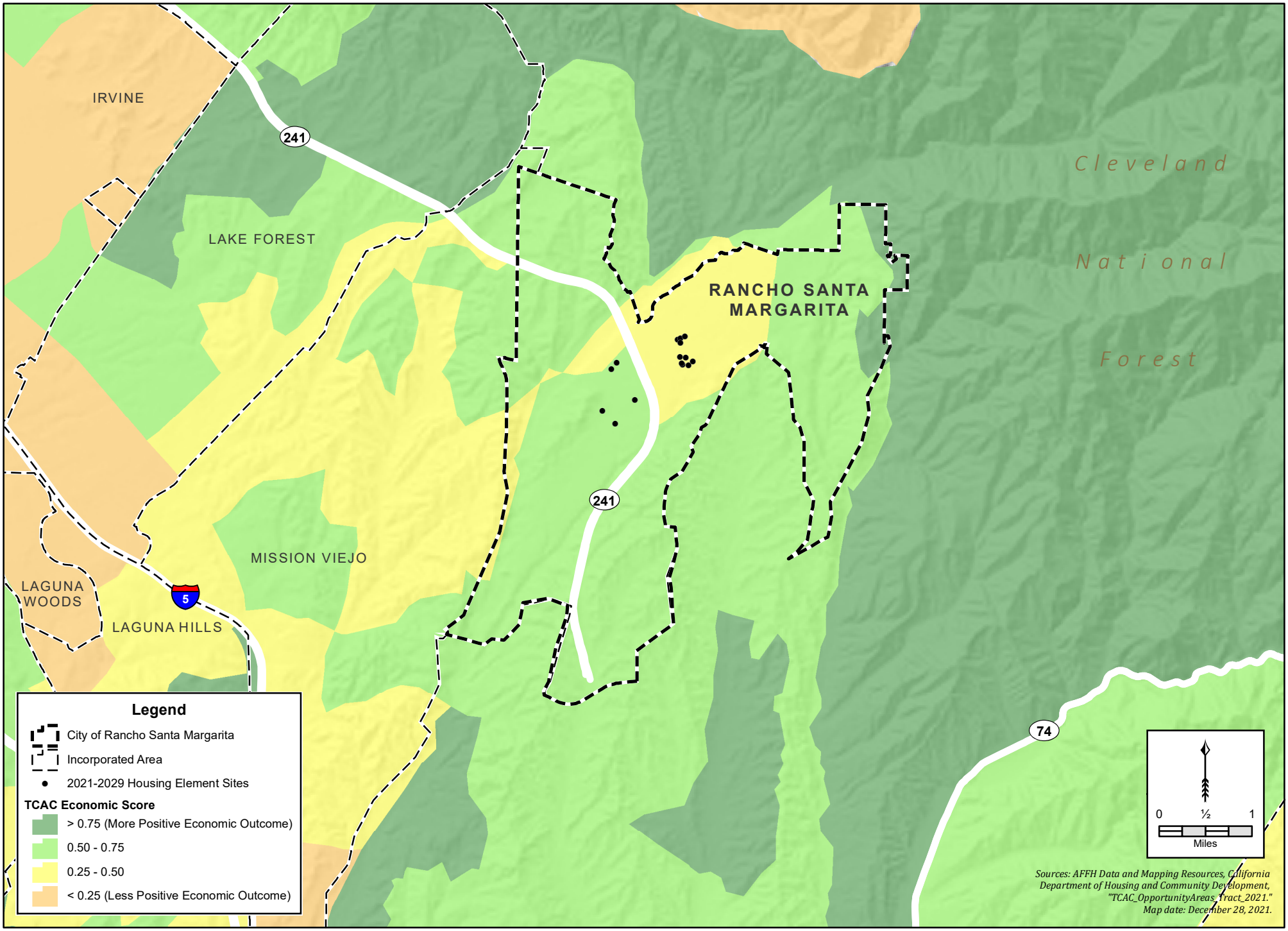

Figure H-28. TCAC Economic Score by Census Tract

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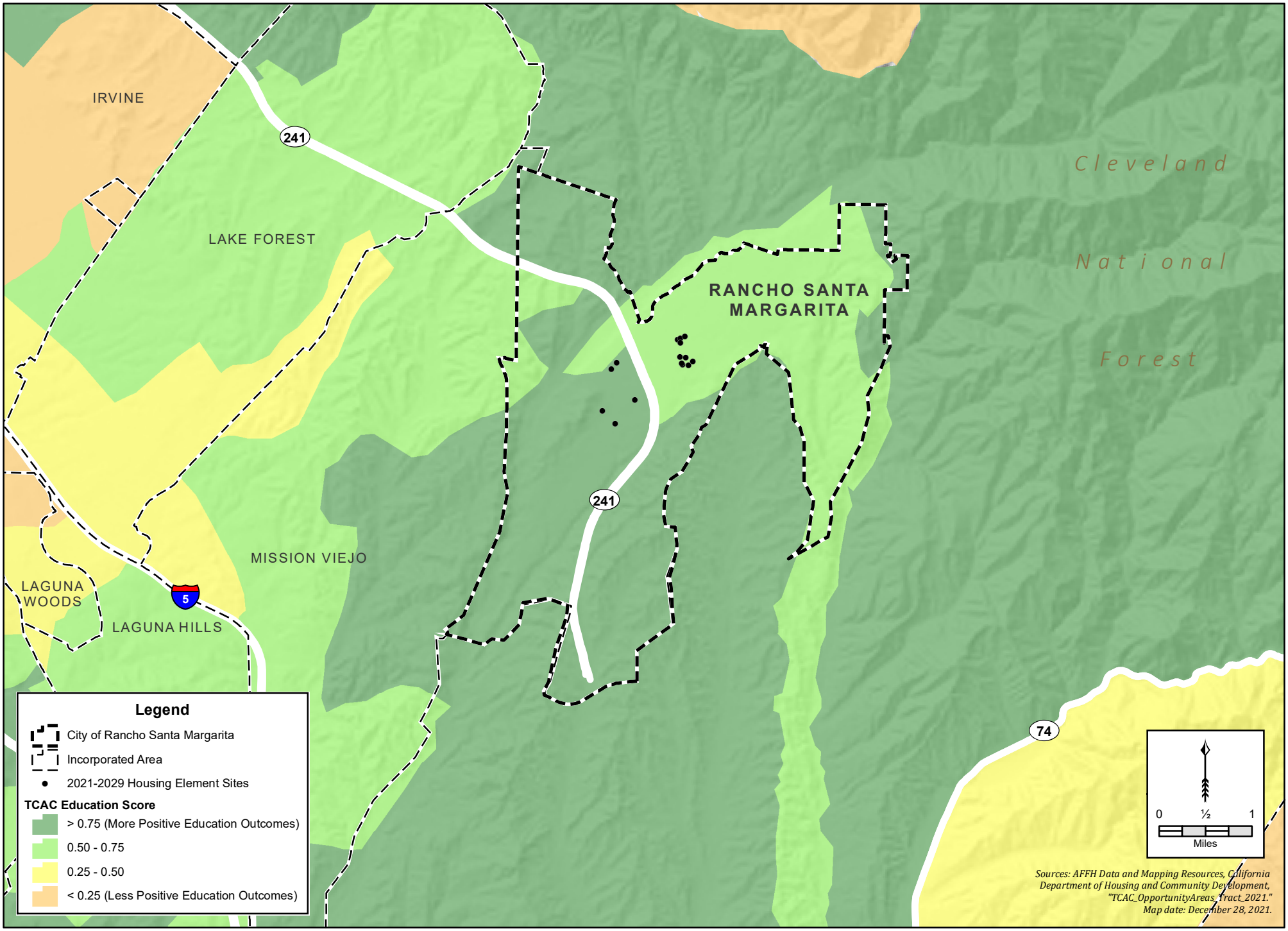

Figure H-29. TCAC Education Score by Census Tract

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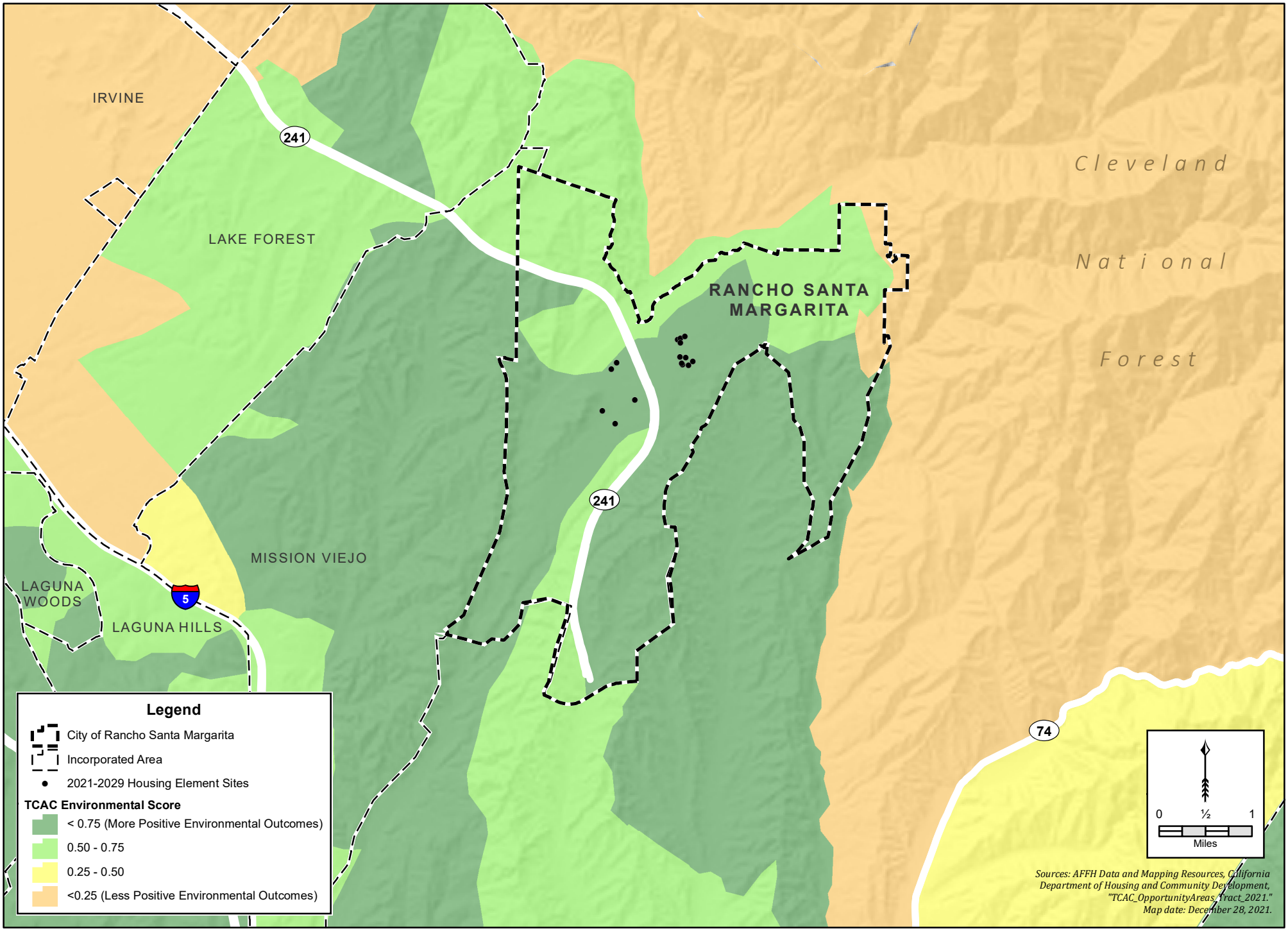

Figure H-30. TCAC Environmental Score by Census Tract

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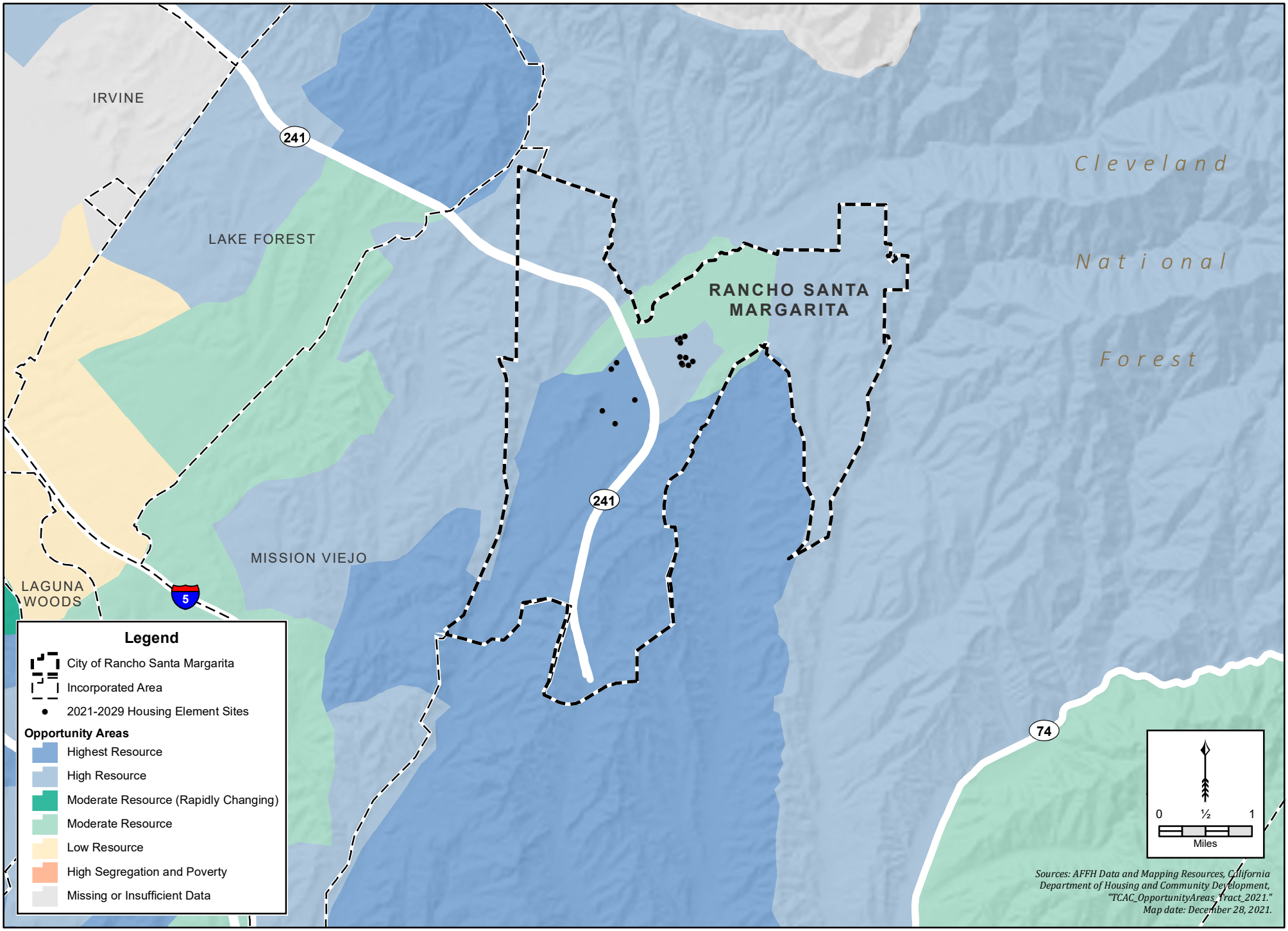

Figure H-31. TCAC Opportunity Areas by Census Tract

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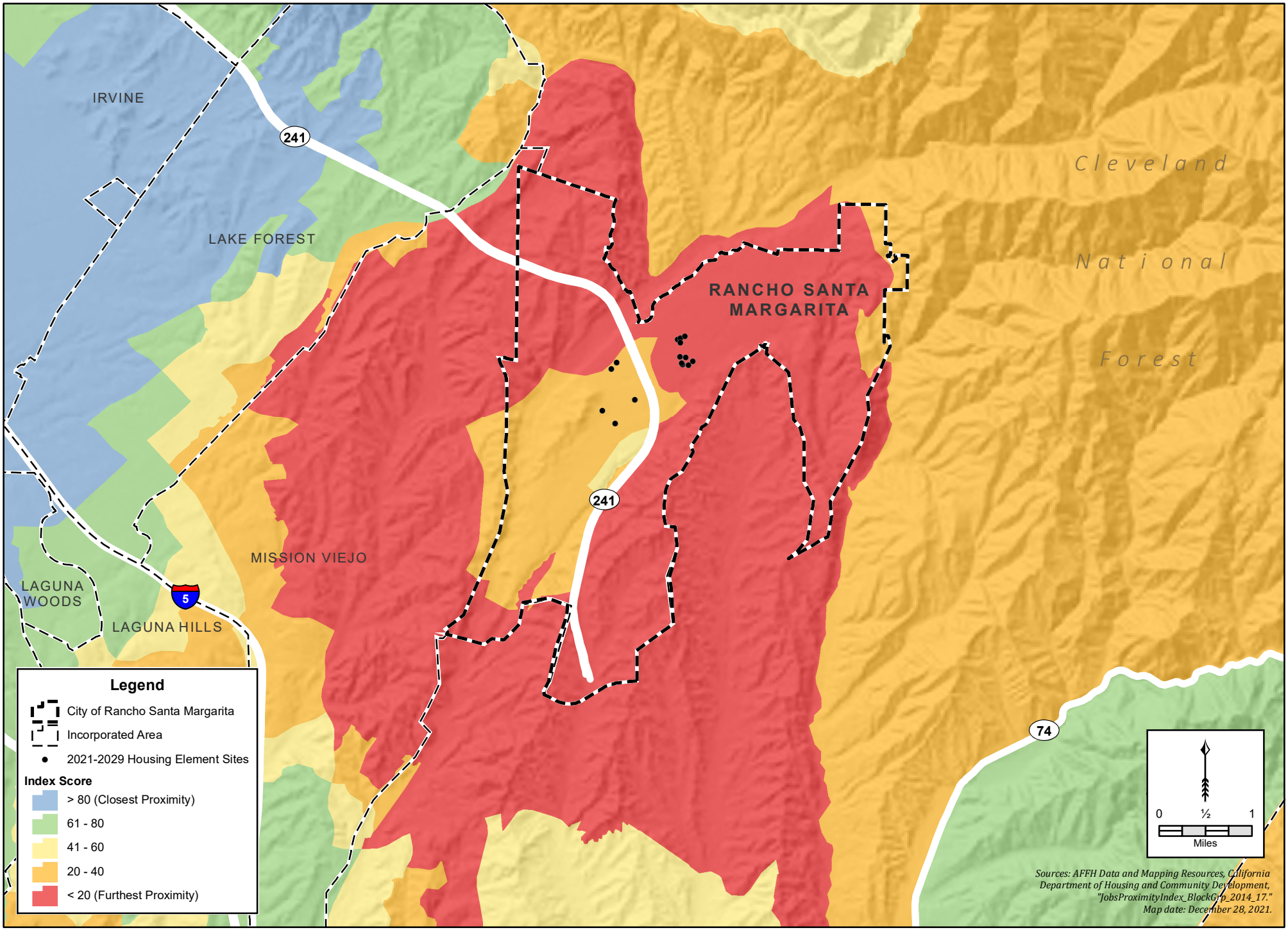

Figure H-32. Jobs Proximity Index by Block Group

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Discussion of Disproportionate Housing Needs

The analysis of disproportionate housing needs within Rancho Santa Margarita evaluated existing housing need, housing needs of the future population, and units within the community at-risk of converting to market-rate (of which there are none). HUD requires all grantees to compare and assess the burdens for housing for different groups in the community. A disproportionately greater burden exists when the members of a particular group experience a housing problem at a greater rate (90 percent or more) than the group as a whole.

The four HUD-designated housing problems include when a:

1) housing unit lacks complete kitchen facilities;

2) housing unit lacks complete plumbing facilities;

3) household is overcrowded; and

4) household is cost burdened.

Households are considered to have a housing problem if they experience at least one of the above. Table 67 summarizes the demographics of households with disproportionate housing needs in the City and County. As shown in Table H-67, Rancho Santa Margarita has a lower percentage of residents experiencing housing problems compared to the region. For both the City and the region as a whole, non-White households are more likely to experience at least one of the housing problems than White households.

Table H-67: Demographics of Households with Disproportionate Housing Needs

Housing Needs	Rancho Santa Margarita			Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim Region		
Households experiencing any of 4 housing problems	**# with problems**	**# house-holds**	**% with problems**	**# with problems**	**# of house-holds**	**% with problems**
Race/Ethnicity						
White	4,505	11,890	37.89%	710,485	1,741,265	40.80%
Black	140	285	49.12%	186,785	332,330	56.20%
Hispanic	1,629	2,674	60.92%	924,105	1,458,220	63.37%
Asian or Pacific Islander	565	1,855	30.46%	312,775	666,628	46.92%
Native American	0	0	N/a	4,655	9,535	48.82%
Other	155	370	41.89%	44,255	90,895	48.69%
Total	6,990	17,085	40.91%	2,183,075	4,298,855	50.78%
Household Type and Size						
Family households, <5 people	4,000	11,320	35.34%	1,029,920	2,301,365	44.75%
Family households, 5+ people	745	1,730	43.06%	434,995	628,630	69.20%
Non-family households	2,250	4,040	55.69%	718,155	1,368,880	52.46%
Households experiencing any of 4 severe housing problems	**# with severe problems**	**# house-holds**	**% with severe problems**	**# with severe problems**	**# of house-holds**	**% with severe problems**
Race/Ethnicity						
White	2,000	11,890	16.82%	387,770	1,741,265	22.27%
Black	84	285	29.47%	115,450	332,330	34.74%
Hispanic	720	2,674	26.93%	649,345	1,458,220	44.53%
Asian or Pacific Islander	175	1,855	9.43%	189,350	666,628	28.40%
Native American	0	0	N/a	2,645	9,535	27.74%
Other	90	370	24.32%	26,215	90,895	28.84%
Total	3,075	17,085	18.00%	1,370,770	4,298,855	31.89%

Source: HUD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Database, 2020.

Future Growth Need

The City's future growth need is based on the RHNA, which allocates production of 680 units, including 209 very-low and 120 low-income units, to the City for the 2021-2029 planning period. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is largely built-out and no residentially-zoned land remains vacant. As such, all future housing growth must be located in infill areas, near jobs and services, primarily in the City's business park and commercial areas. Figure H-3 shows that the Housing Element Sites Inventory is well dispersed throughout the community and do not present a geographic barrier to obtaining affordable housing. In addition, the City allows for the development of accessory dwelling units, which provide a more affordable housing option when compared to single-family homes, throughout the community. Appendix A of this Housing Element shows the City's ability to meet its 2021-2029 RHNA need at all income levels. This demonstrates the City's ability to accommodate the anticipated future affordable housing needs of the community.

Existing Need

As described earlier in this Background Report, Carina Vista includes 48 owner-occupied affordable single-family homes, which will be affordable in perpetuity. These units are not at-risk of conversion.

Cost Burden

A household is considered cost burdened if the household pays more than 30% of its total gross income for housing costs. For renters, housing costs include rent paid by the tenant plus utilities. For homeowners, housing costs include mortgage payment, taxes, insurance, and utilities. As discussed in the Background Report, as with most communities, the location of the home is one of the biggest factors with regard to price.

As discussed previously in the Background Report and shown in Table H-28, 56.2% of renters in Rancho Santa Margarita overpay for housing. The majority of renters that overpay are in the lower income groups, with 71.8% in the extremely low-income group and 63.1% in the very low-income group severely overpaying for housing (over 50% of their monthly income). As shown in Figure H-33, these renters are located throughout the City, with increased concentrations in two census tracts, one located in central Rancho Santa Margarita where there are overall a greater concentration of renters versus homeowners, and one located in the community of Dove Canyon.

As shown in Table H-28 of the Background Report, 34.4% of homeowners overpay for housing. 83.0% of extremely low-income owners and 53.8% of very low-income owners are severely overpaying. 40.8% of all households in Rancho Santa Margarita overpay for housing. Figure H-34 shows the concentrations of cost burden on homeowners in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. Similar to renters that overpay, these homeowners are located throughout the City. There are two census tracts with slightly higher concentrations of homeowners who overpay located in central Rancho Santa Margarita and directly west of Antonio Parkway. The census tracts with higher concentrations of overpayment are different for

renters versus homeowners, potentially due to the greater number of multi-family housing available in those census tracts.

The County AI found that severe housing cost burden is a large but not as frequent problem for residents in Orange County. The average rate of residents experiencing severe housing cost burden is 19.7% across the County. Discrepancies across race/ethnicity or family type are much lower than for housing problems or severe housing problems in the County. However, in Orange County, Hispanic households are most likely to experience severe housing cost burden. As shown in Table H-67, Hispanic households in the City and regionally are the most likely to experience housing problems, including cost burden. Figures H-35 and H-36 show the concentrations of cost burden by renter and homeowners Countywide. As seen in the figures, there are concentrations of cost burdened renters and homeowners Countywide.

Overcrowding

Typically, a housing unit is considered overcrowded if there is more than one person per room and severely overcrowded if there are more than 1.5 persons per room. As described in Table H-20 in the Background Report, 1.2% of owner-occupied homes and 5.5% of renter-occupied homes are overcrowded, and a total of 2.4% of all households in Rancho Santa Margarita are overcrowded. As shown in Table H-21 of the Background Report, the average household size in Rancho Santa Margarita was 2.83 persons in 2018, which is consistent with a slight decrease of the City's average household size in 2010 (2.94). Figure H-37 shows the concentration of overcrowded households in Rancho Santa Margarita. There is a slight concentration of overcrowded households in central Rancho Santa Margarita. Two census tracts, 320.54 and 320.51 have 8.3 to 12% of households which are overcrowded. As shown in Figure H-38, the more racially/ethnically diverse north Orange County has a significantly higher concentration of overcrowded households than south Orange County. The County AI found that Hispanic residents face especially high rates of overcrowdedness.

Substandard Housing

Typically, housing over 30 years of age is more likely to have rehabilitation needs that may include plumbing, roof repairs, electrical repairs, foundation rehabilitation, or other significant improvements. As discussed in Section 3 of the Background Report, the 2014-2018 ACS data indicates that most of the housing in the City is less than 40 years old; 94.4% of units were built in 1980 or later as shown in Table H-19. Due to the relatively young age of the City's housing stock, overall housing conditions are good. While units built after 1970 may require new roofs and windows, it is anticipated that most units constructed after 1970 would not need significant rehabilitation to the structure, foundation, electrical, and plumbing systems. Units built prior to 1970 may require aesthetic and maintenance repairs including roof, window, and paint improvements and some units in this age range may also require significant upgrades to structural, roof, plumbing, and other systems. US Census information can also provide insight into housing conditions, specifically based on the age of the structure and presence of adequate plumbing facilities. Table H-19 in Section 3 of this Background Report

indicates that the majority of housing units in the City are 30-40 years old and all dwelling units had complete plumbing facilities in 2018.

To supplement the Census information regarding housing conditions, the City included specific questions pertaining to the quality of the City's housing stock in its Housing Element Update community survey #1, which was available online from January 29, 2021 to March 3, 2021 (this is further detailed in Appendix B). When asked to rate the physical condition of the residence they lived in, the majority of residents (62.4%) responded that their home was in excellent condition, while almost a third (29.1%) of residents indicated that their home shows signs of minor deferred maintenance such as peeling paint or chipped stucco. Another 7.5% of resident respondents indicated that their home was in need of one or more major systems upgrades (such as new roof, windows, electrical, plumbing, or HVAC system). When asked to report the type of home improvements they have considered making to their homes, residents' most popular answers included improvements for kitchen or bathroom remodels, painting, solar, and HVAC systems.

Homelessness

Rancho Santa Margarita is actively involved with local and regional initiatives to help the homeless, including:

- Rancho Santa Margarita participates in the Orange County South Service Planning Area (SPA) to help facilitate a regional approach to address homelessness including shared services, coordinated intake, health resources, substance abuse services, and job skills. A regional approach with allocated points of contact for each City and jurisdiction allows the homeless liaisons to avoid duplicating efforts and allows them to best utilize resources. The City's homeless liaison is Mercy House. Program 6, Homeless Services, is included in the Housing Plan to direct the City to continue participating the County's Continuum of Care and to continue partnering with the City's homeless liaison, Mercy House, to provide services and resources.
- One City Council member and one Planning Commissioner are appointed to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Service Grant (PSG) Advisory Committee who are responsible for recommending an allocation of funds toward homeless services and homelessness prevention services. The 2022-2023 PSG is estimated to be $28,130, of which 37% were allocated toward homeless services and homelessness prevention services by organizations to supplement and support the efforts of the City's appointed homeless liaison, Mercy House.
- Mercy House's efforts in the City are supported via the Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) grant funds. The City's PLHA grant provides funding for Mercy House to conduct outreach and provide services and resources to the City's homeless. Mercy House provides this essential service to other Orange County cities which facilitates a macro-level, and regional approach for outreach and conversations with homeless individuals.

- Through the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD), the City has its own Homeless Liaison Officer (HLO) assigned to patrol and provide resources to the homeless community. HLO's receive additional training on mental illness and how best to connect the homeless population with available services and resources. Further, the Development Services Department organizes regular meetings with OCFA, their HLO, Mercy House, Public Works, Code Enforcement, and the Planning Department so that everyone has up-to-date information on the homeless individuals in the City, and all efforts to assist them. This open communication is very helpful as the City's 2022 Point in Time Count is seven male individuals (four White, two Black, and one Hispanic) who are known to the City, OCFA, and Mercy House.

As discussed in Section 3 of the Background Report, the 2019 Point-In-Time Report identified 15 people in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita experiencing homelessness, representing 0.2% of Orange County's total homeless count (6,860 individuals). All 15 homeless individuals in the City identified by the 2019 PIT count were unsheltered.

From the 2017 to the 2019 Homeless Count, there was an increase of homeless individuals counted in Orange County from 4,792 to 6,860, which is a 43% increase. This has been a greater increase in the County of homeless counts compared to previous years. In comparison, from 2015 to 2017, there was a 14% increase in the homeless count in Orange County. Primarily, the increase from 2017 to 2019 in the County was unsheltered individuals, which increased from 2,584 individuals in 2017 to 3,961 individuals in 2019.

The 2022 PIT count was conducted on February 24, 2022 and City staff participated in these efforts. On February 24, 2022 during the 4:30 a.m. count, eight individuals currently experiencing homelessness were found and counted in the City's most recent PIT tally. All persons experiencing homeless on February 24, 2022 were male, ranging in age from 30s to 60s, five were White, a father and son were Black, and one was Hispanic. One individual included in the 2022 PIT count is a known Veteran. Information about this group's demographics regarding disability are unknown, other than what was observed informally. The 2022 PIT count was half of the 2019 PIT count. Therefore, the City has determined that homeless numbers are trending downward.

The City has contracted with Mercy House since April, 2020 to provide the City with homeless liaison services. The City communicates with Mercy House regularly and Mercy House provides a South County Street Outreach Program Monthly Report. At the end of 2021, Mercy House provided the following data and information chronicling their efforts in South County (which includes Rancho Santa Margarita specifically) throughout 2021:

- 0 people exited the streets to permanent housing
- 0 people existed the streets to temporary housing, emergency shelter or institutional care
- 9 clients were served in RSM during 2021
- 5 clients were active in their program
- 30 hours of engagement were provided in December 2021
- 19 services were provided during 2021
- 11 resources, referrals, and linkages were provided during 2021

Findings

"Disproportionate housing needs" generally refers to a condition in which there are significant disparities in the proportion of members of a protected class experiencing a category of housing need when compared to the proportion of members of any other relevant groups, or the total population experiencing that category of housing need in the applicable geographic area. Based on input from the community and the County AI, the most disproportionate housing needs in Rancho Santa Margarita includes rehabilitation of the existing housing stock (although this is a minor issue) and increased variety of housing types at affordable prices, including housing for lower income households and larger households.

As described earlier in this report, Rancho Santa Margarita has a housing stock which is in excellent condition, however, rehabilitation of the existing housing stock has been identified as a minor issue. The City does not have a Housing Department and funding and staff are not currently available to implement a home rehabilitation program. However, it is important to the City to ensure that seniors and disabled homeowners have access to necessary minor repairs. Since March 2018, the City has partnered with Habitat for Humanity – Orange County to implement the Minor Home Repair Program. The program's goal is to provide senior or disabled homeowners with a grant to undertake up to $5,000 in minor home repairs that address health, safety, and accessibility concerns. The City Council authorizes approximately $20,000 annually in CDBG funds for the program; however, program activity and homeowner interest has been limited to one to three participants per year.

The variety of housing types at affordable prices has also been identified as a disproportionate housing need. As noted earlier, the City is nearly built out with no available vacant land for residential development. The policies and programs in this Housing Element will provide new opportunities to meet the identified housing needs, including Program 3 to promote the development of accessory dwelling units throughout the City and Programs 10 and 11 to encourage affordable housing production.

Displacement Risk

There are no at-risk affordable units in Rancho Santa Margarita. As described earlier in this Background Report, the City plans to accommodate the majority of its 2021-2029 RHNA allocation at infill sites through a Workforce Housing Overlay or a Mixed-Use Housing designation; the sites identified to accommodate the City's RHNA have good access to transportation facilities, goods and services, amenities, and infrastructure. No residential uses currently exist at any of the City's Housing Element sites (they are developed with nonresidential uses). There is not a significant displacement risk associated with the City's current affordable housing stock as a result of new development.

The City recognizes that even though it has identified sufficient land to accommodate its RHNA allocation at all income levels through the application of the Workforce Housing Overlay and the Mixed-Use Housing land use/zoning designation, there is still the potential for economic displacement because of new development and investment. This "knock-on" effect can occur at any time, and it can be challenging for the City to predict market changes and development patterns which have the potential to impact rental rates and sales prices for housing available in the marketplace. To date, the City has no evidence that new development (affordable or market-rate) has resulted in economic displacement.

According to the HCD AFFH Guidance Memo, displacement risk can be fueled by disinvestment, investment fueled gentrification, or a process which combines the two. Further, the Guidance Memo describes disinvestment-driven displacement, investment-driven displacement, and disaster driven displacement. As shown in Figure H-39, two census tracts in the City (320.54 and 320.55) are consisted "Sensitive Communities" where residents may be vulnerable to displacement in the event of shifts in housing costs. Vulnerability is determined when the share of very low-income residents is above 20% (in 2017) and the tract meets one other criteria related to renters, diversity, and housing burden. In the case of these Census Tracts, the additional criteria is the cost of housing (housing burden).

The City has considered the risk of displacement specifically for protected classes as discussed previously throughout this Background Report. Recognizing that some future housing sites are located in areas with higher levels of disabled residents and lower income households, the City sought to understand the risks related to displacement and to address any issues related to that analysis. Accordingly, the City evaluated the risk of disinvestment-driven displacement, investment-driven displacement, and disaster driven displacement.

As noted throughout this Background Report, the City is characterized by high resource areas, access to opportunity, and demographic factors which are common in the South Orange County area. As a newer master-planned community, the area has not experienced historically low public investments in infrastructure or neighborhood disinvestment. Accordingly, the area is not at risk for gentrification which would cause or investment driven displacement.

As discussed in the Constraints section under Environmental Constraints, environmental hazards affecting residential development in the City include wildfire, which represents the greatest threat to the built environment, flooding, and geologic and seismic conditions. The risks related to these natural disasters may impact protected populations, such as low income renters, causing disaster-driven displacement.

The City's Fire Zones are illustrated on Figure H-2. The vulnerable census tracts shown on Figure H-39 are not located within fire hazard zones. Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are located in the west, south, and east areas of the City, as well as surrounding areas including the Cleveland National Forest and parts of the City of Lake Forest and the City of Mission Viejo. As described in the Constraints section, the City has adopted the 2019 Fire Code into Title 10 of the Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code (RSMMC); therefore, wildfire risk to residential development is mitigated through building and development standards. Wildfire risk is further mitigated through regional cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions and the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA).

100 and 500-year flood zones are located within the City. Potential flooding could occur along the Arroyo Trabuco Creek (also known as Trabuco Creek) and Tijeras Canyon Creek, and is limited to open space and canyon areas. According to the General Plan Safety Element, no homes, structures or opportunity sites are located within the 100-year or 500-year flood zones within the City. This danger is further mitigated by the Rancho Santa Margarita Stormwater Program and Local Implementation Plan which incorporates mitigation actions such as design and construction measures that address flooding. Liquefaction and other seismic-related issues are addressed by the State Universal Building Code (UBC). Further strategies to prepare for and mitigate disasters are found in the City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plans and programs in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan provide resources to increase resiliency and address hazard risks for the entire community.

Findings

The City is not a historically disinvested area and has no affordable units at risk of conversion to market rate. Further, the City has strategies in place through its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan to ensure resilience for all segments of the community. The City has included Program 19 to update its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan to continue planning to meet the resiliency needs for all members of the Rancho Santa Margarita community. The policies and programs in this Housing Element will provide new opportunities to meet the identified housing needs in areas with low risk for displacement.

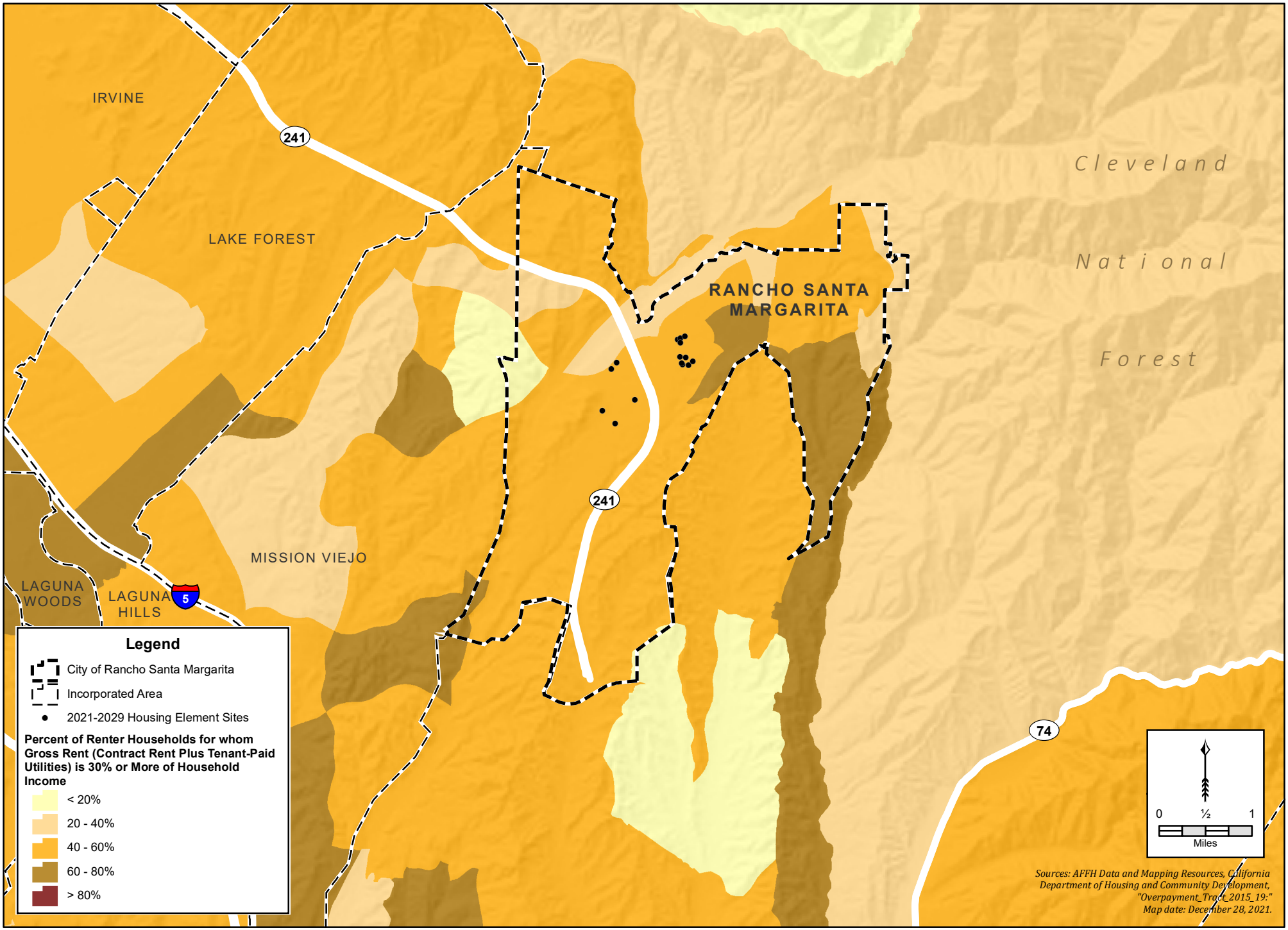

Figure H-33. Cost-Burdened Renter Households by Census Tract

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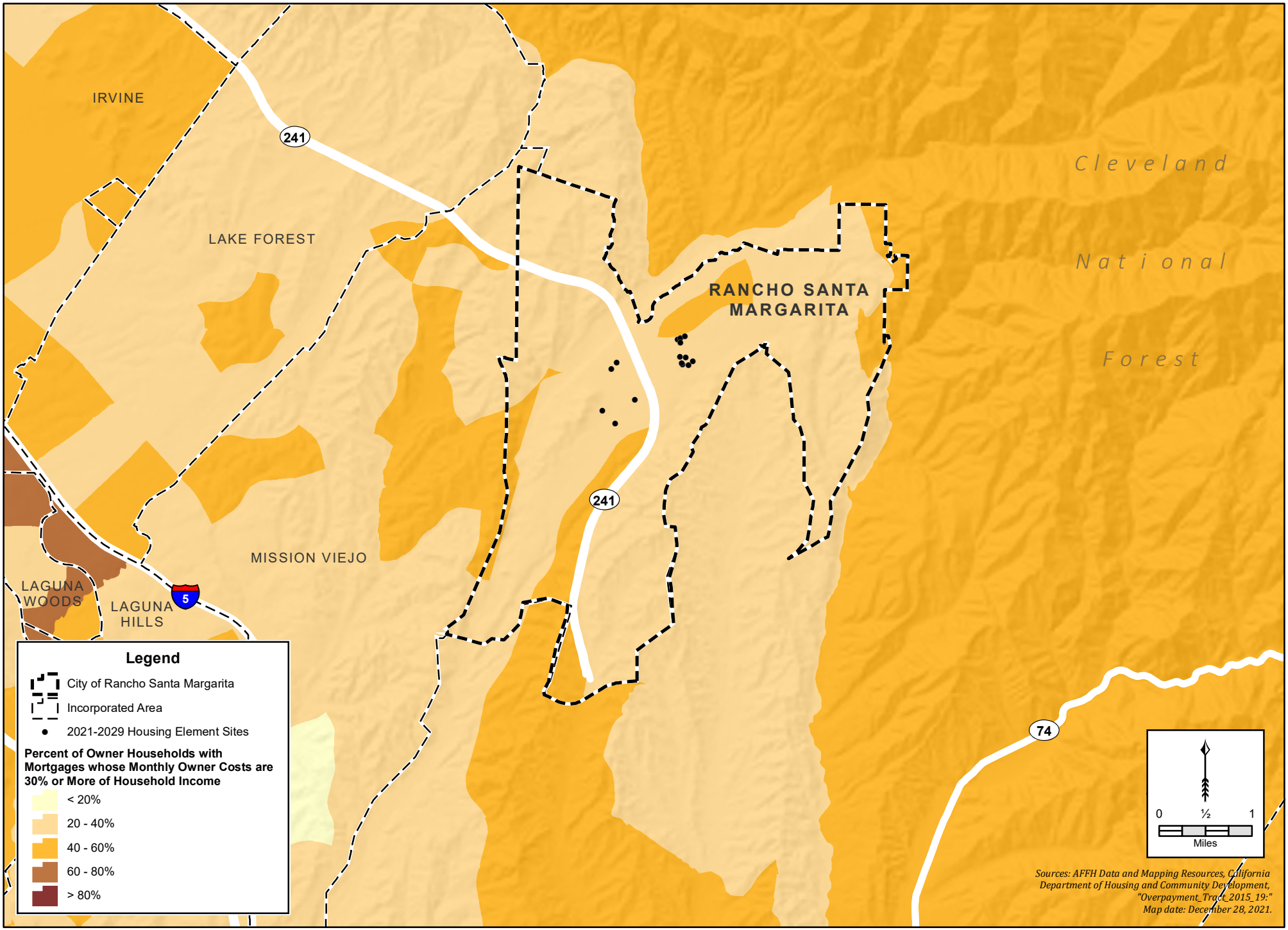

Figure H-34. Cost-Burdened Owner Households by Census Tract

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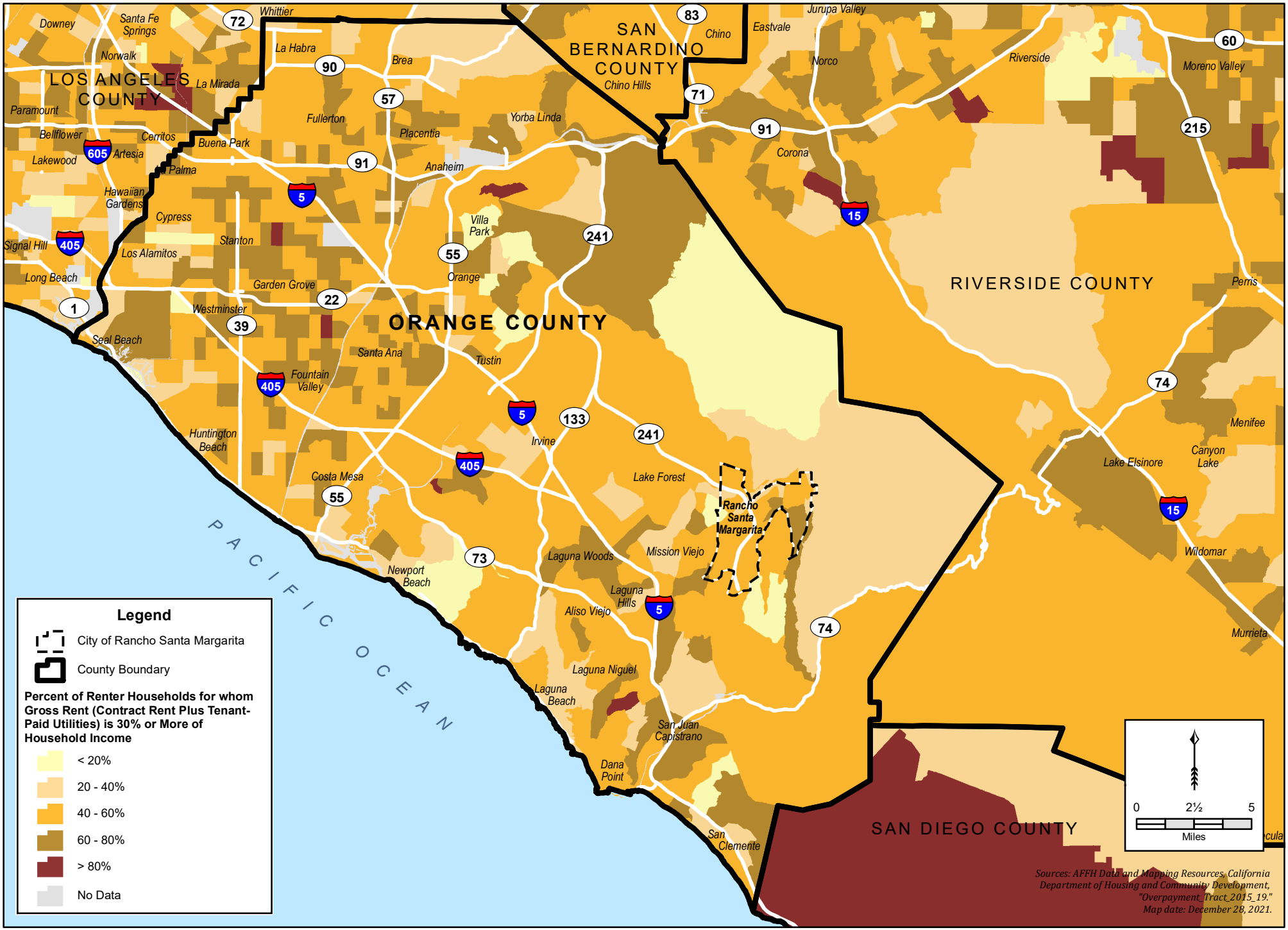

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Figure H-35. Cost-Burdened Renter Households by Census Tract - Countywide

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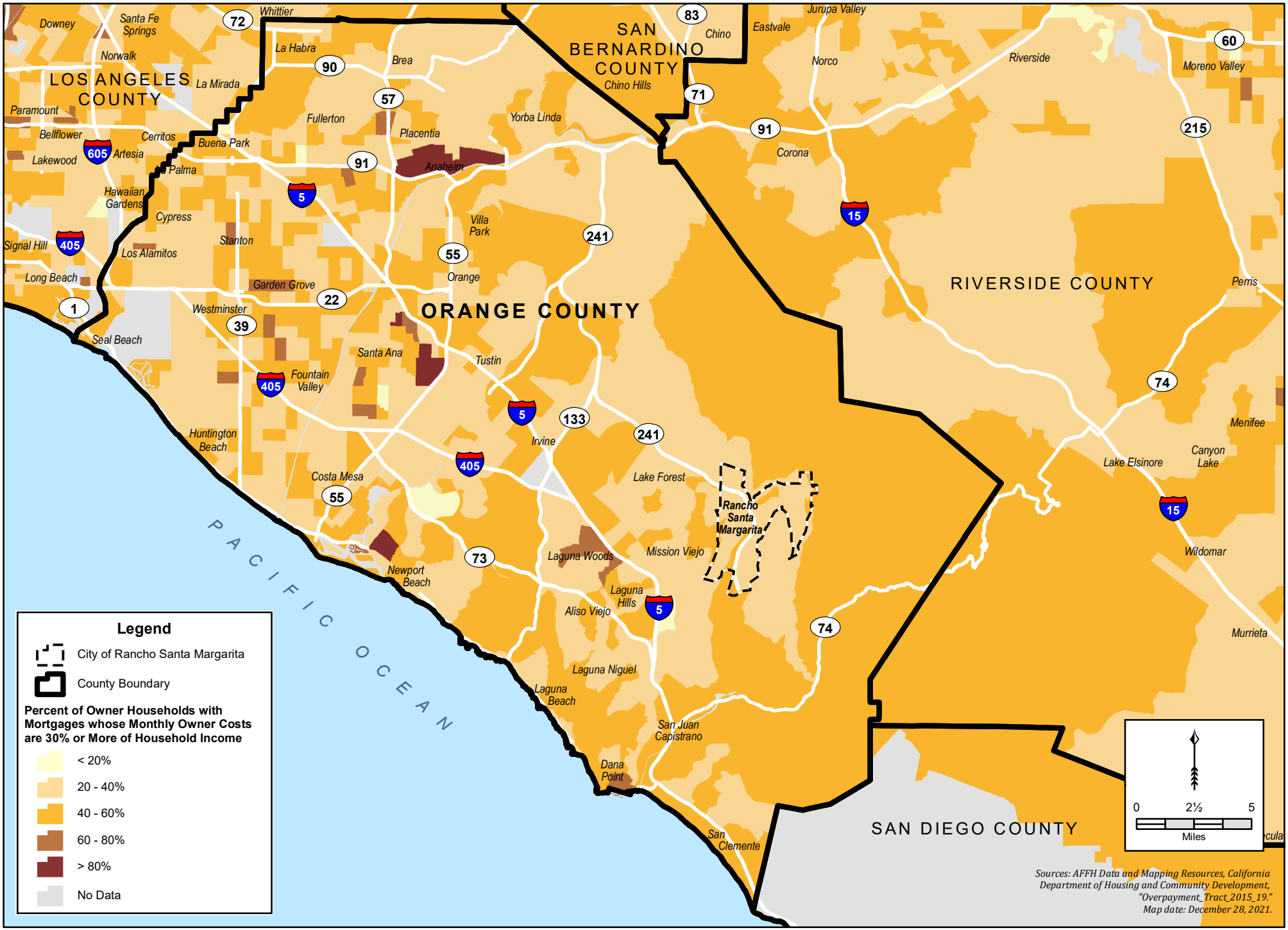

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Figure H-36. Cost-Burdened Owner Households by Census Tract - Countywide

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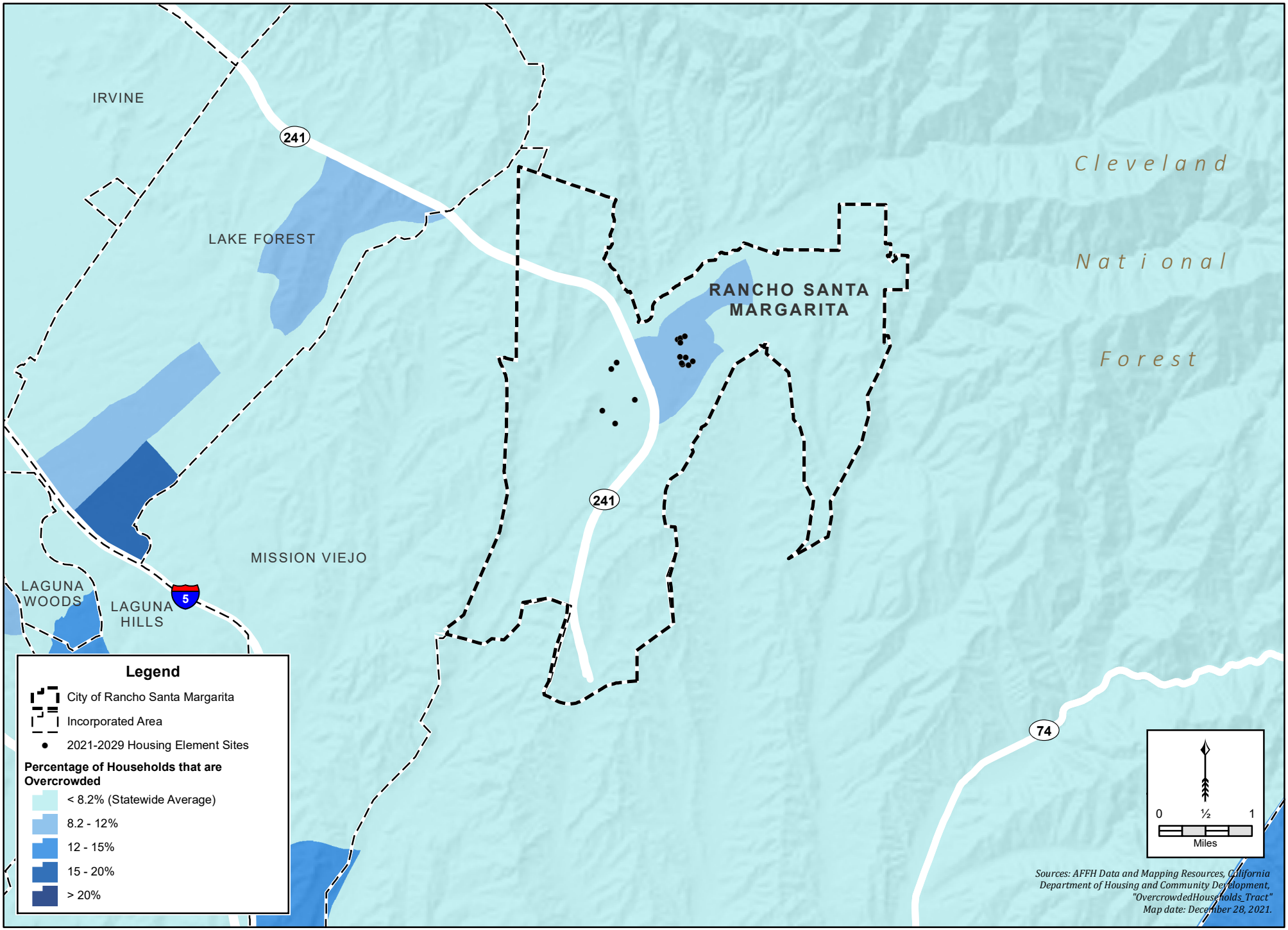

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Figure H-37. Overcrowded Households by Census Tract

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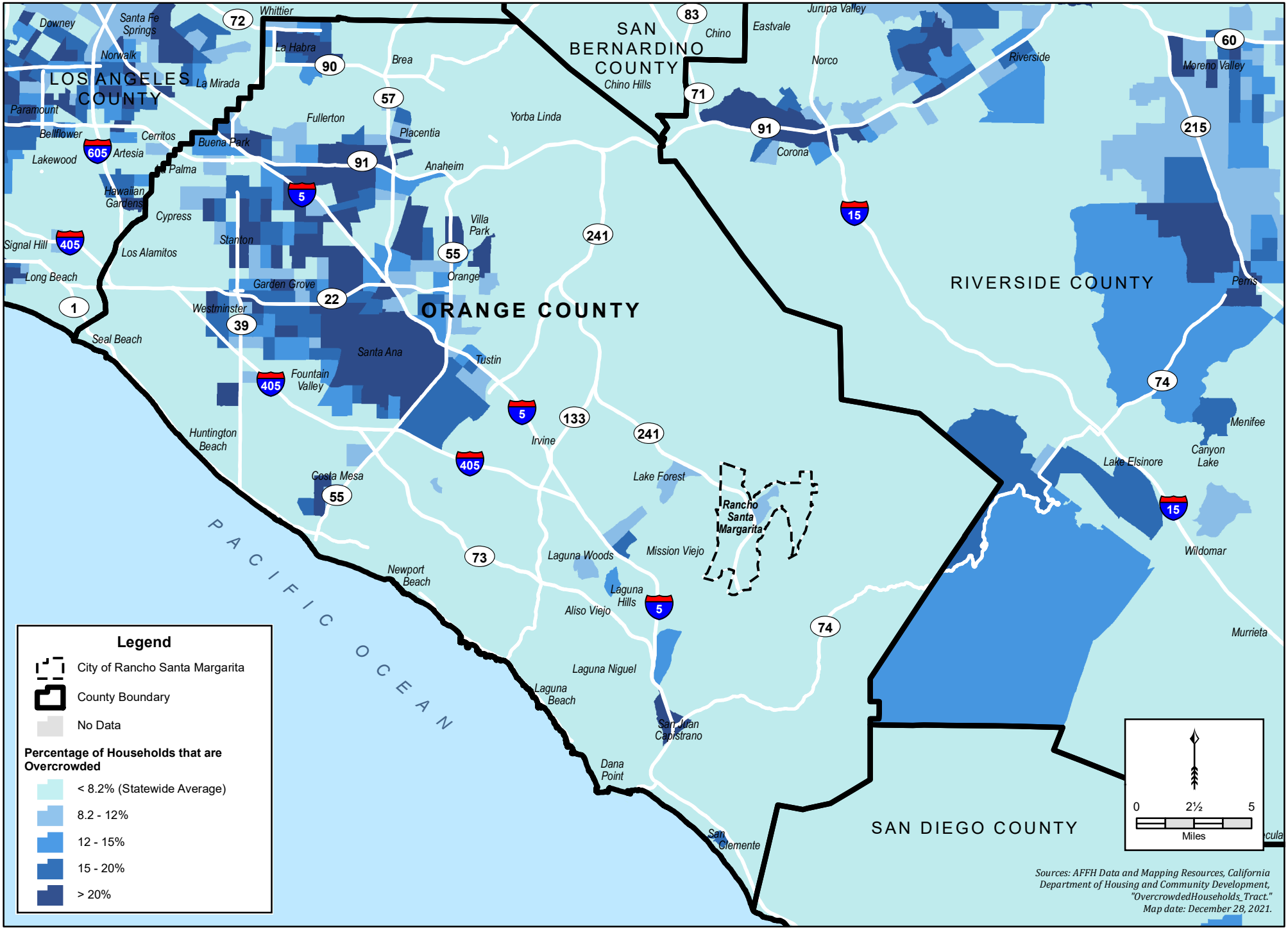

Figure H-38. Overcrowded Households by Census Tract - Countywide

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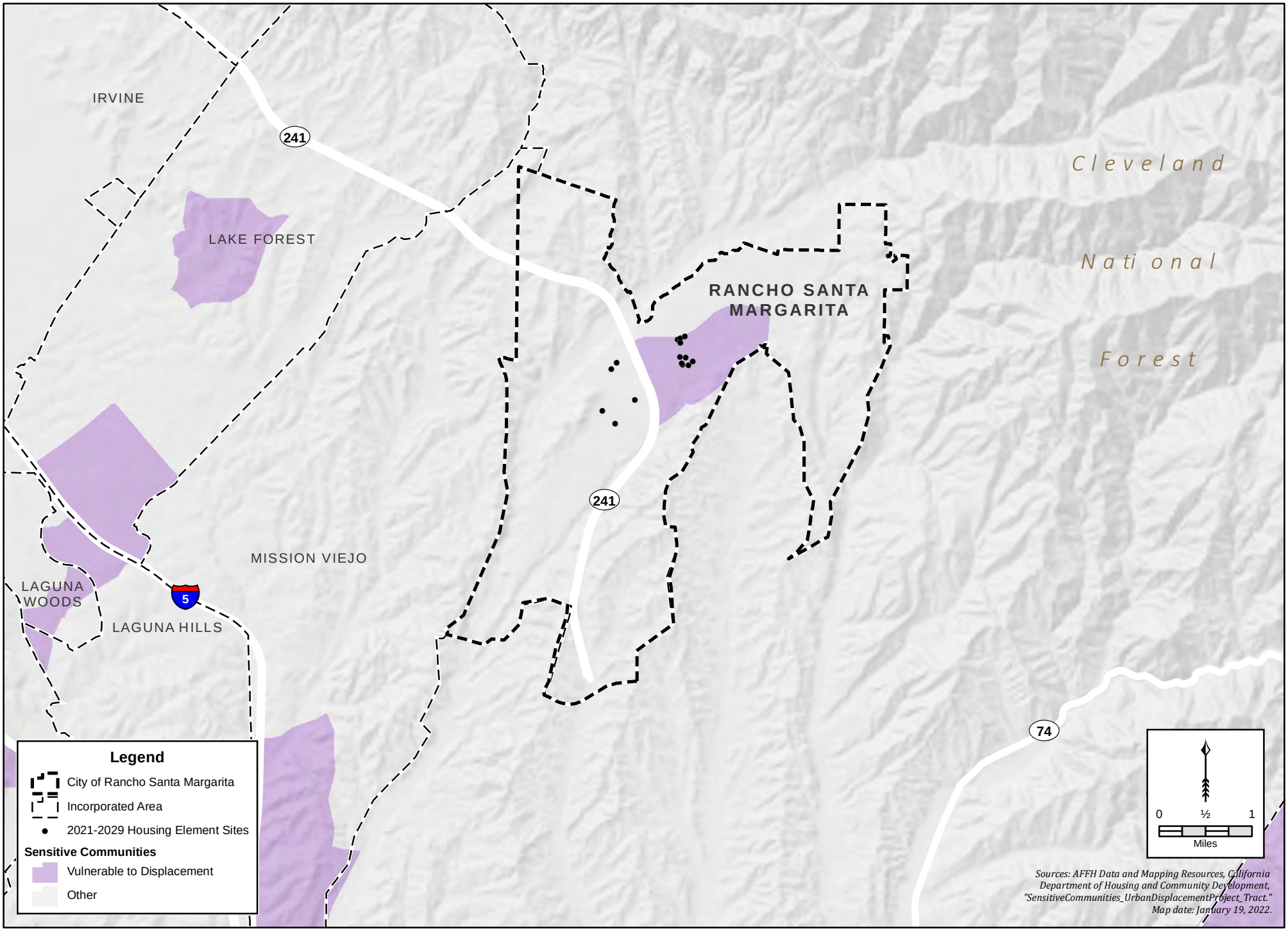

Figure H-39. Sensitive Communities

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6C. Sites Inventory

Government Code 65583 (amended pursuant to AB 686) requires that jurisdictions identify sites throughout the community in a manner that is consistent with its duty to affirmatively further fair housing. The site identification includes not only an analysis of site capacity to accommodate the RHNA (provided in this section), but also considers whether the identified sites serve the purpose of replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced ones, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity. This section analyzes the role of all sites, regardless of income level, in assisting to affirmatively further fair housing. However, special attention is paid to those sites identified to accommodate a portion of the City's lower-income RHNA to ensure that the City is thinking carefully about how the development of new affordable housing options can promote patterns of equality and inclusiveness.

SEGREGATION/INTEGRATION

As previously stated, the City finds that there are no known historic patterns of segregation by race and ethnicity, persons with disabilities, familial status, age or income. Nonetheless, as described throughout this Housing Element, the City is committed to supporting the development of housing to promote a balanced and integrated community. This is highlighted in Table H-58: RHNA Sites Strategy in the Housing Resources chapter, as the City has identified a surplus of sites and excess development capacity for housing for all income levels.

Figure H-10 shows the sites identified to meet the City's RHNA allocation in relation to racial/ethnic diversity. As shown, proposed sites are located in multiple census tracts currently developed with nonresidential uses are not concentrated in areas of low diversity. No sites are located in areas of low diversity.

Figure H-12 shows the sites designated to meet the City's RHNA allocation in relation to the concentration of persons with disabilities. As shown, proposed sites in areas with different proportions of persons with disabilities, and some sites are located in the census tract with the highest proportion of persons with disabilities. However, persons with disabilities and persons living in affordable/attainable housing both benefit from being near goods and services, including in mixed-use settings, and it stands to reason that both populations are well-served by locating in mixed-use areas. The locations of sites designated to meet the City's RHNA allocation are not expected to contribute to patterns of isolation or segregation for persons with disabilities.

Figure H-16 shows the sites designated to meet the City's RHNA allocation in relation to family status. There is a slightly increased concentration of single-person households located in central Rancho Santa Margarita where the locations of sites designated to meet the City's RHNA allocation are. There is no pattern of concentration of female-headed households in the community. The locations of sites designated to meet the City's RHNA allocation are not expected to contribute to patterns of isolation or segregation for family status.

Figure H-20 shows the sites designated to meet Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA allocation in relation to concentration of senior residents. As shown, proposed sites

are located throughout the community and are not concentrated in areas with high proportions of senior residents. Some of the of sites are located in areas with lower levels of senior residents (less than 10%) and some sites are located in areas where seniors make up 10-15% of the population. The City does not have a high concentration of seniors. However, there are existing senior developments and an assisted living facility located in these census tracts. None of the proposed housing sites are developed with existing senior housing. The locations of sites designated to meet the City's RHNA allocation are not expected to contribute to patterns of isolation or segregation for senior households.

Figure H-22 shows the sites designated to meet the City's RHNA allocation in relation to median household income. As shown, proposed RHNA sites are located in census tracts with varying levels of household median income. No candidate sites are located in any of the City's lowest median household income census tracts. Development is expected to occur at other sites where nonresidential uses are currently (2021) located. The location of new development to meet the City's very-low and low income RHNA are not expected to contribute to patterns of isolation or segregation for lower-income households.

R/ECAPS

The City does not have any racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty or areas of affluence and the identification of sites to accommodate the City's RHNA is not expected to alter this finding.

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Figure H-24 shows the sites designated to accommodate the City's RHNA allocation in relation to place-based opportunities by census tract. Approximately half of the City's candidate sites (those identified for the Workforce Housing Overlay) are located within census tract 320.53, which is considered an area with low place-based opportunities. This census tract is heavily developed with nonresidential uses, primary related to the City's business park. The primary concern in this area is related to access to supermarkets. The introduction of new residential development in this primarily commercial area will help to create more demand for goods and services nearby and could serve as the catalyst for development of neighborhood-serving retail in the area (in accordance with the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code). Taken together, development of new workforce housing in this area, which is focused on underutilized business park sites, will help to diversify the land use pattern without displacing existing residents. Additionally, as shown in Figure H-31, census tract 320.53 is considered the highest resource area in the TCAC Opportunity Index Scores for economic, education and environmental indexes. This census tract also has some of the higher job proximity index scores comparatively in the City (Figure H-32). Due to the location of sites in high opportunity areas, the site inventory would improve fair housing concerns regarding access to opportunity. Program 1 in the Housing Plan requires the designation of identified candidate sites to be either a Workforce Housing Overlay or Mixed-Use Housing land use/zoning designations, which would allow for densities up to 35 du/ac, to accommodate its RHNA for all income levels, including low-income households.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) provided throughout the City would also

indiscriminately increase access to opportunity (Program 3). To help support the addition of new development in high resource areas, the City has included Program 3, which promotes the opportunity to develop accessory dwelling units throughout the community.

DISPLACEMENT RISK

Figure H-33 shows the sites designated to accommodate the City's RHNA allocation in relation to percent of renter households overburdened by housing costs, by census tract. No sites are located in the census tracts with the highest levels of renter households overburdened by housing costs (located in the northern portion of the City), but sites are located in census tracts with modest levels of renter households overburdened. The sites are located in census tracts which are largely developed with nonresidential uses, and the introduction of new units in these tracts, and throughout the community, will help to alleviate existing patterns of overpayment. In addition, no sites are located in the census tracts with the highest levels of homeowner households overburdened by housing costs; these census tracts are largely developed as single-family neighborhoods and can accommodate ADU's as part of the City's RHNA. Figure H-34 shows the sites proposed to meet Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA, including its very-low and low-income RHNA allocation (the new Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing sites will allow for densities up to 35 du/ac) in relation to percent of homeowner households overburdened by housing costs, by census tract. The intent of introducing new residential development in these areas (at locations currently developed with commercial uses) is to add new housing to desirable areas and provide a range of housing choices at different prices to current and future residents. The sites designated to accommodate the City's lower-income RHNA are not currently developed with residential uses and are not expected to displace current residents. Therefore, the site inventory would mitigate potential displacement risk for existing low-income households.

On occasion, the City will receive a call from a current or prospective resident looking for resources to assist them with paying rent to remain in their rental unit, or for one they are hoping to rent. These callers are referred to the County's Section 8 program and to the City's CDBG-funded partners for additional resources.

SITE ANALYSIS FINDINGS

To accommodate the City's RHNA allocation, two key opportunities for redevelopment of underutilized nonresidential sites have been identified: the introduction of workforce housing in the City's business park and revitalization of the City's commercial centers through mixed-use development where residential uses can coexist with places to shop, work and play (Housing Plan Program 1). The City's RHNA needs, including very-low and low needs, are accommodated in these locations which do not represent extremely concentrated racial or ethnic populations, persons with disabilities, female household, or low-income households. In addition, the City has included a program to encourage additional development of lower-income units throughout the community through its accessory dwelling unit program (Program 3).

Using the statewide opportunity area map and indicators of segregation, displacement risk, and access to opportunity as overlays to the City's site inventory, the City was able to determine if sites identified in the site inventory to accommodate the City's RHNA affirmatively further fair housing and combat any existing identified patterns. By locating sites throughout the City, and at permitted densities which promote a variety of housing types to meet all income needs, the sites affirmatively further fair housing and provides for housing for all income types in high resource areas. The integration of affordable housing into high opportunity areas will promote mixed-income communities and will facilitate housing mobility and improve access to opportunity for lower-income households.

Lack of access to jobs and lack of access to affordable housing options are both contributing factors to fair housing issues in the City. These fair housing factors are addressed by promoting the opportunity for infill workforce housing within the City's Business Park through development and implementation of a new Workforce Housing Overlay. The Workforce Housing Overlay sites have the potential capacity for 344 units (approximately 54% of the RHNA), including 107 units for extremely/very low-income households, and 62 units for low-income households. The Workforce Housing Overlay sites are located in the highest resource areas and are located in Census Block Groups with median incomes greater than $125,000, which would allow for mixed income neighborhoods.

The Mixed-Use Housing land use/zone will allow for residential development at locations currently developed with commercial and business park uses at a density of up to 35 dwelling units per acre. The intent of the Mixed-Use Housing designation is to allow for mixed-use development in vertical or horizontal formats within the City's existing activity centers. The Mixed-Use Housing designation would have a capacity for 320 units (approximately 50% of the remaining RHNA), including 95 units for extremely/very low-income households and 57 units for low-income households. Two of the Mixed-Use Housing sites with a capacity for 70 units, including 33 units for very low-income and low-income households, are located in the highest resource areas and are located in Census Block Groups with median incomes greater than $125,000, which would allow for mixed income neighborhoods. The remaining sites, with a capacity for 250 units, are located in high resource areas as well. These sites are located in Census Tract 320.54, which has high levels of overcrowding and are considered "Sensitive Communities" for displacement. The development of housing for all income levels here on sites that do not currently contain housing, would help alleviate overcrowding and potential displacement.

For these reasons, the City finds that the sites proposed to accommodate its RHNA allocation do not unduly burden existing areas of concentrated racial or ethnic homogeneity, poverty, or other characteristics. Moreover, the sites affirmatively further fair housing by helping to stimulate investment in areas where additional people- and place-based opportunity is desired, and where new residential and/or mixed-use development can help to improve some of the opportunity level characteristics discussed earlier in this section.

The City has included programs in the Housing Plan to address specific Fair Housing issues in the City, including Program 1: RHNA/Shortfall Program, Program 10: Affordable Housing Development, Program 16: Large Sites to Accommodate the RHNA, Program 17: Fair Housing Council of Orange County, Program 18, Expand Housing Opportunities, and Program 19: Affirmatively Further Fair Housing, which will encourage lower-income sites to be located in areas with more resources and will help to ensure displacement does not occur as a result of future housing development.



6D. Analysis of Contributing Factors and Fair Housing Priorities and Goals

The December 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule Guidebook identifies examples of contributing factors by each fair housing issue area: outreach, fair housing enforcement and outreach capacity, segregation and integration, racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty, disparities in access to opportunity, disparities in access to opportunities for persons with disabilities, disproportionate housing needs, including displacement risks, and sites inventory. Further, the Guidebook requires that contributing factors be prioritized based on local information, giving highest priority to factors that most limit or deny fair housing choice and/or access to opportunity. Based on the analysis included in this Background Report and the County AI, the City has identified the following potential contributing factors to fair housing issues in Rancho Santa Margarita and has developed a series of specific programs to address these contributing factors. The meaningful actions listed in the Table H-68 relate to the actions identified in the Housing Plan.

TABLE H-68: FAIR HOUSING ISSUES AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Fair Housing Issues	Contributing Factors	Priority	Meaningful Actions
Disparities in Access to Opportunity	• Location of employers • Availability, type, frequency, and reliability of public transportation • Location and type of affordable housing • Land use and zoning laws	High	• Program 1 • Program 3 • Program 9 • Program 10 • Program 11 • Program 14 • Programs 17-19
Segregation and Integration	• Community opposition • Location and type of affordable housing • Land use and zoning laws	High	• Program 1 • Program 3 • Programs 5-10 • Programs 12-14 • Programs 17-19
Disproportionate Housing Needs, including Displacement Risks	• Availability of affordable units in a range of sizes • Land use and zoning laws	High	• Program 1 • Program 3 • Program 5 • Programs 7-8 • Programs 9-11 • Programs 18-19
Disparities in Access to Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities	• Access to transportation for persons with disabilities • Lack of affordable, accessible housing in range of unit sizes • Land use and zoning laws	Medium	• Program 1 • Program 3 • Program 5 • Program 8 • Programs 10-12 • Programs 14-15 • Programs 17-19
Fair Housing Enforcement and Outreach	• Lack of resources for fair housing agencies and organizations • Lack of local private fair housing outreach and enforcement	Medium	• Program 17 • Program 19

Based on the issues identified in Section 5 of this Background report, the following are the top three issues to be addressed through the Housing Programs.

1. **Location of employers (disparities in access to opportunity).** Rancho Santa Margarita is a master-planned community designed to provide a balance of jobs and housing where people live, work, shop and play. However, over time, housing costs in the City have continued to rise and most of the City's housing units, especially single-family homes, are only affordable to households earning above moderate incomes (120% or more of the area median income). Employers located in the community can have a hard time attracting talent due to the high cost of living in the City, and conversely, many residents of Rancho Santa Margarita commute out of the City for high-wage jobs in more robust jobs centers both in Orange County and throughout the region. To help address this contributing factor, the City has identified three sites in the Business Park suitable for workforce housing and has committed to adopting and implementing a Workforce Housing Overlay which will allow for development of residential uses at these sites at densities up to 35 du/ac. The Workforce Housing Overlay will create new opportunities to provide attainable housing near the City's job centers, and could encourage the location of new employers to Rancho Santa Margarita who are looking to allow residential uses to coexist with jobs centers. Program 1, *Regional Housing Needs Allocation*, has been included in the City's Housing Plan to support adoption and implementation of the Workforce Housing Overlay.
2. **Community opposition.** The County AI identified community opposition as a potential significant contributing factor to fair housing issues in Orange County and Rancho Santa Margarita. In Rancho Santa Margarita, and many other communities, there is a lack of community understanding around affordable housing and the important role it plays in helping meet the needs of a variety of community members, including young people, working professionals, seniors, persons with disabilities, female-headed and other single-parent households, low-income households, and other at-risk populations. Program 17, *Orange County Fair Housing Council*, has been included in the City's Housing Plan to address this contributing factor.

3. **Land use and zoning laws**. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita comprehensively updated its General Plan in 2020. Although the City prepared and adopted a Mixed-Use land use designation which allows for residential development up to 25 du/ac as part of its new General Plan, the designation was not applied to any specific sites. As part of the Housing Element Update, the City identified a shortfall of available sites to accommodate its RHNA at all income levels. In order to provide adequate sites, the City has included a program to adopt a new Mixed-Use Housing land use and zoning designation, which will allow for residential development up to 35 du/ac, and implement the designation by applying it to specific underutilized nonresidential sites currently designated as Commercial General or Business Park. By allowing for residential development where residential development was not previously allowed, the City has put forward a plan to accommodate new growth at the most viable sites for redevelopment. Program 1 has been included to address this contributing factor.

Moving forward, the City remains committed to providing a diversity of housing options for all income levels, encouraging development throughout the community to help overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. The majority of the City's Housing Programs designed to address fair housing are required to be implemented on an ongoing basis, with annual progress reports and program evaluations to ensure they are achieving the City's objectives. The following list summarizes those programs identified in this Housing Element which affirmatively further fair housing and implement the County AI's recommendations:

- Program 1, to accommodate new growth through the Workforce Housing Overlay and Mixed-Use Housing land use/zoning designation
- Program 3, to encourage the production of accessory dwelling units
- Program 10, to support affordable housing construction
- Program 11, to ensure that the City's density bonus ordinance continues to be in compliance with State law
- Program 12, to comply with all State of California accessibility standards

- Program 14, to accommodate specialized housing types and update the City's policies and procedures regarding low barrier navigation centers, supportive housing, employee housing, and farmworker housing
- Program 17, to continue utilizing a fair housing service provider to assist with addressing fair housing issues in Rancho Santa Margarita and to educate the community
- Program 18, to expand housing opportunities
- Program 19, to affirmatively further fair housing through outreach, fair housing enforcement and outreach capacity, addressing racially/ethnically concentrated areas of poverty or affluence, addressing disparities in access to opportunity, including for persons with disabilities, addressing disproportion housing needs, including displacement risks, and promoting a sites inventory that affirmatively furthers fair housing

To the extent that these programs represent ongoing work efforts, these programs are evaluated for effectiveness in Section 2 of this Background Report. The City has undertaken a series of proactive amendments to the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code to address new State requirements including accessory dwelling units, and the City will continue to partner with local and regional stakeholders to affirmatively further fair housing.

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APPENDIX A:
SITE INVENTORY

Adopted August 24, 2022

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Table A-1: RHNA Sites Summary (See Background Report Section 5C Residential Sites Inventory and Table H-59 for further information and analysis of the suitability of nonvacant sites)

Map Reference (Figure H-3)	Address	APN	Acres	Proposed Designation	Potential Capacity
1	22931 Arroyo Vista	805-062-06	2.92	Workforce Housing Overlay (WHO)	34
2	29977 Avenida De Las Banderas	805-061-01	24.53	Workforce Housing Overlay (WHO)	212
3	30200 Avenida De Las Banderas	805-042-02	10.98	Workforce Housing Overlay (WHO)	98
4	30021 Tomas	805-222-01	1.92	Mixed-Use Housing	24
5	22022 El Paseo	814-153-05	1.00	Mixed-Use Housing	12
6	22012 El Paseo	814-153-06	0.46	Mixed-Use Housing	0*
7a	22032 El Paseo	814-153-07	0.67	Mixed-Use Housing	8
7b	22032 El Paseo	814-153-14	2.23	Mixed-Use Housing	27
8	22342 Avenida Empresa	805-052-09	3.88	Mixed-Use Housing	46
9	30832 Santa Margarita Pky	814-153-04	1.03	Mixed-Use Housing	13
10	22205 El Paseo	814-172-10	0.70	Mixed-Use Housing	9
11	22215 El Paseo	814-172-11	5.54	Mixed-Use Housing	70
12	22235 El Paseo	814-172-12	2.98	Mixed-Use Housing	35
13	22245 El Paseo	824-172-25	0.71	Mixed-Use Housing	9
14	22342 El Paseo	814-172-26	4.11	Mixed-Use Housing	50
15	22372 El Paseo	814-172-27	1.39	Mixed-Use Housing	17
Total			**65.05**		**664**

**Per State guidance, sites smaller than 0.50 acres are found to be inadequate to accommodate the City's 6th Cycle RHNA; while Site 6 is proposed to be redesignated consistent with surrounding uses, the capacity for this site is shown as zero units.*

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Table A-2: Site Selection Factors (See Background Report Section 5C Residential Sites Inventory for further information and analysis of the suitability of nonvacant sites)

Map Reference (Figure H-3)	Site Size and Ownership Patterns	Property Owner Interest	Existing/Past Uses	Surrounding Development and Densities	Proximity/ Location Outside VHFHSZ	Improvement to Land Value Ratio[1]	Site Utilization/ Lot Coverage/ FAR	Existing Vacancies	Access to Infrastructure, Goods, Services, and Transportation	Factors Exhibited
1	X	X	X		X	X (34.89%)	X		X	7
2	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	7
3	X	X	X		X		X		X	6
4	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	7
5			X	X	X	X (43.53%)	X		X	6
6			X	X	X	X (36.84%)	X		X	6
7	X		X	X	X	X (8.33%)	X		X	7
8	X		X	X	X		X		X	6
9	X			X	X	X (20.07%)	X		X	6
10	X		X	X	X	X (29.15%)	X		X	7
11	X		X	X	X		X		X	6
12	X		X	X	X	X (26.09%)	X		X	7
13	X		X	X	X	X (24.72%)	X		X	7
14	X		X	X	X	X (24.16%)	X		X	7
15	X		X	X	X	X (29.7%)	X		X	7

1. Digital Map Products Full Property Detail, based on 2021 Orange County Assessor Data.

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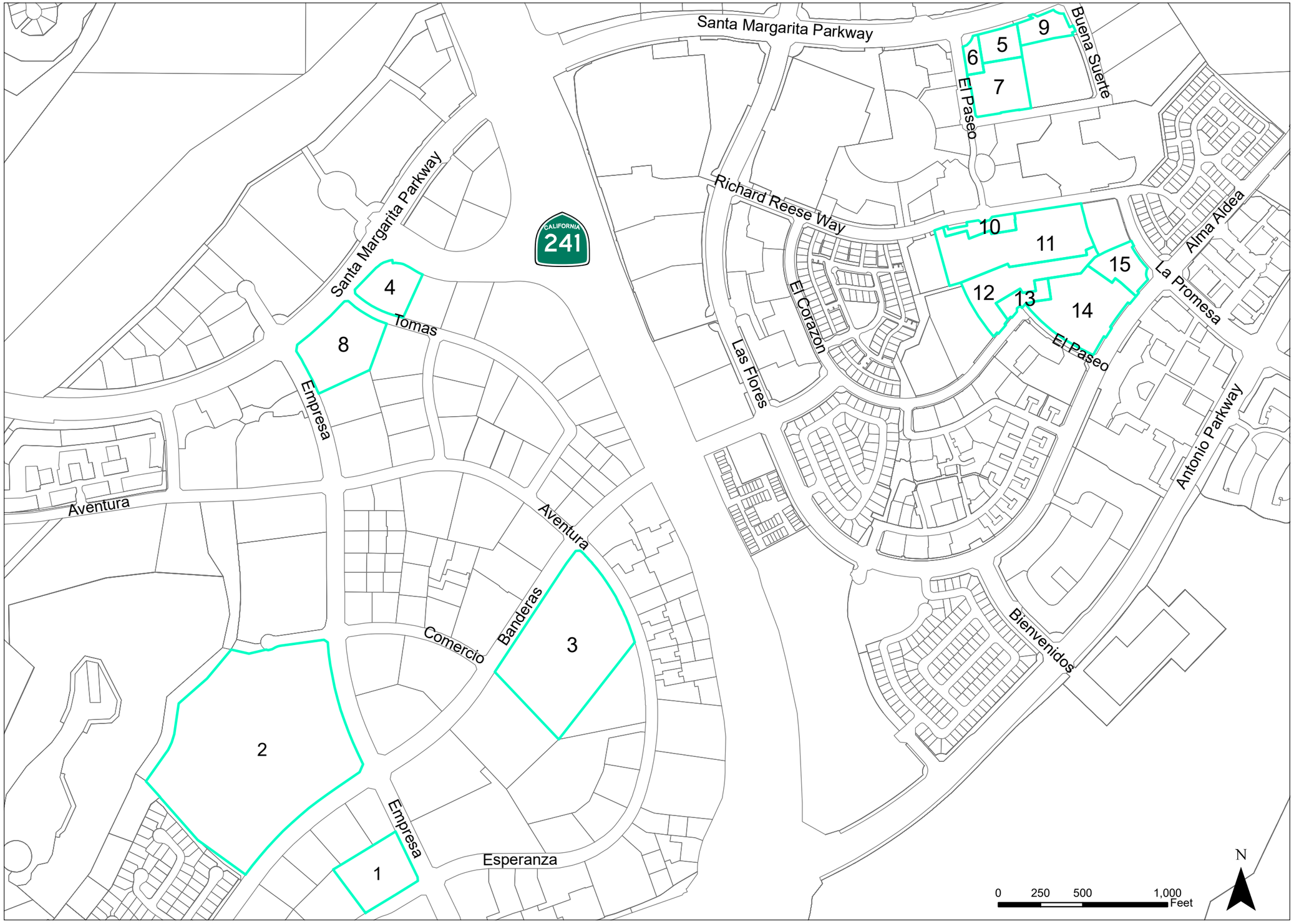

Legend

Site No. 1
22931 Arroyo Vista

Site No. 2
29977 Avenida De Las Banderas

Site No. 3
30200 Avenida De Las Banderas

Site No. 4
30021 Tomas

Site No. 5
22022 El Paseo

Site No. 6
22012 El Paseo

Site No. 7
22032 El Paseo

Site No. 8
22342 Avenida Empresa

Site No. 9
30832 Santa Margarita Parkway

Site No. 10
22205 El Paseo

Site No. 11
22215 El Paseo

Site No. 12
22235 El Paseo

Site No. 13
22245 El Paseo

Site No. 14
22342 El Paseo

Site No. 15
22372 El Paseo

Figure A-1: Proposed 2021-2029 Housing Element Inventory

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Site Details: 22931 Arroyo Vista

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	1
Acreage	2.92
Accessor Parcel Number	805-062-06
Ownership	Applied Medical Resources Corporation
Existing Use	Office Building; 10,258 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.06
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.08
Existing General Plan	Business Park
Existing Zoning	Business Park
Proposed General Plan	Business Park
Proposed Zoning	Business Park/Workforce Housing Overlay
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	34 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (11 ELI/VL, 6 L, 6 M, 11 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Property Owner Interest • Existing/Past Uses • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



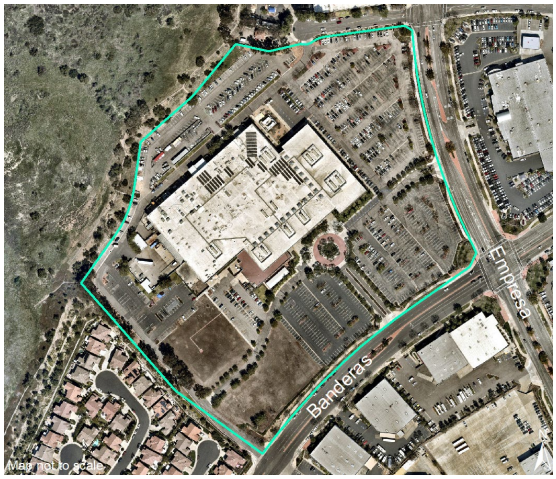
Photograph



Site Details: 29977 Avenida de las Banderas

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	2
Acreage	24.53
Accessor Parcel Number	805-061-01
Ownership	Applied Medical Resources Corporation
Existing Use	Office Building; 300,000 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.20
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.28
Existing General Plan	Business Park
Existing Zoning	Business Park
Proposed General Plan	Business Park
Proposed Zoning	Business Park/Workforce Housing Overlay
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	212 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (66 ELI/VL, 38 L, 38 M, 70 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Property Owner Interest • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 30200 Avenida de las Banderas

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	3
Acreage	10.98
Accessor Parcel Number	805-042-02
Ownership	Applied Medical Resources Corporation
Existing Use	Office Building; 125,760 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.27
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.26
Existing General Plan	Business Park
Existing Zoning	Business Park
Proposed General Plan	Business Park
Proposed Zoning	Business Park/Workforce Housing Overlay
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	98 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (30 ELI/VL, 18 L, 18 M, 32 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Property Owner Interest • Existing/Past Uses • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 30021 Tomas

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	4
Acreage	1.92
Accessor Parcel Number	805-222-01
Ownership	Dolphin Partners, Inc.
Existing Use	RSM Office Center; 36,673 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.15
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.44
Existing General Plan	Business Park
Existing Zoning	Business Park
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	24 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (7 ELI/VL, 4 L, 4 M, 9 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Exiting Vacancies • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22022 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	5
Acreage	1.0
Accessor Parcel Number	814-153-05
Ownership	Santa Ana Canyon Inc.
Existing Use	BJs Restaurant; 7,000 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.20
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.16
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	12 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (4 ELI/VL, 2 L, 2 M, 4 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22012 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	6
Acreage	0.46
Accessor Parcel Number	814-153-06
Ownership	US Bank
Existing Use	US Bank; 3,000 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.25
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.15
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	Due to the size of the site (less than 0.50 acres), no development capacity has been assumed at this site.
Site Selection Factors	• Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22032 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	7a (Site 7 is composed of two parcels)
Acreage	0.67
Accessor Parcel Number	814-153-07
Ownership	Cypress West Realty Partners
Existing Use	RSM Health Center; 0 SF (parking)
Existing Lot Coverage	0.0
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.0
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	8 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (2 ELI/VL, 1 L, 1 M, 4 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22032 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	7b (Site 7 is composed of two parcels)
Acreage	2.23
Accessor Parcel Number	814-153-14
Ownership	Cypress West Realty Partners
Existing Use	RSM Health Center; 24,846 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.14
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.26
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	27 Assumed Capacity (40% of total capacity) (8 ELI/VL, 5 L, 5 M, 9 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22342 Avenida Empresa

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	8
Acreage	3.88
Accessor Parcel Number	805-052-09
Ownership	Olen Properties
Existing Use	Cal West Bank/SAMLARC; 52,721 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.22
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.31
Existing General Plan	Business Park
Existing Zoning	Business Park
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	46 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (14 ELI/VL, 8 L, 8 M, 16 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 30832 Santa Margarita Parkway

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	9
Acreage	1.03
Accessor Parcel Number	814-153-04
Ownership	Del Mar Petroleum, Inc.
Existing Use	Town Center Car Wash; 4,425 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.12
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.10
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	13 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (4 ELI/VL, 2 L, 2 M, 5 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22205 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	10
Acreage	0.70
Accessor Parcel Number	814-172-10
Ownership	Plaza El Paseo Center LLC
Existing Use	Plaza El Paseo Mixed Use; 5,350 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.18
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.18
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	9 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (2 ELI/VL, 2 L, 2 M, 3 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



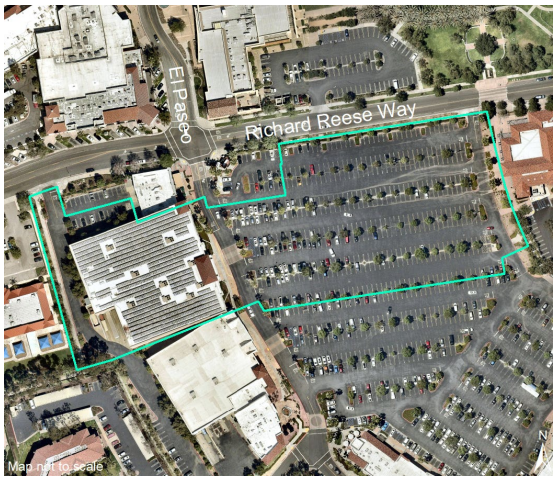
Photograph



Site Details: 22215 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	11
Acreage	5.54
Accessor Parcel Number	814-172-11
Ownership	Kohl's Department Stores Inc.
Existing Use	Plaza El Paseo Mixed Use; 88,435 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.20
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.37
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	70 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (21 ELI/VL, 13 L, 13 M, 23 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



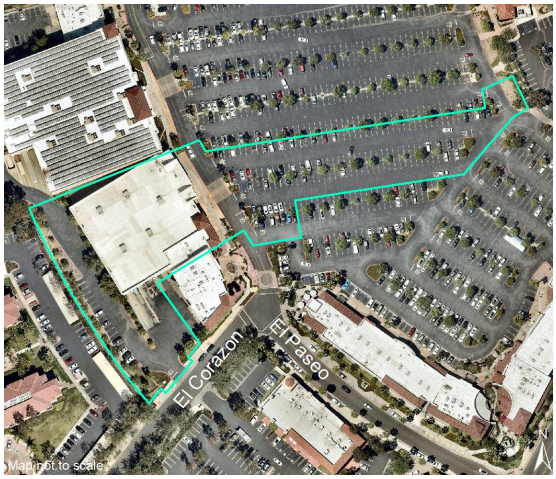
Photograph



Site Details: 22235 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	12
Acreage	2.98
Accessor Parcel Number	814-172-12
Ownership	Plaza El Paseo Center LLC
Existing Use	Plaza El Paseo Mixed Use; 36,648 SF (inclusive of 22245 El Paseo SF)
Existing Lot Coverage	0.24
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.28
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	35 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (11 ELI/VL, 6 L, 6 M, 12 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22245 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	13
Acreage	0.71
Accessor Parcel Number	824-172-25
Ownership	Plaza El Paseo Center LLC
Existing Use	Plaza El Paseo Mixed Use; 6,737 SF (inclusive of 22235 El Paseo SF)
Existing Lot Coverage	0.22
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.21
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	9 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (2 ELI/VL, 2 L, 2 M, 3 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22342 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	14
Acreage	4.11
Accessor Parcel Number	814-172-26
Ownership	Plaza El Paseo Center LLC
Existing Use	Plaza El Paseo Mixed Use; 47,844 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.26
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.27
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	50 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (15 ELI/VL, 9 L, 9 M, 17 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Site Details: 22372 El Paseo

Site Inventory Map Number Reference	15
Acreage	1.39
Accessor Parcel Number	814-172-27
Ownership	Plaza El Paseo Center LLC
Existing Use	Plaza El Paseo Mixed Use; 21,517 SF
Existing Lot Coverage	0.40
Existing Floor Area Ratio	0.36
Existing General Plan	Commercial General
Existing Zoning	Commercial General
Proposed General Plan	Mixed-Use Housing
Proposed Zoning	Mixed-Use Housing
Potential Capacity by Household Income Level	17 Assumed Capacity (35% of total capacity) (5 ELI/VL, 3 L, 3 M, 6 AM)
Site Selection Factors	• Site Size and Ownership Patterns • Existing/Past Uses • Surrounding Development and Densities • Proximity/Location Outside of VHFHSZ • Improvement to Land Value Ratio • Site Utilization/Lot Coverage/FAR • Access to Infrastructure, goods, services, and transportation

Site Boundary (Aerial with Parcel Boundary)



Photograph



Applied Medical
A New Generation Medical Device Company

September 23, 2021

Cheryl Kuta
Development Services Director
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
2112 El Paseo, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Re: **Housing Element Update Rancho Santa Margarita**
Rezoning of Business Park for Mixed Use

Mrs. Kuta,

As a commercial resident of Rancho Santa Margarita, Applied Medical Resources Corporation (AMR) has been actively following the development regarding the Housing Element Update. The topics covered include consideration of undeveloped sites, reuse and repurposing of existing sites throughout the City, addition of accessory dwelling units, as well as discussions on workforce housing in the business park where AMR operates.

Regarding workforce housing, the City staff has been evaluating the most plausible candidates for such sites by considering the lot size and lot occupancy for all parcels within the business park in Rancho Santa Margarita. Suitable sites identified by the City include 29977 Avenida de las Banderas (R100), 30200 Avenida de las Banderas (R105), 22931 Arroyo Vista (R113) and 22922 Empresa.

We are writing you to express our support in the workforce housing overlay for R100, R105 and R113, all of which are in AMR's ownership. The rezoning of these specific sites would allow AMR to consider mixed use of the sites at its discretion, enabling AMR to accommodate at least 300 housing units.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding this project.

Sincerely,

Zoran Falkenstein

22872 Avenida Empresa, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 Main 949-713-8000 Customer Relations 800-282-2212 www.appliedmedical.com

Please Start Here, Instructions in Cell A2, Table in A3:B15	Form Fields
Site Inventory Forms must be submitted to HCD for a housing element or amendment adopted on or after January 1, 2021. The following form is to be used for satisfying this requirement. To submit the form, complete the Excel spreadsheet and submit to HCD at sitesinventory@hcd.ca.gov. Please send the Excel workbook, not a scanned or PDF copy of the tables.	
General Information	
Jurisidiction Name	RANCHO ST. MARGARITA
Housing Element Cycle	6th
Contact Information	
First Name	Cheryl
Last Name	Kuta
Title	r of Development Se
Email	
Phone	(949) 635-1800
Mailing Address	
Street Address	22112 El Paseo
City	NCHO ST. MARGAR
Zip Code	92688

Table A: Housing Element Sites Inventory, Table Starts in Cell A2

Jurisdiction Name	Site Address/Intersection	5 Digit ZIP Code	Assessor Parcel Number	Consolidated Sites	General Plan Designation (Current)	Zoning Designation	Minimum Density Allowed (units/acre)	Max Density Allowed (units/acre)	Parcel Size (Acres)	Existing Use/Vacancy	Infrastructure	Publicly-Owned	Site Status	Identified in Last/Last Two Planning Cycle(s)	Lower Income Capacity	Moderate Income Capacity	Above Moderate Income Capacity	Total Capacity	Optional Information1	Optional Information2	Optional Information3
RANCHO ST. MARGARITA																					
RANCHO ST. MARGARITA																					

Table B: Candidate Sites Identified to be Rezoned to Accommodate Shortfall Housing Need, Table Starts in Cell A2

Jurisdiction Name	Site Address/Intersection	5 Digit ZIP Code	Assessor Parcel Number	Very Low-Income	Low-Income	Moderate-Income	Above Moderate-Income	Type of Shortfall	Parcel Size (Acres)	Current General Plan Designation	Current Zoning	Proposed General Plan (GP) Designation	Proposed Zoning	Minimum Density Allowed	Maximum Density Allowed	Total Capacity	Vacant/ Nonvacant	Description of Existing Uses	Optional Information1	Optional Information2	Optional Information3
RANCHO ST.	22931 Arroyo Vista	92688	805-062-06	11	6	6	11	Shortfall of Sites	2.92	Business Park	Business Park	Business Park	Workforce Housi	0	35	34		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.0	1	Applied Medical
RANCHO ST.	29977 Avenida de las Banderas	92688	805-061-01	66	38	38	70	Shortfall of Sites	24.53	Business Park	Business Park	Business Park	Workforce Housi	0	35	212		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.2	2	Applied Medical
RANCHO ST.	30200 Avenida de las Banderas	92688	805-042-02	30	18	18	32	Shortfall of Sites	10.98	Business Park	Business Park	Business Park	Workforce Housi	0	35	98		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.2	3	Applied Medical
RANCHO ST.	30021 Tomas	92688	805-222-01	7	4	4	9	Shortfall of Sites	1.92	Business Park	Business Park	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	24		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.4	4	RSM Office Cent
RANCHO ST.	22022 El Paseo	92688	814-153-05	4	2	2	4	Shortfall of Sites	1	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	12		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.1	5	BJs Restaurant
RANCHO ST.	22012 El Paseo221	92688	814-153-06	0	0	0	0	Shortfall of Sites	0.46	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	0		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.1	6	US Bank
RANCHO ST.	22032 El Paseo	92688	814-153-07	2	1	1	4	Shortfall of Sites	0.67	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	8		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.1	7	RSM Health Cent
RANCHO ST.	22032 El Paseo	92688	814-153-14	8	5	5	9	Shortfall of Sites	2.23	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	27		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.2	7	RSM Health Cent
RANCHO ST.	22342 Avenida Empresa	92688	805-052-09	14	8	8	16	Shortfall of Sites	3.88	Business Park	Business Park	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	46		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.3	8	Cal West Bank/S
RANCHO ST.	30832 Santa Margarita Pky	92688	814-153-04	4	2	2	5	Shortfall of Sites	1.03	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	13		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.1	9	Town Center Car
RANCHO ST.	22205 El Paseo	92688	814-172-10	2	2	2	3	Shortfall of Sites	0.7	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	9		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.1	10	Plaza El Paseo M
RANCHO ST.	22215 El Paseo	92688	814-172-11	21	13	13	23	Shortfall of Sites	5.54	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	70		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.3	11	Plaza El Paseo M
RANCHO ST.	22235 El Paseo	92688	814-172-12	11	6	6	12	Shortfall of Sites	2.98	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	35		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.2	12	Plaza El Paseo M
RANCHO ST.	22245 El Paseo	92688	824-172-25	2	2	2	3	Shortfall of Sites	0.71	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	9		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.2	13	Plaza El Paseo M
RANCHO ST.	22342 El Paseo	92688	814-172-26	15	9	9	17	Shortfall of Sites	4.11	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	50		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.2	14	Plaza El Paseo M
RANCHO ST.	22372 El Paseo	92688	814-172-27	5	3	3	6	Shortfall of Sites	1.39	Commercial General	Commercial General	Mixed-Use 35	Mixed-Use 35	0	35	17		Nonresidential	Existing FAR: 0.3	15	Plaza El Paseo M

Table C: Land Use, Table Starts in A2

Zoning Designation (From Table A, Column G)	General Land Uses Allowed

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APPENDIX B: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Adopted August 24, 2022

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1. Introduction

This Appendix summarizes the work to date on developing the required Housing Element, including general public comments provided during preparation of the Draft Housing Element, the results of community surveys, focus groups, and public comments provided on the Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element, which was circulated for a 30-day public review period beginning on September 30 and concluding on October 29, 2021.

Staff worked closely with De Novo Planning Group to create an outreach strategy that encourages input from the City's residents, business community, and housing advocates. The City created a dedicated webpage with educational information about the Housing Element, including the RHNA process, surveys, and focus group information. The webpage can be accessed at the following web address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021. Staff also created an interest list for individuals and organizations to receive information on the Housing Element Update, and notifies the interest list every time the webpage is updated. Two on-line surveys and five focus group meetings were conducted to receive specific input regarding local housing conditions and acceptable options for the required Housing Element sites inventory. Summaries of the surveys and focus group meetings are also provided below.

2. Surveys

Survey No. 1 was made available for on-line responses from January 29 to March 3, 2021. This survey focused on existing conditions to better understand the characteristics of households in the City, to identify the community's housing needs and priorities, and to uncover real or perceived fair housing concerns. Pursuant to Housing Element law, the City is required to evaluate housing needs and fair housing issues in the Housing Element Update. In addition, State law requires the City to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) through Housing Element policies, programs, and the sites inventory. Specifically, Housing Element law (GC 65583(c)(10)) requires all public agencies to explicitly address, combat, and relieve disparities resulting from past patterns of segregation, and to foster communities that are more inclusive. The information gathered from this survey served as a starting point to address AFFH requirements. Additional information on AFFH requirements can be found on HCD's website at: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/affh/index.shtml.

Survey No. 1 received 530 responses. Detailed survey results are provided in Attachment 4A. Key findings from this survey include:

- 93% of resident respondents are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their current housing situation.
- 68% of resident respondents chose to live in Rancho Santa Margarita because of safe neighborhoods.
- 62% of resident respondents rate their housing as being in excellent condition, while 29% rated it as showing minor signs of deferred maintenance.
- 73% of respondents support programs to ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live here as adults.
- 67% of respondents support programs to rehabilitate existing housing.
- 65% of respondents support programs to promote affordable housing for working families.
- 86% of resident respondents indicated they had not witnessed housing discrimination in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Survey No. 2 was available between February 21, and March 29, 2021 and focused on the types of development that should be further explored as the City plans to accommodate the RHNA of 680 housing units. Eleven potential development types were presented in the survey and respondents were requested to indicate which types they found most acceptable in order to comply with the RHNA. The survey also included open-ended questions that allowed respondents to provide additional development type ideas, and to share other thoughts on the topic of housing and the RHNA. The 11 development types included in the survey for consideration are listed below in the order in which they appeared in the survey.

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- Repurposing of office sites to residential uses
- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)
- Repurposing of general commercial shopping centers to residential uses
- Repurposing of general commercial shopping centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial shopping center sites to residential uses
- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial shopping center sites to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
- Workforce housing in the business park
- Housing on church property
- Repurposing of surplus school property
- Development on undeveloped or underdeveloped sites

Survey No. 2 data was analyzed to determine the development types ranked as most acceptable. As described in the Community Survey Results Report (Attachment 4A), survey respondents were asked three questions regarding the suitability of the 11 listed development types. First, they were asked to identify the three development types they found most suitable. Next, respondents were asked to identify the three development types they found least suitable, and finally, they were asked to rank the 11 listed development types from most to least acceptable.

The three **most** acceptable development types among all respondents were as follows:

- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (58.47%)
- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential) (52.54%)
- Workforce housing in the business park (43.22%)

The three **least** acceptable development types among all respondents were as follows:

- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses (57.63%)
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses (39.83%)
- Housing on church sites (33.47%)

When asked to rank the development types from most suitable to least suitable, the results were similar, with the development types ranking as follows:

1. Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)
2. Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites
3. Repurposing of office sites to residential uses
4. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
5. Repurposing of general commercial shopping centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
6. Workforce housing in the business park
7. Repurposing of general commercial shopping centers to residential uses
8. Repurposing of surplus school property
9. Repurposing of neighborhood commercial shopping center sites to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
10. Housing on church property
11. Repurposing of neighborhood commercial shopping center sites to residential uses

Survey No. 2 data was also analyzed to determine similarities and differences among the preferences of groups based on resident/worker status and residence location. As summarized in the attached Community Survey Results Report (Attachment 4A), of the 236 respondents, 92% live in Rancho Santa Margarita, 4% work in Rancho Santa Margarita and live elsewhere, and less than 4% neither live nor work in the City. In addition to evaluating the responses from resident and worker groups, staff evaluated preferences based on residence location by distributing the responses between northern RSM (north of Plano Trabuco Road) and southern RSM (south of Plano Trabuco Road). It is interesting to note that 64% of respondents live in northern RSM, and 29% in southern RSM. Of the 236 responses, 119 (52%) live in Dove Canyon (North RSM).

Based on this analysis, we found similarities in the development types found most suitable. The top four development types identified by each group are listed below.

Resident Responses – top four development types:

- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites
- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses
- Workforce housing in the business park
- Accessory Dwelling Units

Worker Responses – top four development types:

- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses
- Workforce housing in the business park
- Repurposing of office sites to residential uses

North RSM Responses – top four development types:

- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites
- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Repurposing of surplus school property

South RSM Responses – top four development types:

- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses
- Workforce housing in the business park
- Accessory Dwelling Units

Based on the ranking of sites provided in Survey No. 2, staff utilized the following top four development types in the focus group discussions:

- Repurposing of office sites (listed as acceptable by all 4 groups)
- Workforce housing in the business park (listed as acceptable by 3 groups)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (listed as acceptable by 3 groups)
- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (listed as acceptable by 2 groups)

3. Focus Group Meetings

Focus groups were assembled to obtain direct feedback on the development types, along with reactions to potential sites identified in each of the acceptable categories based on the results of Survey No. 2. Staff and the consultant team sought a wide sample of stakeholders representing neighborhoods throughout the City, local businesses, and housing interest groups. Five focus groups were conducted virtually over Zoom as follows:

- Community Associations of Rancho (CAR) on April 13, 2021 with 18 participants;
- Applied Medical on April 15, 2021 with 11 participants;
- CAR Delegates on April 21, 2021 with seven participants;
- Housing Advocacy Groups on April 21, 2021 with nine in attendance; and
- Residents/Community Members on April 29, 2021 with 11 in attendance.

After analyzing the data collected in the first four focus groups, staff felt that it was important to reach out to certain areas in the City in order to balance out the responses, feedback, and data received. Specifically, Census Tract 0320.51 contains a concentration of Hispanic residents (35.5%) and is identified as cost-burdened, and Census Tract 0320.54 is identified as cost-burdened. Therefore, the City added a fifth focus group, and a question and answer session to specifically target feedback from these areas.

The City created a post on the City's Instagram and Facebook pages requesting volunteers to be on an "At-Large Community Members" Focus Group. The City conducted all focus groups via Zoom and in order to ensure that all participants had enough time to provide feedback, attendance was limited to two representatives from each of the following three neighborhoods (Central Rancho Santa Margarita, Arroyo Vista/Tijeras Creek, and Melinda Heights). Central Rancho Santa Margarita contains the concentration of multi-family residential homes including apartment homes and is Census Tract 0320.51 mentioned above. This fifth focus group had the exact same content as the previous four focus groups. There are Spanish speaking employees at the City who were

available to provide translation services if needed, but none were requested or needed throughout the duration of Housing Element work efforts.

The focus groups included a PowerPoint presentation where City staff and the consultant team presented background information including an overview of RHNA and the Housing Element Update process, and results from the surveys. After the background information was presented, possible sites to accommodate the RHNA based upon the four most acceptable development types were presented to participants. Five potential scenarios were utilized as conversation starters to illustrate possible ways that the sites could be combined to achieve the RHNA of 680 units. A copy of the Focus Group PowerPoint is included as Attachment 4B.

The group of potential housing sites listed below was presented to the Focus Groups to represent the options available in each of the acceptable development type categories. The PowerPoint in Attachment 4B includes additional details on each development type. An estimated range of development capacity was described for each of the potential sites and provided in sample scenarios to illustrate how the sites could be combined to achieve the RHNA.

Undeveloped/Underdeveloped Sites:

- Sphere of Influence Area (SOI)
- Chiquita Ridge
- Rose Canyon

Office Sites:

- Eight sites containing 100% office development (i.e., no light industrial, manufacturing, etc.) were identified for further discussion. These sites represent all of the sites in the City that contain purely office uses.

Workforce Housing in the Business Park:

- This development type was discussed as a concept without identifying specific sites within the Business Park Zoning District.

Accessory Dwelling Units:

- HCD does not require identification of specific sites for ADUs. ADUs are allowed in all residential zones.

The following is a summary of the input received from the Focus Groups. Additional information is provided in the Focus Group Summary in Attachment 4B.

- Office Sites: Repurposing of office sites was found to be a very acceptable option among all of the focus groups.

- Workforce Housing in the Business Park: Focus group members were generally accepting of the idea of allowing housing in the Business Park with a limit on the number of units as to not change the character of the area.

- Undeveloped/Underdeveloped Sites:
    - Sphere of Influence Area: The groups expressed mixed feelings about development in the sphere of influence citing access and wildfire issues as primary concerns.
    - Chiquita Ridge: Four of the five focus groups were supportive of the concept of development on the City-owned Chiquita Ridge property.
    - Rose Canyon: All groups were accepting of potential development on the Rose Canyon property due to its proximity to existing residential uses and goods and services.

- Accessory Dwelling Units: The groups were divided on the matter of Accessory Dwelling Units, with two groups finding ADUs to be the least acceptable development option of those presented.

- All groups recognized the importance of honoring the community master plan and expressed the need to ensure that any new development consistent with the master plan and community character.

4. Public Comments and AB 215

Since kickoff of the Housing Element Update project, staff has been receiving general public input in addition to the feedback provided through the community surveys and focus groups; separately, staff has received specific comments on the Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element. It is important to note that while the official Public Review period of the Housing Draft was from September 30th to October 29th, 2021, the draft and all accompanying materials remained on the City's website and that the public was welcome to submit additional feedback and comment at any time. Staff received the first comment on the 6th Cycle Housing Element on January 12, 2021 and staff sent out an email on December 29, 2021 to the Housing Element Interest Group advising of the January 5, 2022 Planning Commission meeting and welcoming comment via email to the Principal Planner, or via e-comment to the City Clerk.

As of September 29, 2021, staff had received 187 separate pieces of **general correspondence** from 79 individuals. The correspondence commonly fell into several categories shown in the table below. All of the written comments received by September 29, 2021 (prior to the Public Review period) are summarized below. All written comments received on the Public Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element, which was circulated for a 30-day public review period from September 30 through October 29, are provided here as Section 8.

General Public Comments Received as of September 29, 2021
Common Topics

Requesting to add name to interest list to receive updates	63
Opposition to State Mandates, support for RHNA Appeal	32
Comments on Survey #1 or Survey #2	10
Wildfire concerns, more homes impeding evacuations	19
Support for affordable housing	16
Requesting more time to review information prior to Planning Commission Workshop	5
Opposed to a specific housing site identified in Sites Inventory Scenarios	20
Other	22

The Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element was made available to the public on September 30, 2021. The material was posted to the project website, emails were sent to all parties registered to receive notifications, notices were made to social media, and the availability of the Public Review Draft was advertised at the Planning Commission and City Council meetings in October 2021. Interested parties were invited to submit public comments via mail to City Hall or email comments to the City's Housing Element Project Manager.

The City received 25 **public comments on the draft Housing Element** from 15 separate parties. These comments are included in Section 8 of this Appendix, and responses to these comments are included in the following section (Feedback Influence). While the 30-day public review period for the Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element concluded on October 29, 2021, staff will continue to receive and compile public comments and provide them to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Following the Housing Element's adoption by the City Council in February 2022, additional modifications were required to comply with State Housing Law. The City posted the first round of revisions online for 7 days (from June 9 through June 15, 2022) and the second round of revisions online for 7 days (from July 15 through July 21); in both instances, the link emailed interested parties in accordance with the requirements of AB 215 prior to resubmitting the revisions to HCD for review.

5. Feedback Influence

Staff has carefully reviewed and considered all general comments received during preparation of the draft Housing Element as well as public comments received on the Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element.

The table below summarize the **general feedback** received and describes how the Housing Element considers and responds to the comment provided.

General Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element				
General Input Received	**Applicable Reference**			
	Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
Comments Received Prior To Public Review Draft Period				
Emails requesting to be added to interest list to receive updates				The City started an email interest list on August 3, 2020 to ensure that all interested parties received updates on all City work efforts on the Housing Element Update and to advise them when the City updated the dedicated webpage on the City's website.
Opposition to State Mandates, support for RHNA Appeal	Goal 1. Housing Diversity & Opportunities	• Policy 1.2	Program 1	Noted. The City was unsuccessful with their RHNA appeal, and the City is required to comply.
Comments on Survey #1 and Survey #2				The City diligently logged and recorded all comments on both surveys. The Surveys are included in their entirety in Appendix B of the Public Review Draft Housing Element.
Wildfire concerns, more homes impeding evacuations	SE Goal 1: Protect and prepare the community for natural and man-made hazards. SE Goal 4: Protect the community from loss of life or injury and damage to property due to wildfire hazards.	• Policy 1.5 • Policy 4.1, 4.7		Noted, the Safety Element directly addresses evacuation routes. All sites in the sites inventory are outside of the VHFHSZ, are centrally located on in-fill sites, and will least interfere with evacuation procedures

Support for affordable housing	Goal 1. Housing Diversity & Opportunities	• Policy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8	• Program 1 • Program 5 • Program 8 • Program 9 • Program 10 • Program 11 • Program 14	Noted, the City has several programs to support the development of affordable housing
Requesting more time to review information prior to Planning Commission Workshop				These comments relate to a Planning Commission agenda item presenting the results of the two surveys. The packet included a staff report and survey responses. The City complies with the Brown Act requirement to provide at least 72 hours advance notice of a Planning Commission or City Council meeting. In this instance, the email interest list was provided with five days or at least 120 hours advance notice via the email interest group.
Opposed to a specific housing site identified in Sites Inventory Scenarios	Goal 1: Plan for a range of housing opportunities to adequately meet the existing and projected needs of the entire community	• Policy 1.2	• Program 1 • Program 2	The City is required to ensure that the sites identified in the RHNA are viable.

The table below summarize the **specific feedback** received on the Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element and describes the City's consideration of the comment and response. This section is organized into five categories:

1. Written comments received during the 30-day public review period
2. Written comments sent directly to the State Department of Housing and Community Development
3. Additional written comments received subsequent to the 30-day public review period (i.e., comments received from October 30, 2021 through January 13, 2022)
4. Written Comments received for the January 18, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting
5. Written Comments received after January 18, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
1. Judy Elmayan (9/30/21)	Questioning assigned RHNA numbers & SCAG	Goal 1	Policy 1.2	Program 1	Noted, the City is required to comply.
2. Daniel Dokhanian (9/30/21) 2a. Daniel Dokhanian (10/12/21)	Developer seeking information about sites inventory Developer provided marketing material on Mulholland Drive Co Workforce Housing Model	Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 4	Policy 1.1, 1.5, 1.7 Policy 3.1, 3.3, 3.6 Policy 4.2	Program 1 Program 10 Program 11 Program 14 Program 15 Program 16 Program 18	Pursuant to State law, the City will adopt amendments to the RSMZC to establish the Workforce Housing Overlay and amend the General Plan and RSMZC to establish the Mixed-Use Housing land use/zoning designation. The City will create Objective Design Standards in 2022 to will clarify review process for applicants, developers, and the City
3. Dennis Shoji (10/1/21)	Concerns about evacuation routes Concerns about development in the high fire zones	SE Goal 1 SE Goal 4: SE Goal 2 SE Goal 4	SE Policy 1.5 SE Policy 4.1, 4.7 SE Policy 2.4 SE Policy 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8		Noted, none of the sites in the RHNA Strategy are located in the VHFHSZ
3a. Dennis Shoji (10/8/21)	Thanking staff for meeting with a resident interest group on October 7, 2021 to receive				Staff met with a small group of residents to answer questions about the draft Housing Element (Beth Heard, Dennis Shoji, and Russ Khouri)

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	clarification on their questions.				
4. Cindy Ashley (10/5/21)	Requested spreadsheet of sites inventory				Staff provided the requested information in the format requested
4a. Cindy Ashley (10/5/21)	Advocating for affordable housing: 1) requesting an informal workshop; 2) requesting Inclusionary Housing Ordinance; 3) advocating for inclusion of Chiquita Ridge on Sites Inventory; 4) seeks clarification on specific sites and how viable they are; 5) seeks assurance workforce housing will include affordable housing	Goal 1	Policy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8	Program 1 Program 5 Program 8 Program 9 Program 10 Program 11 Program 14 Program 18	Noted, the City has several programs to support the development of affordable housing; new and updated programs and data addressing these comments have been added to the revised Draft Housing Element.
5. Rhonda Lundberg (10/6/21)	Seeks clarification on sites inventory, surplus in sites inventory, no net loss requirement.	Goal 1	Policy 1.2	Program 1 Program 2 Program 3 Program 18	The City's RHNA appeal was denied by SCAG. The City is working diligently to meet all requirements of State law, including requirements to ensure that the net future housing capacity is maintained to accommodate the City's RHNA. The City's RHNA is 680 units and the State recommends all cities include a surplus to ensure that net capacity is maintained

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
					throughout the planning period. The proposed buffer of 24 units is approximately 3%.
3b. Dennis Shoji (10/20/21)	Requested to be added to zoom meeting on October 26, 2021				Staff provided link to the meeting. He attended the meeting.
3c. Dennis Shoji – follow up to meeting Staff had with resident group on October 7, 2021 comprised of Beth Heard, Dennis Shoji, and Russ Khouri on behalf of RSM Voice Group (10/26/21)	1)Question about why Chiquita Ridge wasn't included in the sites inventory. 2) Questions about development standards for proposed mixed-use and workforce housing. 3) Question about shared parking at El Paseo Shopping Center. 4) Requesting clarification about development capacity, density, and buffer in sites inventory 5) Question about what happens if property owner of site identified does not want to create housing.	1) SE Goal 2 1) SE Goal 4 2) Goal 1 3) 4)5) 7) Goal 1 6) SE Goal 1 6) SE Goal 4: Protect the community from loss of life or injury and damage to property due to wildfire hazards.	SE Policy 2.4 SE Policy 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8 Policy 1.4 Policy 1.2, Policy 1.5 SE Policy 4.1, 4.7	Program 1 Program 2 Program 10 Program 14 Program 15 Program 16 Program 18	1) A number of significant constraints including applicable Settlement Agreement, location in the VHFHSZ, and the size of the site make it unlikely to develop during the planning period. 2) The City will adopt appropriate zoning and objective design standards. 3) Will be addressed in the review of a site-specific development application. 4) Clarified all questions about sites inventory. 5) Clarified questions about approval process. 6) All sites in the inventory are outside of the VHFHSZ and safety element update assessed evacuation routes for residential areas. 7) Clarified that 3 sites have the largest surface parking lots and lowest FAR's and are most feasible for workforce housing. 8) The City is not a participant in the lawsuit.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	6) Question about evacuation routes and high fire areas. 7) Question about 344 workforce housing units 8) Question about OCCOG's lawsuit.				
6. People for Housing (10/21/21)	1)HE lacks 15-30% buffer 2)Questioned 40 ADUs 3)Questioned City's AFFH efforts 4)City does not estimate likelihood of development 5)Questioned role of single-family only zoning and other constraints to development 6) Recommended City adhere to SB10	1)2) 5) Goal 1 3)Goal 4	1)Policy 1.2 2)Policy 1.1 5)Policy 1.1 3) Policy 4.1, Policy 4.2, and Policy 4.2	Program 2 Program 3 Program 14 Program 16 Program 17 Program 19	1) Noted. RHNA Strategy provides a 3% buffer of 24 units 2) The City used HCD's Safe Harbor analysis to determine a realistic number of ADUs to develop during the planning period. 3) New and updated programs and data addressing this comment has been added to the revised Draft Housing Element. Refer to Section 6 Assessment of Fair Housing subsections 6C Sites Inventory and 6D Analysis of Contributing Factors and Fair Housing Priorities and Goals. New Workforce housing and mixed-use zones will provide access to jobs and goods and services. 4) and 5) New and updated programs and data addressing this comment has been added to the revised Draft Housing Element. See Section 5C Residential Sites Inventory and new Programs 16 and 19.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
					6) SB10 does not apply to the City because the City lacks transit rich areas.
7. Dick Aced (10/22/21)	1)Question about how many people will be added to RSM with 680 new homes. 2) Question if new schools will be required with the addition of new homes.	1) Goal 1	1)Policy 1.2	Program 1 Program 2 Program 15	1)Median household size is 2.93 x 680 = approximately 1,992 new residents. Current population 48,793 + 1,992 = 50,785. Original master plan was for a community of 50,000. 2) Both school districts were provided notification of the Draft Housing Element on October 21, 2021 requesting comment. Development applications will be routed to the appropriate school district upon submittal.
1a. Judy Elmayan (10/26/21)	Concern about water availability				Noted. The City's 2020 General Plan Update Final EIR assessed water supply from the City's two Water Districts and found that there would be sufficient water supplies available. Additional environmental review will be completed for each project as it is submitted.
8. Carol Wheeler (10/26/21)	1) Supports reopening discussion of Paloma Project 2) supports proposed sites inventory 3) recommending adaptive reuse ordinance 4) Wants Chiquita Ridge to include affordable housing	Goal 1 Goal 3	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2 Policy 3.1, Policy 3.3, Policy 3.6	Program 1 Program 2 Program 10	1) Application that was mentioned is closed. 2) Noted. 3) The City does not require an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance. Objective design standards and rezoning sites for mixed-use will allow for the development/ creation of housing. 4) Noted. Chiquita Ridge is not included in the Sites Inventory due

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	if/when it is developed.				to constraints to development discussed above.
3d. Dennis Shoji (10/27/21)	Thanked the City for the zoom question and answer and provided follow up comments after the question and answer zoom meeting				Noted.
5a. Rhonda Lundberg (10/27/21)	Thanked the City for the question and answer zoom meeting which allowed her to get some answers she was seeking				Noted.
9. Rona Henry (10/27/21)	Provided the City with information on Congregational Overlays				Noted. The City explored the creation of housing on church sites in survey 2 and it was one of the 3 least popular options. The City will evaluate proposals for residential on church properties on a case-by-case basis during the Housing Element Planning Period and will evaluate any proposal in accordance with Government Code Section 65913.6.
4b. Cindy Ashley – Welcoming Neighbors Home (10/27/21)	Affordable housing advocate: 1)questioning feasibility of mixed-use sites 2)asking about dormant application for housing	Goal 1. Goal 3	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 1.3, Policy 1.4, Policy 1.5, Policy 1.6, Policy 1.8 Policy 3.1, Policy 3.3, Policy 3.6	Program 1 Program 2 Program 3 Program 5	The City has created a Public Review draft Housing Element that best reflects the physical constraints of the City and reflects that undeveloped land is in high fire hazard areas, and that reflects the concerns expressed about evacuation routes. As a

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	3) asking about Chiquita Ridge 4) Feedback about 5th cycle efforts 5) Recommendations about affordable housing programs; 5)Same concerns raised previously (recommending: Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, Affordable Housing Overlay, Congregational Housing Overlay, Adaptive Reuse Overlay, affordable ADU program, community land trust, density bonus, incentivizing 100% affordable housing, and prioritizing city owned land for 100% affordable housing).	Goal 4	Policy 4.2	Program 10 Program 11 Program 14 Program 15 Program 16 Program 17 Program 18 Program 19	result, all sites selected are in the City's central core where future residents of affordable housing units can walk to services (grocery stores, convenience stores, etc.). The City has drafted programs that best reflect the needs of the community and that honors the master plan. New and updated programs and data addressing these comments have been added to the revised Draft Housing Element. See Section 5C Residential Sites Inventory and new Programs 16 and 19.
10. Caltrans (10/28/21)	General comments from Caltrans about AFFH, providing multi-modal transportation, providing active transportation, Safety Element Update assessing evacuation	SE Goal 1 SE Goal 4	Policy 1.5 SE Policy 4.6	Program 19	The 6th Cycle HE Update includes an addendum to the 2020 General Plan FEIR which assesses the impact of the additional 152 units required to attain the 680 RHNA over the next 8 years. The General Plan fully assessed all concerns expressed in the letter, and all proposed developments

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	routes, and recommending the City assess VMT with new development, and that encroachment permits be obtained in the ROW.				will require the appropriate environmental review (i.e., EIR). The City's 6th Cycle Housing Element included an update to the Safety Element assessing evacuation routes and was submitted to OCFA and CalFire for review/comment. Both agencies approved the updates. New and updated programs and data addressing these comments have been added to the revised Draft Housing Element. See new Program 19.
11. Michael Ebel (10/29/21)	Advocating for affordable housing and avoiding long commutes.	Goal 1	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 1.3, Policy 1.6	Program 1 Program 10 Program 14	See Goals, Policies, and Programs discussed above that address the need for affordable housing, Policy 1.6 specifically supports Aging in Place so that individuals and families can live and work in RSM long-term. The Sites Inventory provides affordable housing opportunities close to services. Workforce housing in the Business Park will allow workers to walk to work and avoid using vehicles.
12. Beth Heard (10/29/21) 13. Cindy Gildersleeve (10/29/21) (Please note that two residents	Concerns about: traffic impacts of identified sites on inventory, evacuation routes, parking, loss of commercial revenue, and safety of pedestrians.	SE Goal 1 SE Goal 4	Policy 1.5 SE Policy 4.6	Program 1 Program 15	The Mixed-Use and Workforce Housing zoning designations will allow existing uses to remain, with the opportunity to add residential units. All applications will be routed to Public Works and Traffic Engineering for review and appropriate conditions of approval will address potential impacts. All applications will be

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
submitted very similar comments that are reflected here.)					subject to CEQA to assess impacts on traffic. The Safety Element update assessed evacuation routes.
14. Tasia Surch (10/29/21)	Advocating for: affordable housing and inclusion of Chiquita Ridge, questioning mixed-use sites in the downtown core, and dormant application for residential, tracking workforce housing affordability, timing of rezoning, and information about the City's homeless liaison Mercy House)	Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 4	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2 Policy 3.1, Policy 3.2, Policy 3.3, Policy 3.6 Policy 4.2	Program 1 Program 2 Program 3 Program 4 Program 5 Program 6 Program 8 Program 9 Program 10 Program 14 Program 15 Program 16 Program 17 Program 19	As mentioned above, there are significant constraints with regards to Chiquita Ridge that exclude it from consideration in the 6th Cycle Housing Element, but do not exclude it from development in the future. Mercy House provides monthly reports to the City about their efforts to assist the City's homeless including rehousing. New and updated programs and data addressing these comments have been added to the revised Draft Housing Element. See Section 5C Residential Sites Inventory Housing Needs Assessment and new Programs 16 and 19.
15. Chris McLaughlin (10/29/21)	Questioned the sites inventory excluding open space, a dormant application	Goal 1	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 1.3	Program 1 Program 3	Workshops and public information have been provided which illustrate the City's methodology to determine appropriate sites for

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	for housing on a neighborhood commercial site, and timing of rezoning program.			Program 10 Program 14 Program 15 Program 16	the RHNA inventory. Conversion of open space was considered but eliminated due to the constraints discussed previously. Additional information regarding site selection is available in Appendix B. The Revised Draft Housing Element provides extensive information to demonstrate the feasibility of the sites inventory and additional programs to support residential development. See Section 5C Residential Sites Inventory and Programs 1, 10, 14, and 16.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO HCD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
1. Jon Wizard (dated 3/5/21)	1)Stating that the City solicited feedback only from respondents who "live or work in Rancho Santa Margarita"				Input was not restricted and was received from a variety of sources within and outside the City. For example, responses to the surveys were as follows: Survey 1 respondents were as follows: 81% residents, 16% work in RSM but live elsewhere, and less than 4% neither live nor work in RSM. Survey 2 demographics were 92% residents of RSM, 4% work in RSM but live elsewhere, and 4% neither work nor live in RSM. A full

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO HCD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
					discussion of survey results and a compilation of written comments from all sources is provided in Appendix B.
2. Cindy Ashley, Welcoming Neighbors Home (6/1/21 e-comment to Planning Commission and 6/2/21 email to HCD)	1)Requested track changes for redlines of HE, requested electronic copy of sites inventory, requested 30-day public review period 2) Requested information about focus groups, and surveys, and requested dialog with City Staff and consultant. 3) Questioned survey results (specifically, Dove Canyon Shopping Center, Trabuco Marketplace, and Chiquita Ridge) 4) Questioned non-vacant sites 5) Recommended Inclusionary Housing Ordinance	Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 4	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.3, Policy 1.5, Policy 3.1, Policy 3.3, Policy 3.6 Policy 4.1, Policy 4.2, Policy 4.3	Program 1 Program 10 Program 14 Program 19	-This letter from Welcoming Neighbors Home was received during public comment for a Planning Commission Sites Scenario Workshop. The City complied with all required noticing procedures/processes. -Staff provided a copy of the sites inventory in the format requested. –Appendix B Public Engagement Summary provides an extensive description of the two surveys, focus groups, and other public outreach. -Members of Welcoming Neighbors Home either personally attended, or submitted e-comments on all public hearings, and attended the focus groups, and regularly communicated with City Staff either in writing on verbally. City staff offered to meet with this group. They did not follow up to staff's offer of a meeting. -Chiquita Ridge was discussed several times in public meetings and the City Council's decision to not include this site in the sites inventory is well-documented; the site has numerous constraints which would make development

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO HCD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	6) Recommended Adaptive Reuse Ordinance 7)"Emphasize, promote, encourage use of incentives available to developers" 8) Ease governmental constraints.				during the planning period unlikely (see various communications and responses to Cindy Ashley and Rona Henry in above matrix). - Dove Canyon Plaza and Trabuco Marketplace are zoned Neighborhood Commercial, sites in the inventory are zoned General Commercial or Business Park. -The City makes a concerted effort to address incentives and constraints to development. Additional analysis has been provided in the Background Report (see pages 70-79) and Programs 10 and 14 have been updated to address constraints.
3. Cindy Ashley (not dated)	Provided HCD with copy of County of Santa Cruz's Accessory Dwelling Unit Forgivable Loan Program				Noted. The City does not have a Housing Department, nor does it have funding or resources for an Accessory Dwelling Unit Forgivable Loan Program.
4. Cindy Ashley (letter dated10/5/21 and 10/6/21 email to HCD)					This is a duplicate of the letter received by the City dated 10/5/21. Responses are found in Item 4 of the prior table.
5. People for Housing Orange County (letter to RSM and HCD dated 10/20/21)					This is a duplicate of the letter received by the City dated 10/20/21. Responses are found in Item 6 in the prior table.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO HCD					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
6. Carol Wheeler (email to RSM and HCD dated 10/26/21, and HCD email dated 10/27/21)					This is a duplicate of the email received by the City dated 10/26/21. Responses are found in Item 8 in the prior table.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS (10/30/21-1/13/22)					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
1.Kevin Shaw (11/8/21)	Provided an email that was sent to their group's membership updating them on the City's work efforts on the Draft Housing Element.				Received and Noted. Email chronicled the City's RHNA, and thanking the City for their "due diligence in making the best of a controversial situation."
2. Saddleback Valley Unified School District (11/9/21)	Letter in response to Agency Notification and requesting review of future environmental documents				The City will ensure that both school districts and other agencies are provided with the opportunity to review environmental documents relating to proposals for future development in compliance with State law.
3. Dick Aced (11/11/21)	Questions about the City's Consolidated Plan				Comments do not relate to the Housing Element Update, but

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS (10/30/21-1/13/22)					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
					rather to the City's Consolidated Plan
4. Dennis Shoji (1/1/22)	Acknowledging receipt of the City's December 29, 2021 email to the Email Interest List about the upcoming public hearings and other updates.				Noted.
4a. Dennis Shoji (1/3/22)	Further acknowledgement of City's December 29, 2021 email to interest list.				Noted.
5. Lauren and Sergio Rivera (1/3/22)	Concerned about the potential loss of retail uses and with adding low-income housing.	Goal 1	Policy 1.2	Program 1	Noted, the City does not anticipate the loss of existing retail. Property owners will have the option to add residential in addition to their existing uses.
6. Rona Henry (1/6/22)	Unable to access January 5, 2022 Planning Commission Public Hearing				Due to an inadvertent error, public access was unavailable. A Special Meeting/Public Hearing of the Planning Commission was held on January 18, 2022.
7. Judy Elmayan (1/6/22)	Forwarded email encouraging people to oppose State law				Comment received and filed.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING WRITTEN COMMENTS					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
1. Cindy Ashley, Welcoming Neighbors Home (1/5/22)	1) requests acknowledgement of comments submitted on October 27 2) Notes public review requirement 3) Requests for two week review of redline draft Housing Element 4) Requests additional outreach	Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 4	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2, Policy 1.3, Policy 1.4, Policy 1.5, Policy 1.6, Policy 1.8 Policy 3.1, Policy 3.3, Policy 3.6 Policy 4.2	Program 1 Program 2 Program 3 Program 5 Program 10 Program 11 Program 14 Program 15 Program 16 Program 17 Program 18 Program 19	1) The commentor's prior letters are addressed above. 2) The City provided a full 30-day public review period as demonstrated in Appendix B; this information will be clarified in resubmittal to HCD. 3) A fully revised, redlined housing element will be provided as early as possible prior to the City Council public hearing and will be made available on the Housing Element webpage. 4) The City uses a variety of methods to announce the availability of key documents as described in Section 6A of the Revised Draft Housing Element and in Appendix B.
2. Rona Henry (1/17/22)	Acknowledging receipt of notice of Planning Commission meeting, advising unable to attend.				Noted.
3. Zoran Falkenstein (1/18/22)	Requesting confirmation that Planning Commission public hearing is live-streamed.				Staff confirmed that audio for all public hearings is provided and interested parties can listen while meeting is in progress or after meeting has ended and provided link.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING WRITTEN COMMENTS					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
4.Beth Heard (1/18/22) 5.Rhonda Lundberg (1/18/22) 6. Cindy Gildersleeve (1/18/22) (Please note that three residents submitted very similar comments that are reflected here.)	1) request for longer review time and more public notification 2) Expressing opinions regarding Housing Element process and displeasure with the State/State law/HCD.				The documents reviewed by the Planning Commission were available to the public on December 23, 2021, with notifications to the interest list on December 29, 2021 and January 14, 2022. Information was also posted in the monthly e-news letter on January 2 (with a distribution of approximately 9,500). Comments regarding OCCOG and HCD are noted; the City is working diligently to comply with State law.
7. Kennedy Commission (1/18/22)	1) request measures to ensure workforce housing for specific income levels 2) request for inclusionary housing ordinance 3)request to review fully revised Housing Element	Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 4	Policy 1.1, Policy 1.2 Policy 3.1, Policy 3.3, Policy 3.6, Policy 4.2	Program 1 Program 2 Program 3 Program 10 Program 14 Program 15 Program 16 Program 19	The Revised Draft Housing Element includes augmented programs to facilitate development of affordable housing and to respond to fair housing issues. See Programs 10, 14, 16, and 19. A fully revised, redlined housing element will be provided as early as possible prior to the City Council public hearing.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 18, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
1.Susan Schnaars (1/21/22)	Requested to be added to interest list and for links/info on sites in sites inventory				Added her to the email interest list and provided information and links about/to sites inventory.
2.Dick Aced (1/22/22)	Requested zoom access to Planning Commission public hearing				Provided the link to access Planning Commission and City Council meetings.
3.Beth Heard (1/26/22)	Planning Commission e-comment 1)Request for more time to review document 2) Expressing opinions regarding Housing Element process and displeasure with the State/State law/HCD, abbreviated time for rezoning, and erosion of local control				The documents reviewed by the Planning Commission were available to the public on December 23, 2021 with notifications to the interest list on December 29, 2021, and January 14, 2022. Information was also posted in the monthly e-newsletter on January 2, 2022 (with a distribution of approximately 9,500). Comments regarding HCD are noted and the City is working diligently to comply with State law.
4.Julien Hoisington (1/31/22)	Asked if HE has been certified by HCD and when it is expected to be				Provided information about steps and timeline towards certification.
5.Judy Elmayan (2/4/22)	Thanking staff for keeping her updated				Noted.
6.Alison Martinez/James Pugh from SheppardMullin (2/7/22)	Attorney for Dove Canyon Plaza requesting property to be added to Sites Inventory				Attorney attended 2/9/22 City Council meeting and spoke during Housing Element adoption public hearing, as did vocal opponents. See City

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 18, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
					Council meeting minutes for additional details.
7.James Pugh from SheppardMullin (2/8/22)	Attorney for Dove Canyon advising they plan to attend 2/9/22 City Council meeting				Duly noted, see #6.
8.Mike Safranski (2/8/22)	City Council e-comment 1)Request for more time to review document 2) Expressing opinions regarding Housing Element process and displeasure with the State/State law/HCD, and erosion of local control 3) Requesting information about how sites will develop and impacts to infrastructure and services, including parking				The documents reviewed by the City Council were available to the public on December 23, 2021 with notifications to the interest list on December 29, 2021, January 14, 2022, and February 4, 2022. Information was also posted in the monthly e-newsletter on January 2, 2022 (with a distribution of approximately 9,500). Comments regarding HCD are noted and the City is working diligently to comply with State law. The City's 2020 General Plan Update EIR (GP EIR) assessed impacts on infrastructure and services for 528 housing units. Additionally, an Addendum to the 2020 GP EIR determined that the City has adequate infrastructure and services to accommodate the additional 152 housing units planned for through the Housing Element.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 18, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
9.Californians for Homeownership (2/9/22)	Advising they are monitoring all jurisdictions for compliance with the law, and HCD's certification				Noted. The City is working diligently towards achieving compliance and HCD certification.
10.Beth Heard (2/9/22)	City Council e-comment 1)Request for more time to review document 2) Expressing opinions regarding Housing Element process and displeasure with the State/State law/HCD, abbreviated time for rezoning, and erosion of local control				The documents reviewed by the City Council were available to the public on December 23, 2021 with notifications to the interest list on December 29, 2021, January 14, 2022, and February 4, 2022. Information was also posted in the monthly e-newsletter on January 2, 2022 (with a distribution of approximately 9,500). Comments regarding HCD are noted and the City is working diligently to comply with State law.
11.Rhonda Lundberg (2/9/22)	City Council e-comment Expressing opinions regarding Housing Element process and displeasure with the State/State law/HCD, abbreviated time for rezoning, and erosion of local control				Comments regarding HCD are noted and the City is working diligently to comply with State law.
12.Cindy Ashley (2/16/22)	Concerned that sites in Sites Inventory will not be developed.	Goal 1	Policy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8	Program 1 Program 2 Program 10 Program 14	Letter to Miranda Coy at HCD regarding HCD's December 21, 2021 review letter to the City of RSM.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 18, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	Requesting incentives and Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, requesting the City join the Orange County Housing Finance Trust. Requesting the City to address insufficiency of roads in and out of parts of the City.	SE Goal 1 SE Goal 4	SE Policy 1.5 SE Policy 4.1, 4.7	Program 15 Program 16 Program 18 Program 19	See noted goals, policies, and programs; none of the City streets are "insufficient". Evacuation routes for residential neighborhoods were assessed in Safety Element Update.
13.Judy Elmayan (2/18/22)	Provided a copy of "Our Neighborhood Voices Now Focusing on 2024 Ballot to Bring Back a Local Voice in Community Planning" efforts and asking City to oppose RHNA process				Noted.
14.Judy Elmayan (2/22/22)	Provided a copy of AB 2705 (Quirk-Silva) - Concerned about residential development in "very high fire" risk zones.	SE Goal 2 SE Goal 4	SE Policy 2.4 SE Policy 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8		Noted, none of the sites in the RHNA Strategy are located in the VHFHSZ.
15.Beth Heard (2/23/22) 16.Rhonda Lundberg (2/23/22)	City Council e-comments 1) Opposed to Dove Canyon Plaza being added to Sites Inventory 2) Expressed opinions regarding Housing Element process and displeasure with the State/State law/HCD, abbreviated time for rezoning, and erosion of local control				Dove Canyon is not being added to the Sites Inventory. Duly noted and the City is working diligently to achieve certification for the 6th Cycle Housing Element.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 18, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
	3) Requesting City to support AB 1154 – and expressing concerns about evacuation routes	SE Goal 1 SE Goal 4	SE Policy 1.5 SE Policy 4.1, 4.7		Evacuation routes for residential neighborhoods were assessed in Safety Element Update.
17.Cindy Gildersleeve (2/23/22)	City Council e-comment 1)Opposed to Dove Canyon Plaza being added to Sites Inventory 2)Concerned about evacuation routes	SE Goal 1 SE Goal 4	SE Policy 1.5 SE Policy 4.1, 4.7		Dove Canyon is not being added to the Sites Inventory. Evacuation routes for residential neighborhoods were assessed in Safety Element Update.
18.Russ Khouri (2/23/22)	City Council e-comment Thanking the City Council for not including Dove Canyon Plaza on Sites Inventory				The Housing Element was adopted on 2/9/22 and consideration of the addition of Dove Canyon Plaza to the Sites Inventory was not feasible for several reasons. See City Council meeting minutes for additional information.
19.Marian Russo (3/1/22)	Requested to be added to the email interest list				Added to the email interest list.
20.Rhonda Lundberg (3/7/22)	Requesting update on HCDs review				Provided resident with update on HCD's review.
21.Dennis Shoji (3/22/22)	Provided letter to The Governor of California from Acting State Auditor Michael S Tilden, CPA for our files				"Regional Housing Needs Assessments – The Department of Housing and Community Development Must Improve Its Processes to Ensure That Communities Can Adequately Plan for Housing" – noted.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 18, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
22.Rhonda Lundberg (3/24/22)	Asking for opinion on the State Auditor's Report and its impact on the 6th Cycle Housing Element				Advised resident that the State Auditor's report is an analysis of the process that was applied during the last RHNA allocation and is unlikely to impact the current Housing Element.
23.Beth Heard (4/13/22)	City Council e-comment 1)Requesting update on HCD's review of HE 2) Questions about State Auditors report 3) Questions about AB1154				1)Brought resident up-to-speed that April 11, 2022 HCD comment letter was received. 2) Advised the State Auditor's report is an analysis of the process that was applied during the last RHNA allocation and is unlikely to impact 6th Cycle HE. 3)Advised that staff is tracking AB1154.
24.Rhonda Lundberg (4/18/22)	Requested a copy of HCD's April 11th review letter				Provided link to HCD's April 11, 2022 letter that was posted to the City's dedicated Housing Element webpage.
25.Rhonda Lundberg (4/21/22)	Concerned that Dove Canyon Plaza may be added to Sites Inventory, and asking for clarification about when City is required to respond to HCD's April 11, 2022 letter				Advised that Sites Inventory is unchanged. Advised there is no specific deadline for the City's response to HCD's letter but that the City is working diligently to achieve compliance.
26.July Elmayan (5/18/22)	Provided link for non-profit First Street Foundation – about fire risk in the City	SE Goal 2 SE Goal 4	SE Policy 2.4		Noted, none of the sites in the RHNA Strategy are located in the VHFHSZ.

Public Feedback Response & Incorporation into the 2021-2029 Housing Element COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 18, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING					
Commenter (chronological order)	**General Input Received**	**Applicable Reference**			
		Goal	**Policy**	**Program**	**Other**
			SE Policy 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8		
27.Joan Jones (6/6/22)	Requested to be added to the email interest list				Added to the email interest list.

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6. Community Survey Results

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Community Survey Results

City of Rancho Santa Margarita Housing Element Update





April 2021

In partnership with De Novo Planning Group

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Introduction

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) is updating its Housing Element as part of the 2021-2029 Housing Element Cycle (Cycle 6). The Housing Element is a section of the City's General Plan that looks at housing needs and conditions within Rancho Santa Margarita. It is a policy document that identifies goals, policies, and programs that the City uses to direct and guide actions related to housing.

Each city and county in California is required to have a Housing Element and update it at least every eight years. Updating the Housing Element gives the City a clear picture of housing-related issues such as: housing supply and demand, the types of housing available within the City, housing affordability, and homelessness. Once the Housing Element is updated, it must be approved by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Updating the Housing Element will ensure that the City meets State requirements, and makes Rancho Santa Margarita eligible for State grants and other funding resources. It will also give elected and appointed officials clear guidance on housing issues facing Rancho Santa Margarita.

The State requires that every city and county must help accommodate new housing growth. Since people often live and work in different places, housing needs are assessed at a regional level based on population trends and other factors to determine how much growth each local jurisdiction will need to accommodate. This is called the "Regional Housing Needs Allocation" or "RHNA" for short. The RHNA quantifies the need for housing on a regional level, and then allocates a portion of new growth to each city and county. Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA allocation for the 2021-2029 planning period is 680 units. This means that the City of Rancho Santa Margarita is responsible for identifying areas that can accommodate 680 new housing units. Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA allocation is divided into income categories as detailed on the project website. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is NOT responsible for building new homes. However, Rancho Santa Margarita must demonstrate to HCD that there is enough land zoned for housing to accommodate the allocated share of new homes. Furthermore, a special focus is placed on planning for affordable housing.

The City recently updated its General Plan (2020), includes detailed goals, policies and programs to guide decision-making in the City for the next twenty years. The City of RSM's General Plan includes the following Elements (i.e., chapters): Circulation Element, Conservation/Open Space Element, Economic Development Element, Housing Element, Land Use Element, Noise Element, and Safety Element. All General Plan Elements except the Housing Element (which is updated on a separate schedule as required by State law) and Circulation Element were updated in 2020. This update to the City's Housing Element (which is one "chapter" of the City's General Plan) builds upon that foundation of analysis and community engagement to address the future housing needs of its residents. The Housing Element Update process is a unique opportunity to connect with residents of RSM and learn more about residents' values, priorities, concerns, and ideas.

As part of the community outreach, two surveys were conducted online using the SurveyMonkey platform. The two surveys work together to gather information on housing-related issues. Survey #1, which was posted on January 29, 2021, and closed on March 3, 2021, focused on existing conditions to better understand the characteristics of households in RSM, identify the community's housing needs and priorities, and uncover real or perceived fair housing concerns in RSM. Survey #2, which was posted on February 21, 2021, and closed on March 29, 2021, focused on types of development that should be further explored as the City plans to meet the State-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

This report is a summary of the responses received and the general themes that emerged.

To help gain insight into the profile of respondents, included in each survey was a question asking the respondent to identify whether they:

1. Live in RSM, but work somewhere else;
2. Live and work in RSM;
3. Work in RSM, but live somewhere else; or,
4. Did not live or work in RSM.

This Report, including its Appendices, summarizes the results of both surveys based on the respondent's answer to this question; in other words, the results of each question/topic area are grouped into **resident responses** (regardless of where they work), **worker responses** (which includes people who only work in RSM, but live somewhere else), and **other responses** (people who do not live or work in RSM). The breakdown of response types for **resident responses** and **worker responses** groups is included in the summary for each survey. However, given the small number of respondents who do not live or work in the community (3.5% of responses to Survey 1 were "**other** responses" and 3.8% of response to Survey 2 were "**other** responses"), the Report focuses first on the responses provided by **residents** and **workers**, and then summarizes the comments received by **other** respondents separately in Appendix E.

Executive Summary

65% of resident respondents have lived in Rancho Santa Margarita for 10+ years

68% of resident respondents chose to live in Rancho Santa Margarita because of safe neighborhoods

62% of resident respondents would rate their housing as being in excellent condition, while 29% rated it as showing signs of minor deferred maintenance

93% of resident respondents are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their current housing situation

89% of resident respondents already own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita

Issues that resident respondents rated as most important to them include:

Support programs to help neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures (75%)

Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults (73%)

Rehabilitate existing housing (67%)

Promote affordable housing for working families (65%)

Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs (64%)

Survey #1: Existing Conditions and Fair Housing Issues

Survey #1 was comprised of 28 questions. It had a completion rate of 83% with 533 total responses. The survey responses reveal information about existing housing conditions and fair housing issues in Rancho Santa Margarita. The results are organized into five categories: values and priorities; housing affordability; housing maintenance; housing fit; and fair housing.

Respondent Demographics

The survey contained seven questions related to demographics. The first question asked respondents if they live or work in Rancho Santa Margarita. The answers to this question provide the following breakdown of response types by group: [1]

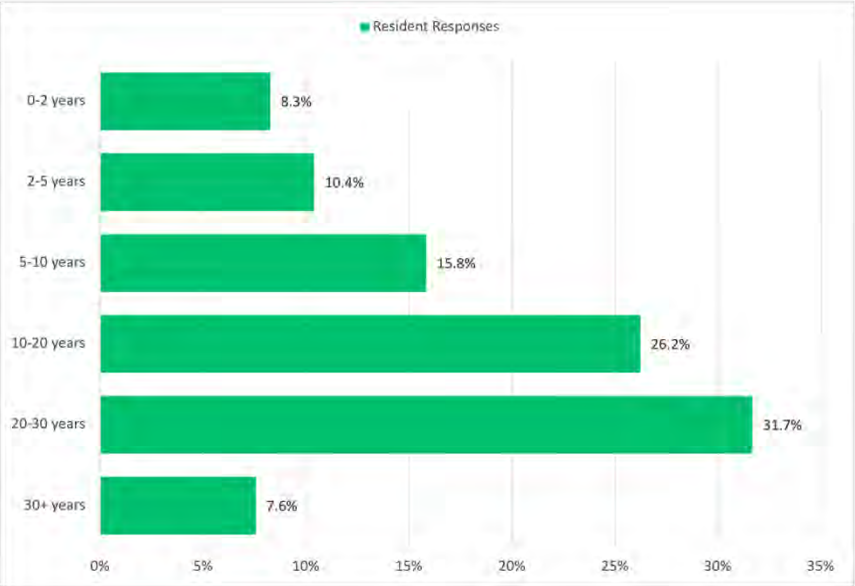
- Most of the respondents (81%) are residents of Rancho Santa Margarita (36% live and work within Rancho Santa Margarita and 45% work somewhere else). In this Report, these are called "**resident** responses".
- Some (16%) respondents work in Rancho Santa Margarita but live somewhere else. In this Report, these are called "**worker** responses".
- A small percentage (less than 4%) of respondents neither live nor work in Rancho Santa Margarita. As summarized in Appendix E, these are called "**other** responses".

The other demographic questions, which asked about length of residency in Rancho Santa Margarita, residency status, housing type, household type, and age range, highlighted the following about the respondents (note that one question asked for contact information, and the results of that question are not included here):

- Of those individuals who live in Rancho Santa Margarita, approximately 65% have lived here for 10+ years. The next highest response (16%) was 5-10 years, followed by 2-5 years (11%) and finally, fewer than two years (8%).[2]

[1] Survey 1, Question 1: Do you live and/or work in Rancho Santa Margarita?
[2] Survey 1, Question 2: How long have you lived in the City?

Figure 1: How long have you lived in Rancho Santa Margarita? (Residents Only)



- Most of the respondents own their own residence (86%), with 13% of respondents renting and 1% neither owning nor renting.[3]
    - Of resident responses, the majority (90%) own their own residence, with 10% of respondents renting and less than 1% neither owning nor renting.
    - Of worker responses, most (67%) own their own residence, with 27% of respondents renting and 6% neither owning nor renting.
- Most of the respondents (76%) live in a single-family home, with the next highest category being multi-family homes (13%), followed by duplex/attached homes (9%). Fewer than 1% of respondents live in mobile homes, accessory dwelling units, or other types of units.[4]
    - Of resident responses, the majority (77%) live in a single-family home, with the next highest category being multi-family homes (14%), followed by duplex/attached homes (9%).
    - Of worker responses, the majority (70%) live in a single-family home, with the next highest category being both multi-family homes (13%) and duplex/attached homes (13%), followed by mobile homes (3%) and finally, accessory dwelling units (1%).
- Of all the respondents surveyed, the most common types of households include couples (38%) and couples with children younger than 18 (32%), followed by single-person households (9%) and multi-generational family households (7%). The remainder of responses showed a

[3] Survey 1, Question 4: Do you currently own or rent your residence?
[4] Survey 1, Question 6: Select the type of housing that best describes your current home.

considerable range in household types including 5% who identified as an unlisted household type, such as couples with adult children living with them.[5]

  - Of resident responses, the most common types of households include couples (39%) and couples with children younger than 18 (33%), followed by single-person households (9%) and multi-generational family households (6%). The remainder of resident responses showed a considerable range in household types including 5% who identified as an unlisted household type, such as couples with adult children living with them.
  - Of worker responses, the most common types of households include couples (32%) and couples with children younger than 18 (30%), followed by multi-generational family households (16%). The remainder of worker responses showed a considerable range in household types including 7% who identified as an unlisted household type, such as couples with adult children living with them.

- The respondents were primarily 56-74 years old (41%), followed by 40-55 years old (40%), and 24-39 years old (17%).[6]
  - Of resident responses, respondents were primarily 40-74 years old (82%), split evenly (41% each) between age range 40-55 and age range 56-74, followed by 24-39 years old (15%).
  - Of worker responses, respondents were primarily 40-55 years old (37%), followed by 56-74 years old (33%), and the remainder 24-39 years old (30%).

Values and Priorities

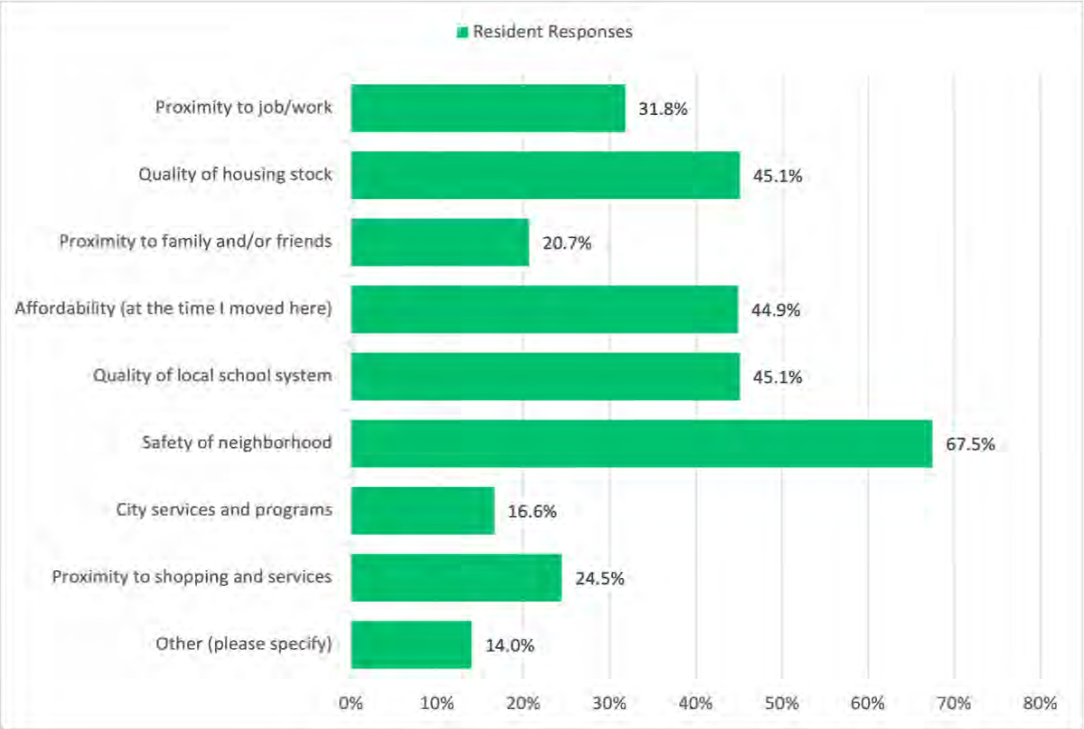
When resident respondents were asked, "What made you decide to live here? (Select all that apply)"[7] the most common answers were:

- Safety of neighborhood (68%)
- Quality of housing stock (45%)
- Quality of local school system (45%)
- Affordability (45%)
- Proximity to job/work (32%)
- Proximity to shopping and services (25%)
- Proximity to family and/or friends (21%)
- City services and programs (17%)
- Other (14%)

[5] Survey 1, Question 24: Which of the following best describes your household type?
[6] Survey 1, Question 27: What age range most accurately describes you?
[7] Survey 1, Question 3: What made you decide to live here? (Select all that apply)

It should be noted that this question was only answered by those respondents who live in RSM. Those who do not live in RSM were not asked this question.

Figure 1: What made you decide to live here? (Residents Only)



Housing Affordability

When respondents were asked, "If you wish to own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita but do not currently own one, what issues are preventing you from owning a home at this time? (select all that apply)".[8] Those who do not already own a home responded as summarized below:

Resident Responses

Of resident responses, almost 89% already owned a home in Rancho Santa Margarita. Fewer than 1% of the residents expressed the opinion that they do not wish to own or rent in Rancho Santa Margarita. Other responses included:

- I do not currently have the financial resources for an appropriate down payment (7%)
- I cannot find a home within my target price range in Rancho Santa Margarita (7%)
- I cannot find a home that suits my living needs in Rancho Santa Margarita (housing size, disability accommodations) (3%)

[8] Survey 1, Question 5: If you wish to own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita but do not currently own one, what issues are preventing you from owning a home at this time? Select all that apply.

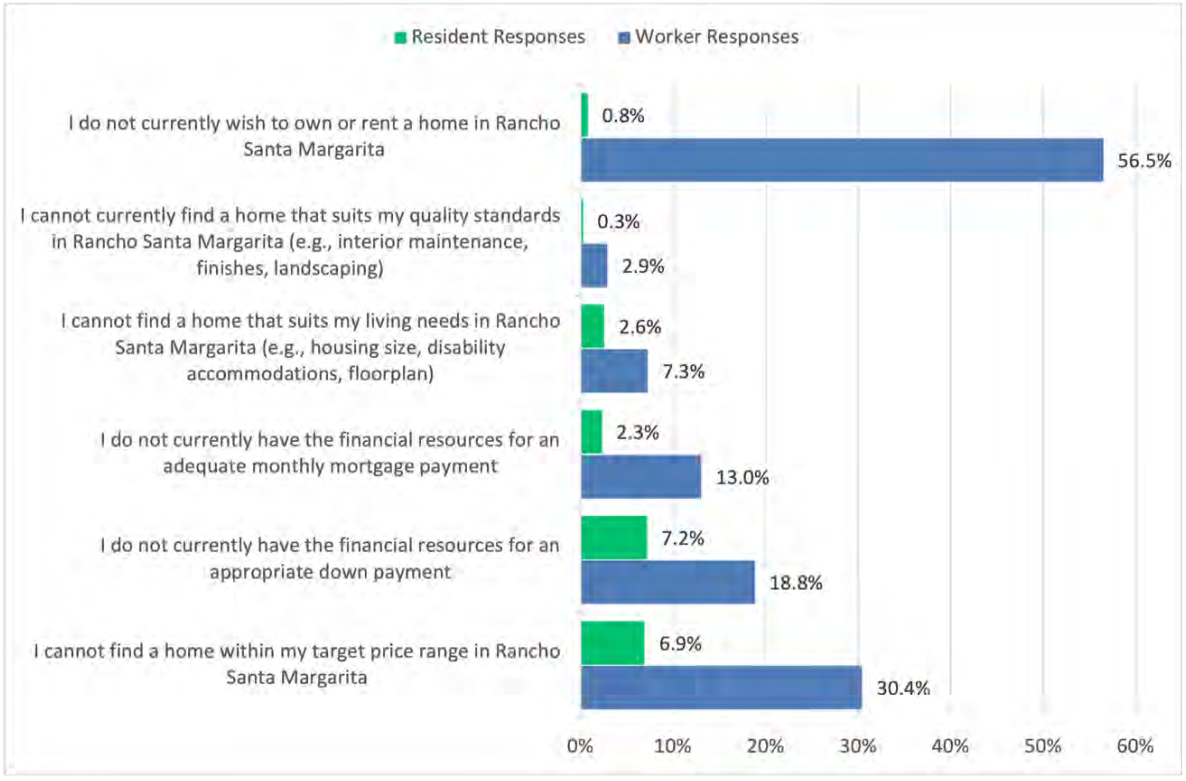
- I do not currently have the financial resources for an adequate monthly mortgage payment (2%)

Worker responses:

Of worker responses, the majority (56%) expressed the opinion that they do not wish to own or rent in Rancho Santa Margarita. Another 30% of workers responded that they cannot find a home within their target price range in Rancho Santa Margarita. Other responses included:

- I do not currently have the financial resources for an appropriate down payment (19%)
- I do not currently have the financial resources for an adequate monthly mortgage payment (13%)
- I cannot find a home that suits my living needs in Rancho Santa Margarita (housing size, disability accommodations) (7%)
- I cannot currently find a home that suits my quality standards in Rancho Santa Margarita (e.g., interior maintenance, finishes, landscaping) (3%)

Figure 2: If you wish to own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita but do not currently own one, what issues are preventing you from owning a home at this time?



When asked what percentage of their income they spend on housing[9], just over half of residents indicated they spent less than 30% of their income on housing, while non-resident workers tended to spend a higher percentage of their income on housing. Responses broken down by group were:

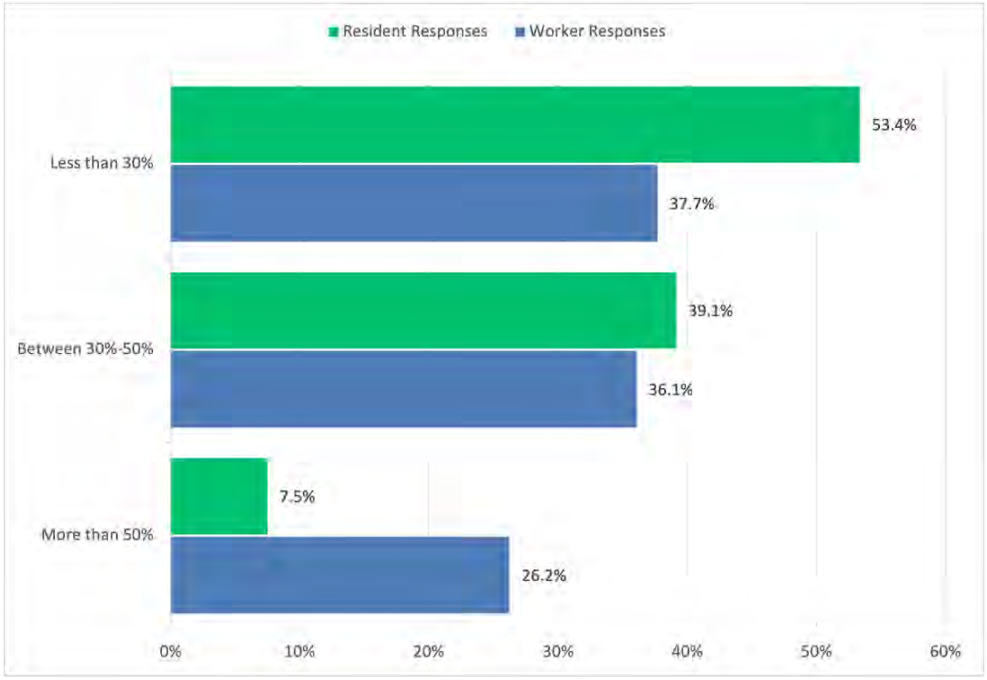
Resident responses:

- Less than 30% of income spent on housing (53%)
- Between 30%-50% of income spent on housing (39%)
- More than 50% of income spent on housing (8%)

Worker responses:

- Less than 30% of income spent on housing (38%)
- Between 30%-50% of income spent on housing (36%)
- More than 50% of income spent on housing (26%)

Figure 3: What percentage of your income do you spend on housing?



[9] Survey 1, Question 13: Based on your monthly income before taxes, how much of your monthly income do you spend on housing?

Housing Maintenance

When respondents were asked, "How would you rate the physical condition of the residence you live in?"[10] most respondents answered positively, with the response "excellent condition" receiving 62% of resident responses and 52% of worker responses.

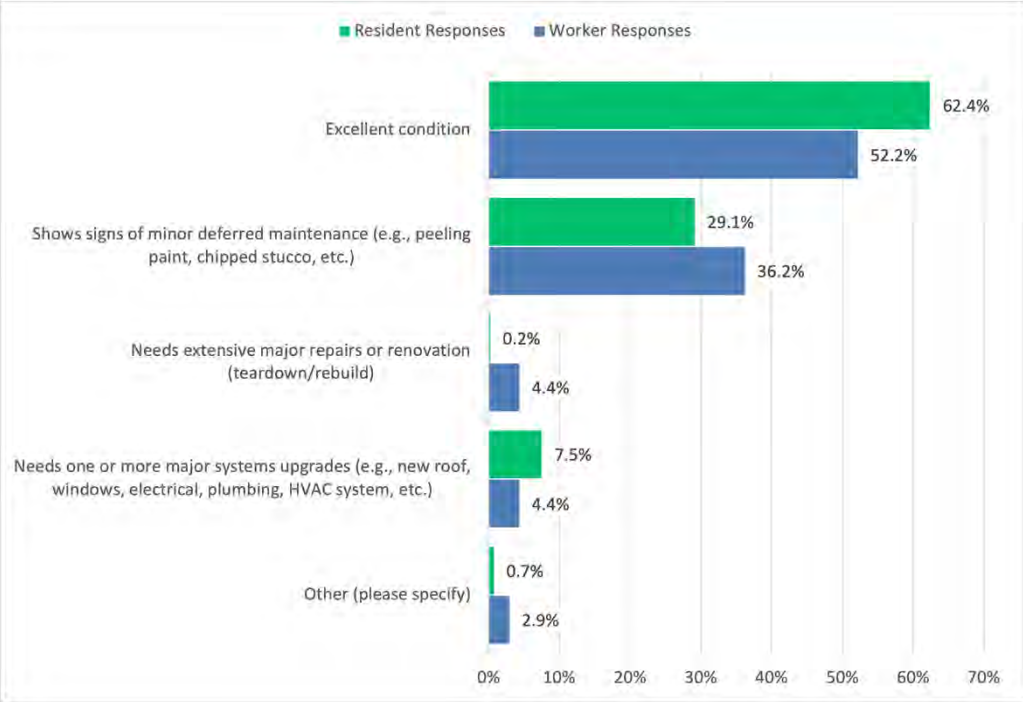
Resident responses:

Of resident responses, approximately 29% answered that their residence showed signs of minor deferred maintenance such as peeling paint or chipped stucco. Approximately 8% of residents indicated that their home needed one or more major systems upgrades such as a new roof or windows.

Worker responses:

Of worker responses, approximately 36% answered that their residence showed signs of minor deferred maintenance such as peeling paint or chipped stucco. Approximately 4% indicated that their home needed one or more major systems upgrades such as a new roof or windows, and another 4% indicated the need for major repairs or renovations.

Figure 5: How would you rate the physical condition of the residence you live in?



[10] Survey 1, Question 11: How would you rate the physical condition of the residence you live in?

When asked, "Which of the following housing upgrades or expansions have you considered making on your home?"[11] the top responses included:

Resident responses:

- Kitchen or bathroom remodels (63%)
- Painting (41%)
- Solar (28%)
- HVAC (25%)
- None (18%)
- Other (10%)

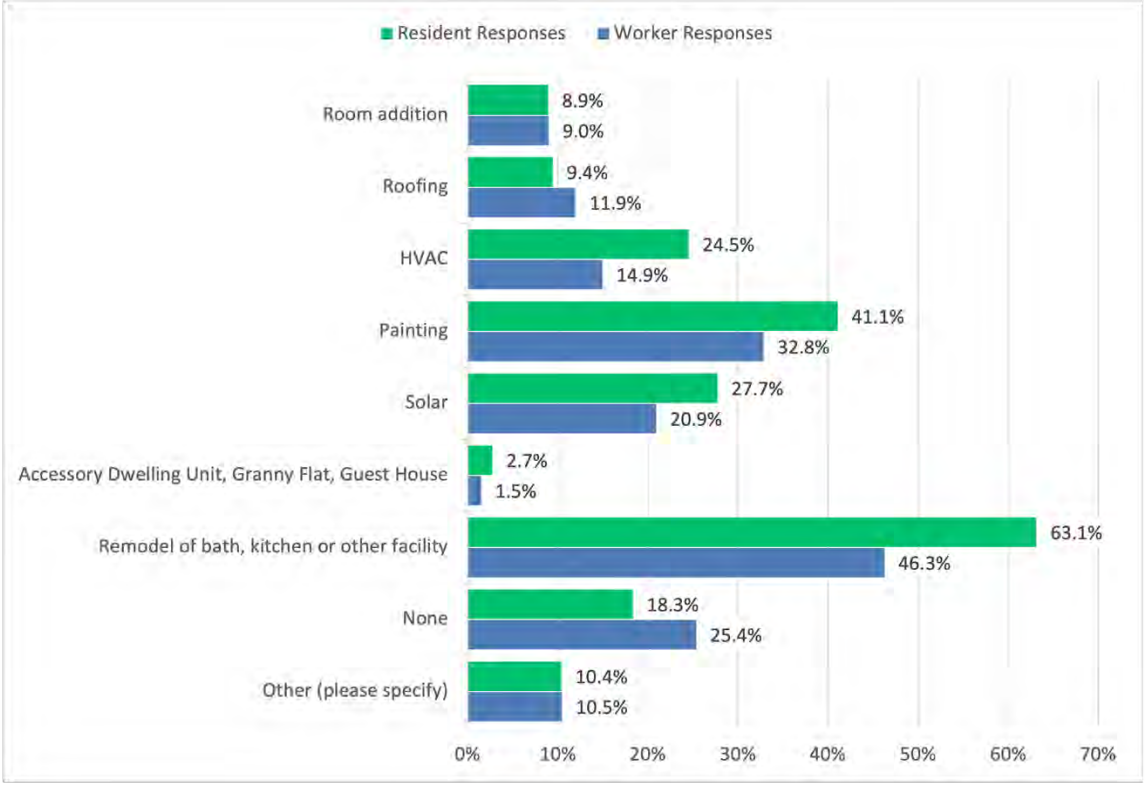
Worker responses:

- Kitchen or bathroom remodels (46%)
- Painting (33%)
- None (25%)
- Solar (21%)
- HVAC (15%)
- Roofing (12%)
- Other (10%)

The other responses included: landscaping, plumbing, and other maintenance related to the interior of the home.

[11] Survey 1, Question 8: Which of the following housing upgrades or expansions have you considered making on your home?

Figure 6: Which of the following housing upgrades or expansions have you considered making on your home?



Housing Fit

When asked, "How satisfied are you with your current housing situation?"[12], over 90% of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their current housing. Residents of Rancho Santa Margarita were more likely to indicate "I am very satisfied" than the worker group. The top responses, broken down by group, were:

Resident responses:

- I am very satisfied (69%)
- I am somewhat satisfied (24%)
- I am somewhat dissatisfied (4%)
- I am dissatisfied (2%)

Worker responses:

- I am very satisfied (62%)

[12] Survey 1, Question 7: How satisfied are you with your current housing situation?

- I am somewhat satisfied (29%)
- I am somewhat dissatisfied (3%)
- I am dissatisfied (6%)

Some of the explanations as to why respondents were dissatisfied include:

- Restrictive Homeowner's Association guidelines and excessive fees
- Have outgrown current type of housing, but single-family homes in the area are too expensive
- Concern for environmental risks such as wildfires
- Small house and yard leads to lack of privacy
- High cost of housing (for both owners and renters)

When asked, "Do you think that the range of housing options currently available in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita meets the needs of the community?"[13] most respondents agreed that it did. Responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- Yes (80%)
- No (20%)

Worker responses:

- Yes (56%)
- No (44%)

While the majority (80%) of resident respondents answered that there were a sufficient range of housing options currently available in the City, the number of worker respondents who agreed differed by nearly a quarter. Fifty-six percent (56%) of workers stated, "Yes," while forty-four percent (44%) of workers stated, "No." This shows a difference of opinions on the matter based on residency status.

When asked, "What types of additional housing are most needed in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? (Select all that apply)"[14] all groups responded that single-family (detached) were most needed. Responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- Single-family (detached) (48%)

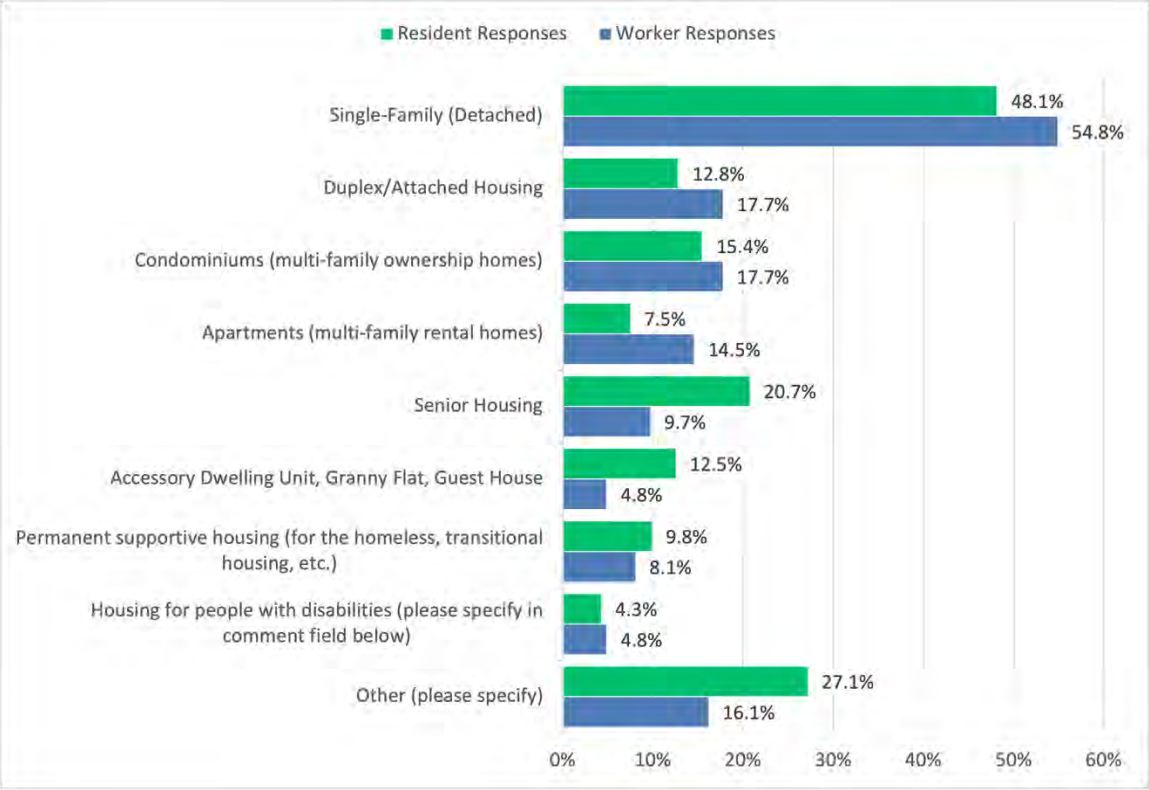
[13] Survey 1, Question 9: Do you think that the range of housing options currently available in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita meets the needs of the community?
[14] Survey 1, Question 10: What types of additional housing are most needed in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? (Select all that apply).

- Other (27%)
- Senior Housing (21%)
- Condominiums (multifamily ownership homes) (15%)
- Duplex/Attached Housing (13%)
- Accessory Dwelling Unit (Granny Flat or Guest House) (13%)

Worker responses:

- Single-family (detached) (55%)
- Duplex/Attached Housing (18%)
- Condominiums (multifamily ownership homes) (18%)
- Other (16%)
- Apartments (multifamily rental homes) (15%)
- Senior Housing (10%)

Figure 7: What types of housing are most needed in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita?



Some of the other responses included:

- No additional housing needed
- Affordable housing at a range of income levels

- Handicap accessible housing

When asked, "If you are currently employed, approximately how long is your one-way commute to work?"[15] respondents showed considerable range, especially among residents. Responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- 10-25 miles (20%)
- Less than 5 miles (18%)
- I am not currently employed (18%)
- 5-10 miles (14%)
- I am employed but work from home (13%)
- 25-40 miles (12%)
- More than 40 miles (6%)

Worker responses:

- 5-10 miles (37%)
- 10-25 miles (32%)
- 25-40 miles (16%)
- More than 40 miles (11%)
- Less than 5 miles (5%)

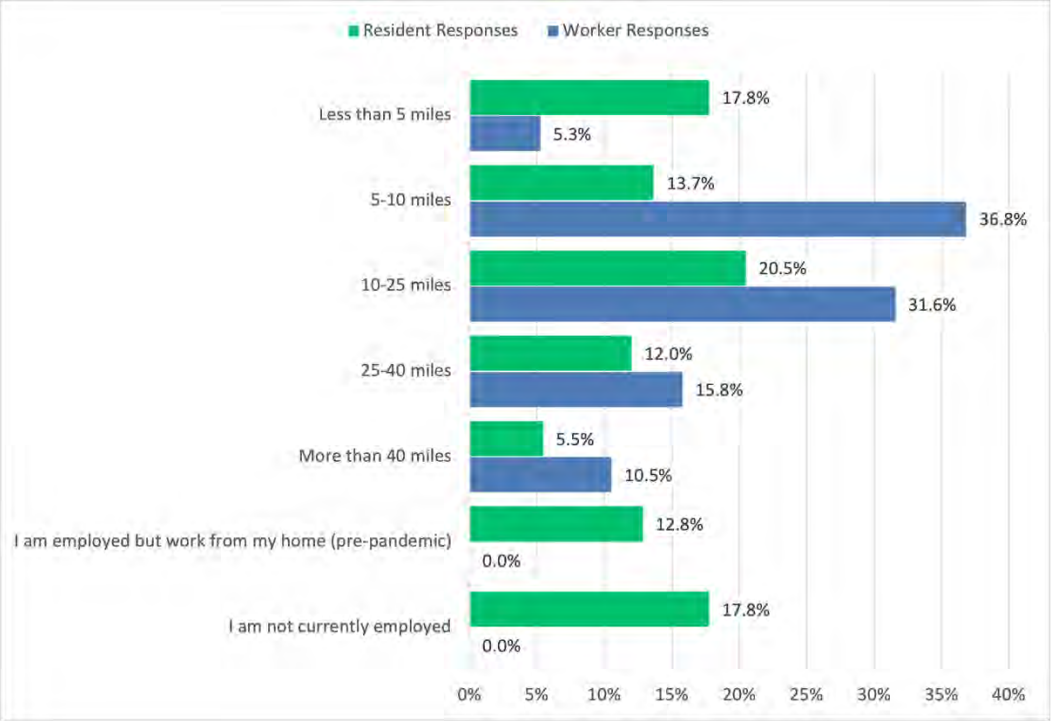
The range of responses amongst residents suggests that while there is great diversity in commute distances, the majority of residents live and work in Rancho Santa Margarita or neighboring jurisdictions. Of those not currently employed, the age group of respondents suggests that many may be retired.

The responses amongst the worker group indicate that the majority of non-residents who work in Rancho Santa Margarita commute between 5-25 miles (69%) and that more than a quarter (27%) live over 25 miles away. This suggests that most non-resident workers live in nearby jurisdictions but a significant portion commute from long distances.

It should be noted that answers are based on commute distance prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, which may have had an impact on travel patterns.

[15] Survey 1, Question 26: If you are currently employed, approximately how long is your one-way commute to work?

Figure 4: If you are currently employed, approximately how long is your one-way commute to work?



When asked if Coronavirus had impacted their housing situation[16], the majority of all respondents answered "No". Responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- Yes (20%)
- No (80%)

Worker responses:

- Yes (21%)
- No (79%)

For respondents who answered "Yes," some of the reasons given were:

- Family members such as adult children moving into the home
- Converting bedrooms to offices to allow work from home or virtual schooling

[16] Survey 1, Question 25: Has the Coronavirus impacted your housing situation?

Fair Housing

In basic terms, "fair housing" means the right to choose a home free from unlawful discrimination. The City is required to consider issues of fair housing as part of its Housing Element update.

When asked, "How important are the following factors in your housing choice?"[17] respondents were most likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

Resident responses:

- Housing I can afford (92%)
- Housing large enough for my household (85%)
- Housing was available in the neighborhood I chose at the time I needed it (77%)
- The amount of money I have/had for deposit (75%)
- My credit history and/or credit score (65%)

While still important for some individuals, resident respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Housing that accommodates disability of household member (24%)
- Concern that I would not be welcome in that neighborhood (22%)

Worker responses:

- Housing I can afford (94%)
- Housing large enough for my household (88%)
- Housing was available in the neighborhood I chose at the time I needed it (84%)
- The amount of money I have/had for deposit (79%)
- My credit history and/or credit score (53%)

While still important for some individuals, worker respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Concern that I would not be welcome in that neighborhood (35%)
- Housing that accommodates disability of household member (29%)

[17] Survey 1, Question 14: How important are the following factors in your housing choice?

When asked, "How important are the following housing priorities to you and your household?"[18] respondents were most likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

Resident responses:

- Support programs to help neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures (75%)
- Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults (73%)
- Rehabilitate existing housing (67%)
- Promote affordable housing for working families (65%)
- Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs (64%)
- Build more single-family housing (63%)
- Support fair/equitable housing opportunities (62%)
- Encourage more senior housing (51%)

While still important for some individuals, resident respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Provide ADA-accessible housing (48%)
- Provide more housing for all income levels (45%)
- Create mixed-use projects to bring different land uses closer together (45%)
- Integrate affordable housing throughout the community to create mixed-income neighborhoods (29%)
- Build more multi-family housing such as apartments and condos (28%)
- Provide housing for the homeless (26%)

Worker responses:

- Promote affordable housing for working families (85%)
- Provide more housing for all income levels (83%)
- Support fair/equitable housing opportunities (82%)
- Build more single-family housing (81%)
- Support programs to help neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures (81%)

[18] Survey 1, Question 15: How important are the following housing priorities to you and your household?

- Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults (78%)
- Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs (78%)
- Create mixed-use projects to bring different land uses closer together (64%)
- Rehabilitate existing housing (61%)
- Integrate affordable housing throughout the community to create mixed-income neighborhoods (58%)
- Build more multi-family housing such as apartments and condos (55%)
- Encourage more senior housing (53%)
- Provide housing for the homeless (52%)

While still important for some individuals, worker respondents were less likely to identify the following factors as being very important or somewhat important:

- Provide ADA-accessible housing (49%)

When asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of affirmative statements[19] respondents were most likely to strongly agree or somewhat agree with the following statements:

Resident responses:

- The condition of the homes in my neighborhood are acceptable (96%)
- There is a pharmacy close to my house (96%)
- There are grocery stores close to my neighborhood (96%)
- There are banks and credit unions near where I live (93%)
- The streets and sidewalks near my home are well kept (93%)
- There is a public library close to my house (91%)
- There are plenty of parks, playgrounds, or green space near me (87%)
- There are plenty of other public spaces near my home (84%)
- The streets and sidewalks in my neighborhood have adequate lighting (79%)
- I am satisfied with the schools in my area (76%)

Resident respondents were less likely to agree with the following statements:

[19] Survey 1, Question 16: Please respond to each statement

- There is enough parking in my area of town (60%)
- There are quality jobs in my neighborhood (52%)
- There is access to public transit close to my neighborhood (39%)

Worker responses:

- The condition of the homes in my neighborhood are acceptable (85%)
- There are grocery stores close to my neighborhood (85%)
- There are banks and credit unions near where I live (85%)
- There is a pharmacy close to my house (84%)
- The streets and sidewalks near my home are well kept (84%)
- The streets and sidewalks in my neighborhood have adequate lighting (78%)
- There are plenty of parks, playgrounds, or green space near me (77%)
- There is a public library close to my house (75%)
- There are plenty of other public spaces near my home (73%)
- I am satisfied with the schools in my area (62%)

Worker respondents were less likely to agree with the following statements:

- There is enough parking in my area of town (56%)
- There are quality jobs in my neighborhood (54%)
- There is access to public transit close to my neighborhood (37%)

When asked to identify what they thought the biggest problem with housing discrimination is in Rancho Santa Margarita,[20] responses varied amongst groups with a greater proportion of residents than non-residents indicating that no problems exist or that they are unaware of any problem (indicated by the response "other"). The responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- Other (please specify) (52%)
- Race/Ethnicity (18%)
- Color (physical appearance (9%)
- Disability (8%)

[20] Survey 1, Question 17: The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. Of those, which do you think is the biggest problem in housing discrimination in RSM?

- Familial status (8%)
- National Origin (3%)
- Religion (2%)
- Sex (less than 1%)

Worker responses:

- Race/Ethnicity (41%)
- Other (please specify) (30%)
- Familial status (20%)
- Color (physical appearance) (5%)
- National Origin (2%)
- Disability (2%)

Of worker responses, nobody indicated housing discrimination was due to religion or sex.

Of all respondents who selected "Other (please specify)" over 90% specified that no problems with housing discrimination existed or that they are unaware of any problem.

When asked whether they had experienced or witnessed housing discrimination in Rancho Santa Margarita[21] the majority of respondents answered "No." The responses broken down by group were:

Resident responses:

- Yes (4% or 15 responses)
- No (86% or 320 responses)
- I don't know (10% or 38 responses)

Of those respondents that answered "yes" to the prior question, the discriminatory factors identified (in order of affirmative responses) were:

- Race/Ethnicity (12 responses)
- Color (physical appearance) (3 responses)
- Age (3 responses)
- Familial status (3 responses)
- Political Ideas (3 responses)

[21] Survey 1, Question 18: Have you ever experienced or witnessed housing discrimination in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita?

- Language spoken (3 responses)
- Level/source of Income (2 responses)
- National Origin (2 responses)
- Marital status (1 response)
- Citizenship status (1 response)
- Use of Housing Choice Voucher or other assistance (1 response)
- Criminal background (1 response)
- Other (1 response)

Worker responses:

- Yes (3% or 2 responses)
- No (61% or 36 responses)
- I don't know (36% or 21 responses)

Of those respondents that answered "yes" to the prior question, the discriminatory factors identified (in order of affirmative responses, where respondents could select as many factors they thought applied) were:

- Race/Ethnicity (2 responses)
- Familial status (2 responses)
- Color (physical appearance) (1 response)
- Age (1 response)
- Marital status (1 response)
- Political Ideas (1 response)
- Religion (1 response)
- National Origin (1 response)
- Sex (1 response)
- Disability (1 response)
- Level/source of Income (1 response)
- Use of Housing Choice Voucher or other assistance (1 response)

When asked whether they knew of anyone in Rancho Santa Margarita who experienced unfair real estate or lending practices[22] respondents provided the following responses:

Resident responses:

- The majority (96%) didn't know of anyone who had encountered these unfair practices
- 2% knew of someone who was unfairly refused a rental or sale agreement
- 1% reported knowing someone who was not shown all housing options
- 1% knew of someone who was offered unfair terms when buying or selling
- Less than 1% reported knowing someone who was unfairly directed to a certain neighborhood and/or location, was not given reasonable accommodations for a disability, or was falsely denied available housing options

Worker responses:

- The majority (94%) didn't know of anyone who had encountered these unfair practices
- 4% knew of someone who was unfairly refused a rental or sale agreement
- 4% reported knowing someone who was not shown all housing options

Many respondents (28% of residents and 54% of workers) would not know where to refer someone (or themselves) if they felt that their fair housing rights were violated[23]. Of those who responded that they might know where to go, most would refer someone to the local, state or federal government or the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Familiarity with Fair Housing Laws varied between groups. The majority of residents (61%) felt somewhat familiar or very familiar with fair housing laws[24], while just under half of non-resident workers (46%) felt the same. Additionally, many (24% of residents and 26% of workers) felt that Federal and/or State Fair Housing Laws are difficult to understand or follow[25].

Survey Responses #2: Development Types

The second survey focused on understanding acceptable types of development to accommodate the State-mandated Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita. It was 13 questions long and had a completion rate of 99% with 236 total respondents.

[22] Survey 1, Question 20: Do you know of anyone in Rancho Santa Margarita who has faced the following: (select all that apply)
[23] Survey 1, Question 21: Where would you refer someone if they felt their fair housing rights had been violated?
[24] Survey 1, Question 22: How familiar are you with Fair Housing Laws?
[25] Survey 1, Question 23: Do you think Federal and/or State Fair Housing Laws are difficult to understand or follow?

Respondent Demographics

The survey contained seven questions related to demographics and included a question asking respondents if they live or work in Rancho Santa Margarita[26]. The answers to this question provide the following breakdown of response types by group:

- Most of the respondents (92%) are residents of Rancho Santa Margarita (37% live and work within Rancho Santa Margarita and 55% work somewhere else). These are "**resident** responses".
- A small percentage (4%) respondents work in Rancho Santa Margarita but live somewhere else. These are "**worker** responses".
- A small percentage (less than 4%) of respondents neither live nor work in Rancho Santa Margarita. These are "**other** responses", and are summarized in Appendix E.

The other demographic questions, which asked about location of residency (neighborhood) within Rancho Santa Margarita, residency status, household type, age range, and annual household income, highlighted the following about the respondents (note that one question asked for contact information, and the results of that question are not included here):

- Of those individuals who live in Rancho Santa Margarita[27], more than half live in Dove Canyon (51%). The other areas include: Robinson Ranch/Trabuco (11%), Lake/Central RSM (9%), Melinda Heights (8%), Arroyo Vista/Tijeras Creek (7%), Town Center (5%), and Rancho Cielo/Walden (2%). Another 7% of respondents did not live in Rancho Santa Margarita. Combined, the respondents from the areas of North RSM (Dove Canyon, Rancho Cielo/Walden, Robinson Ranch/Trabuco Highlands) represented 64% of total responses, and respondents from the areas of South RSM (Lake/Central RSM, Melinda Heights, Arroyo Vista/Tijeras Creek, and Town Center) represented 29% of total responses.
- Most of the respondents own their own residence (92%), with 7% of respondents renting and 1% neither owning nor renting.[28]
    - Of resident responses, the majority (94%) own their own residence, with 5% of respondents renting and less than 1% neither owning nor renting.
    - Of worker responses, the majority (60%) own their own residence, with 40% of respondents renting.
- Of all the respondents surveyed, the most common types of households include couples (44%) and couples with children younger than 18 (34%), followed by single-person households and multi-generational family households (7% each). The remainder of responses showed a

[26] Survey 2, Question 7: Do you live and/or work in Rancho Santa Margarita?
[27] Survey 2, Question 8: Using the map below for reference, in which area of RSM do you live?
[28] Survey 2, Question 9: Do you currently own or rent your residence?

considerable range in household types including 4% who identified as an unlisted household type, such as couples with adult children living with them.[29]

  - Of resident responses, the most common types of households include couples (44%) and couples with children younger than 18 (34%), followed by single-person households and multi-generational family households (7% each). The remainder of resident responses showed a considerable range in household types including 5% who identified as an unlisted household type, such as couples with adult children living with them. No residents responded that they were a family unit living with a roommate.
  - Of worker responses, the most common types of households include couples (30%) and couples with children younger than 18 (40%), followed by single-person households, multi-generational family households, and single person living with roommates (10% each). There were no other household types.

- The respondents were primarily 56-74 years old (42%), followed by 40-55 years old (40%), and 24-39 years old (15%).[30]
  - Of resident responses, respondents were primarily 56-74 years old (45%), followed by 40-55 years old (40%), and 24-39 years old (13%).
  - Of worker responses, respondents were primarily 24-39 years old (70%), followed by 40-55 years old (30%).
- Most respondents reported an annual household income of more than $100,000, broken down by group as follows:[31]
  - Of resident responses, most households earn between $100,000 and $150,000 (24%), followed by households making between $150,000 and $200,000 (23%), and households that make between $200,000 and $300,000 (20%). Another 17% made more than $300,000 annually. The remaining respondents made between $0 and $99,999.
  - Of worker responses, most households earn between $150,000 and $200,000 (40%), followed by households making between $100,000 and $150,000 (30%), and households that make between $75,000 and $99,999 (20%). Another 10% made more than $300,000 annually.

[29] Survey 2, Question 10: Which of the following best describes your household type?
[30] Survey 2, Question 11: What age range most accurately describes you?
[31] Survey 2, Question 12: What is your annual household income?

Development Type Preferences based on Resident/Worker Profile

When asked to identify the development types *most* suitable for future study in Rancho Santa Margarita[32], the top five responses (indicating they are the most preferable options) broken down by group included:

Resident responses:

- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (60%)
- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (53%)
- Workforce housing in the business park (42%)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (41%)
- Repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses (35%)

Worker responses:

- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (50%)
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (50%)
- Workforce housing in the business park (50%)
- Repurposing of office sites to residential uses (40%)
- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (40%)

When asked to identify the development types *least* suitable for future study in Rancho Santa Margarita[33], the bottom four responses (indicating that they are the least preferable options) broken down by group included:

Resident responses:

- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses (62%)
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses (43%)
- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (33%)
- Housing on church sites (33%)

Worker responses:

- Repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses (80%)

[32] Survey 2, Question 1: Please identify the top development types that you believe are most suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita

[33] Survey 2, Question 2: Please identify the top development types that you believe are least suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita

- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (60%)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (30%)
- Housing on church sites (30%)

When asked to rank development types from *most* suitable to *least* suitable[34], respondents identified the following:

Resident responses:

- Of resident responses, the most suitable development types were identified as development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites, repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses, accessory dwelling units, and repurposing of office sites to residential uses. Results were mixed but generally favorable for workforce housing in the business park and repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses. Results were mixed but generally unfavorable for repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses. The least suitable development types were identified as repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses, housing on church sites, repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses, and repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses.

Worker responses:

- Of worker responses, the most suitable development types were identified as repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses, accessory dwelling units, repurposing of office sites to residential uses, and repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses. Results were neither favorable nor unfavorable for repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses, workforce housing in the business park, and repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses. The least suitable development types were identified as repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses, development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites, housing on church sites, and repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses.

Other development types identified by respondents included:

- No additional housing needed
- Subdividing parcels
- Housing for seniors

[34] Survey 2, Question 3: Please rank the following general development types from most suitable (#1) to least suitable (#11) for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Development Type Preferences based on Home Location

The following responses are grouped by location of respondent's residence within Rancho Santa Margarita. The group "North RSM" includes respondents who live in Dove Canyon, Rancho Cielo/Walden, and Robinson Ranch/Trabuco Highlands. The group "South RSM" includes respondents who live in Lake/Central RSM, Melinda Heights, Arroyo Vista/Tijeras Creek, and Town Center

When asked to identify the development types *most* suitable for future study in Rancho Santa Margarita[35], the top five responses (indicating they are the most preferable options) broken down by group included:

North RSM Resident:

- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (65%)
- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (48%)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (42%)
- Repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses (41%)
- Workforce housing in the business park (40%)

South RSM Resident:

- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (57%)
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (51%)
- Workforce housing in the business park (44%)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (43%)
- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (40%)

When asked to identify the development types *least* suitable for future study in Rancho Santa Margarita[36], the bottom four responses (indicating that they are the least preferable options) broken down by group included:

North RSM Resident:

- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses (77%)
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses (48%)
- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (42%)

[35] Survey 2, Question 1: Please identify the top development types that you believe are most suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita

[36] Survey 2, Question 2: Please identify the top development types that you believe are least suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita

- Housing on church sites (26%)

South RSM Resident:

- Accessory Dwelling Units (44%)
- Repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses (43%)
- Housing on church sites (40%)
- Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses (26%)

When asked to rank development types from *most* suitable to *least* suitable[37], respondents identified the following:

North RSM Resident:

- Of responses from North RSM, the most suitable development types were identified as development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites, repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses, Accessory Dwelling Units, and repurposing of office sites to residential uses. Results were mixed but generally favorable for workforce housing in the business park and repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses. Results were mixed but generally unfavorable for housing on church sites, repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses, and repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses. The least suitable development types were identified as repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses and repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses.

South RSM Resident:

- Of responses from South RSM, the most suitable development types were identified as repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses, repurposing of office sites to residential uses, and repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses. Results were mixed but generally favorable for accessory dwelling units, development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites, and repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses. Results were mixed but generally unfavorable for repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses, workforce housing in the business park, and repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses. The least suitable development types were identified as housing on church sites and repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses.

[37] Survey 2, Question 3: Please rank the following general development types from most suitable (#1) to least suitable (#11) for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Appendices

A: Survey #1 Questions

B: Survey #1 Responses

C: Survey #2 Questions

D: Survey #2 Responses

E: “Other Respondent” Responses to Surveys #1 and #2

APPENDIX A

Rancho Santa Margarita
California

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

As required by State law, the City is in the process of updating the Housing Element of the General Plan for the 2021-2029 period. The Housing Element must be updated every 8 years. The Housing Element establishes policies and programs to address RSM's existing and projected housing needs, including the City's "fair share" of the regional housing need (or "RHNA"). If you currently live in RSM, your feedback will help us understand existing opportunities in our City. However, even if you live somewhere else, we still want to learn about your housing conditions and experiences so the City can do its part in planning to meet our region's housing needs.

Part 1 of this survey focuses on questions related to **existing housing conditions** and will help the City better understand the characteristics of households in RSM and identify the community's housing needs and priorities.

Part 2 of this survey focuses on issues related to **fair housing** in order to understand real or perceived fair housing concerns in RSM. In basic terms, "fair housing" means the right to choose a home free from unlawful discrimination.

This is an early step in the process. There will be additional opportunities for the community to comment on the Housing Element Update, including on the locations identified to accommodate our State-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and the goals, policies, and implementation actions to be included in the Housing Element.

Your input will be used to inform preparation of the Housing Element so that it reflects our local priorities and objectives.

For additional information about the Housing Element Update, process, and timeline, please visit the Housing Element website: http://cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

Part 1: Existing Conditions

The first part of this survey will assist us in better understanding existing housing conditions in RSM.

1. Do you live and/or work in Rancho Santa Margarita?

Note: If you currently live in RSM, you will be asked a few follow-up questions about your current living situation on the following page. If you live somewhere else, you will skip these resident-specific questions and proceed to more general questions about your housing conditions. Whether or not you are a resident, your input will still help the City plan to meet our long-term housing needs.

- ○ I live in RSM but my job is located somewhere else (pre-pandemic conditions)
- ○ My job is in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions) but I live somewhere else
- ○ I live and work in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions)
- ○ I do not live or work in RSM

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

Questions for RSM Residents

2. How long have you lived in the City?

- ○ 0-2 years
- ○ 2-5 years
- ○ 5-10 years
- ○ 10-20 years
- ○ 20-30 years
- ○ 30+ years

3. What made you decide to live here? (Select all that apply)

- [ ] Proximity to job/work
- [ ] Quality of housing stock
- [ ] Proximity to family and/or friends
- [ ] Affordability (at the time I moved here)
- [ ] Quality of local school system
- [ ] Safety of neighborhood
- [ ] City services and programs
- [ ] Proximity to shopping and services
- [ ] Other (please specify)

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

Questions for All Respondents (Residents and Nonresidents)

4. Do you currently own or rent your residence?

- ○ I own my residence
- ○ I rent my residence
- ○ I live with another household (neither own nor rent)
- ○ I am currently without permanent shelter

5. If you wish to own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita but do not currently own one, what issues are preventing you from owning a home at this time? Select all that apply.

- [ ] I cannot find a home within my target price range in Rancho Santa Margarita
- [ ] I do not currently have the financial resources for an appropriate down payment
- [ ] I do not currently have the financial resources for an adequate monthly mortgage payment
- [ ] I cannot find a home that suits my living needs in Rancho Santa Margarita (e.g., housing size, disability accommodations, floorplan)
- [ ] I cannot currently find a home that suits my quality standards in Rancho Santa Margarita (e.g., interior maintenance, finishes, landscaping)
- [ ] I do not currently wish to own or rent a home in Rancho Santa Margarita
- [ ] I already own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita

6. Select the type of housing that best describes your current home.

- ○ Single-Family Home (Detached)
- ○ Duplex/Townhome
- ○ Multi-Family Home (Apartment/Condominium)
- ○ Accessory Dwelling Unit, Granny Flat, Guest House
- ○ Mobile Home
- ○ Currently without permanent shelter
- ○ Other (please specify)

7. How satisfied are you with your current housing situation?

- ○ I am very satisfied
- ○ I am somewhat satisfied
- ○ I am somewhat dissatisfied
- ○ I am dissatisfied

8. If you answered dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied to the prior question, please provide a reason below. (If not, please skip).

9. Do you think that the range of housing options currently available in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita meets the needs of the community?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

10. What types of additional housing are most needed in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? (Select all that apply)

- [ ] Single-Family (Detached)
- [ ] Duplex/Attached Housing
- [ ] Condominiums (multi-family ownership homes)
- [ ] Apartments (multi-family rental homes)
- [ ] Senior Housing
- [ ] Accessory Dwelling Unit, Granny Flat, Guest House
- [ ] Permanent supportive housing (for the homeless, transitional housing, etc.)
- [ ] Housing for people with disabilities (please specify in comment field below)
- [ ] Other (please specify)

11. How would you rate the physical condition of the residence you live in?

- ○ Excellent condition
- ○ Shows signs of minor deferred maintenance (e.g., peeling paint, chipped stucco, etc.)
- ○ Needs extensive major repairs or renovation (teardown/rebuild)
- ○ Needs one or more major systems upgrades (e.g., new roof, windows, electrical, plumbing, HVAC system, etc.)
- ○ Other (please specify)

12. Which of the following housing upgrades or expansions have you considered making on your home?

- [ ] Room addition
- [ ] Roofing
- [ ] HVAC
- [ ] Painting
- [ ] Solar
- [ ] Accessory Dwelling Unit, Granny Flat, Guest House
- [ ] Remodel of bath, kitchen or other facility
- [ ] None
- [ ] Other (please specify)

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

Part 2: Fair Housing

The second part of this survey is designed to help us understand fair housing issues facing our community.

Questions for All Respondents (Residents and Nonresidents)

13. Based on your monthly income before taxes, how much of your monthly income do you spend on housing?

- ○ Less than 30%
- ○ Between 30%-50%
- ○ More than 50%

14. How important are the following factors in your housing choice? (If a statement does not pertain to you, please leave blank.) (1-5 scale)

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Somewhat Unimportant	Unimportant
Housing I can afford	○	○	○	○	○
Housing that accommodates disability of household member	○	○	○	○	○
Housing large enough for my household	○	○	○	○	○
My credit history and/or credit score	○	○	○	○	○
The amount of money I have/had for deposit	○	○	○	○	○
Housing was available in the neighborhood I chose at the time I needed it	○	○	○	○	○
Concern that I would not be welcome in that neighborhood	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

15. How important are the following housing priorities to you and your household?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not Important	Don't know
Provide more housing for all income levels	○	○	○	○

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not Important	Don't know
Promote housing affordable to working families	○	○	○	○
Build more single-family housing	○	○	○	○
Build more multi-family housing (apartments, condos, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Rehabilitate existing housing	○	○	○	○
Encourage more senior housing	○	○	○	○
Provide ADA-accessible housing	○	○	○	○
Provide housing for homeless	○	○	○	○
Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults	○	○	○	○
Create mixed-use (commercial/office and residential) projects to bring different land uses closer together	○	○	○	○
Integrate affordable housing throughout the community to create mixed-income neighborhoods	○	○	○	○

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not Important	Don't know
Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs	○	○	○	○
Support fair/equitable housing opportunities	○	○	○	○
Support programs to help maintain and secure neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures	○	○	○	○

16. Please respond to each statement: (1-5 scale)

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I am satisfied with the schools in my area	○	○	○	○	○
There are quality jobs in my neighborhood	○	○	○	○	○
There is access to public transit close to my neighborhood	○	○	○	○	○
There is enough parking in my area of town	○	○	○	○	○
There are plenty of parks, playgrounds, or green space near me	○	○	○	○	○
There is a pharmacy close to my house	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
There is a public library close to my house	○	○	○	○	○
There are grocery stores close to my neighborhood	○	○	○	○	○
There are banks and credit unions near where I live	○	○	○	○	○
The condition of the homes in my neighborhood are acceptable	○	○	○	○	○
The streets and sidewalks near my home are well kept	○	○	○	○	○
There are plenty of other public spaces near my home	○	○	○	○	○
The streets and sidewalks in my neighborhood have adequate lighting	○	○	○	○	○

17. The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. Of those, which do you think is the biggest problem in housing discrimination in RSM?

- ○ Race/Ethnicity (i.e., Caucasian, Asian, Latino, etc.)
- ○ Color (physical appearance)
- ○ National Origin (the country where a person was born)
- ○ Religion
- ○ Sex
- ○ Familial Status
- ○ Disability
- ○ Other (please specify)

18. Have you ever experienced or witnessed housing discrimination in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? (Reminder: Housing discrimination occurs when factors like a person's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability are used in making decisions related to in the sale, rental, or financing of housing).

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I don’t know

Rancho Santa Margarita
California

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

19. On what grounds do you believe you witnessed housing discrimination in RSM? (Select all that apply)

- [ ] Race/Ethnicity (i.e., Caucasian, Asian, Latino, etc.)
- [ ] Color (physical appearance)
- [ ] Age
- [ ] Marital Status
- [ ] Religion
- [ ] Sex/Gender/Gender Identity
- [ ] National Origin (the country where a person was born)
- [ ] Familial Status (Families with Children)
- [ ] Other (please specify)
- [ ] I have not witnessed housing discrimination
- [ ] Disability
- [ ] Political Ideas
- [ ] English Spoken as a Second Language
- [ ] Citizenship Status
- [ ] Level/Source of Income
- [ ] Use of Housing Choice Voucher or other assistance
- [ ] Criminal Background



Rancho Santa Margarita
California

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

20. Do you know of anyone in Rancho Santa Margarita who has faced the following: (select all that apply)

- [ ] Unfairly refused a rental or sale agreement
- [ ] Unfairly denied a mortgage
- [ ] Falsely denied available housing options
- [ ] Unfairly directed to a certain neighborhood and/or locations
- [ ] Not shown all housing options
- [ ] Not given reasonable accommodate for a disability
- [ ] Offered unfair terms when buying or selling
- [ ] Not applicable/None

21. Where would you refer someone if they felt their fair housing rights had been violated?

- ◯ I wouldn’t know what to do
- ◯ Complain to the individual/organization discriminating
- ◯ A local nonprofit
- ◯ Local, state, or federal government
- ◯ The California Office of Housing and Community Development
- ◯ The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ◯ A private attorney
- ◯ Other (please specify)

22. How familiar are you with Fair Housing Laws?

- ◯ Not familiar
- ◯ Somewhat familiar
- ◯ Very familiar

23. Do you think Federal and/or State Fair Housing Laws are difficult to understand or follow?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I don’t know

RSM 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Survey

Background Questions

Questions for All Respondents (Residents and Nonresidents)

24. Which of the following best describes your household type?

- ○ Single person household
- ○ Couple
- ○ Couple with children under 18
- ○ Single parent with children under 18
- ○ Adult head of household (non-parent) with children under 18
- ○ Adult living with parents
- ○ Multi-generational family household (grandparents, children, and/or grandchildren all under the same roof)
- ○ Single person living with roommates
- ○ Family unit living with roommates
- ○ Other (please specify)

25. Has the Coronavirus impacted your housing situation?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ If yes, how?

26. If you are currently employed, approximately how long is your one-way commute to work? (If your commute has changed due to the Coronavirus, please answer this question based on your commute before the pandemic's impact on your travel patterns).

- ◯ Less than 5 miles
- ◯ 5-10 miles
- ◯ 10-25 miles
- ◯ 25-40 miles
- ◯ More than 40 miles
- ◯ I am employed but work from my home (pre-pandemic)
- ◯ I am not currently employed

27. What age range most accurately describes you?

- ◯ 0-23 years old
- ◯ 24-39 years old
- ◯ 40-55 years old
- ◯ 56-74 years old
- ◯ 75+ years old

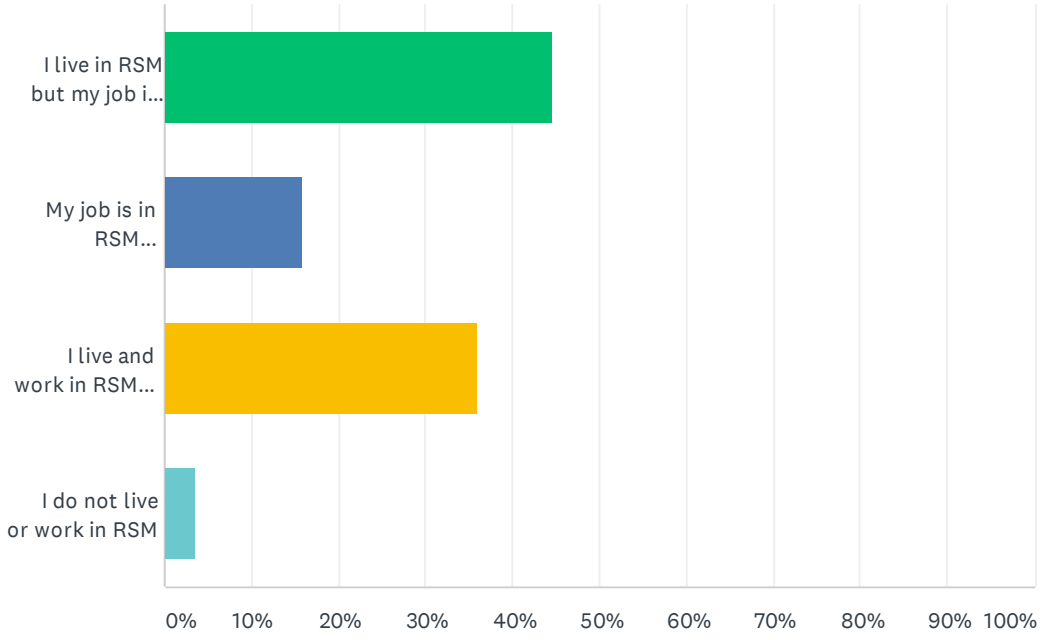
28. If you would like to be notified regarding upcoming project updates and public hearings, please register your email address below.

Name	
ZIP/Postal Code	
Email Address	

APPENDIX B

Q1 Do you live and/or work in Rancho Santa Margarita? Note: If you currently live in RSM, you will be asked a few follow-up questions about your current living situation on the following page. If you live somewhere else, you will skip these resident-specific questions and proceed to more general questions about your housing conditions. Whether or not you are a resident, your input will still help the City plan to meet our long-term housing needs.

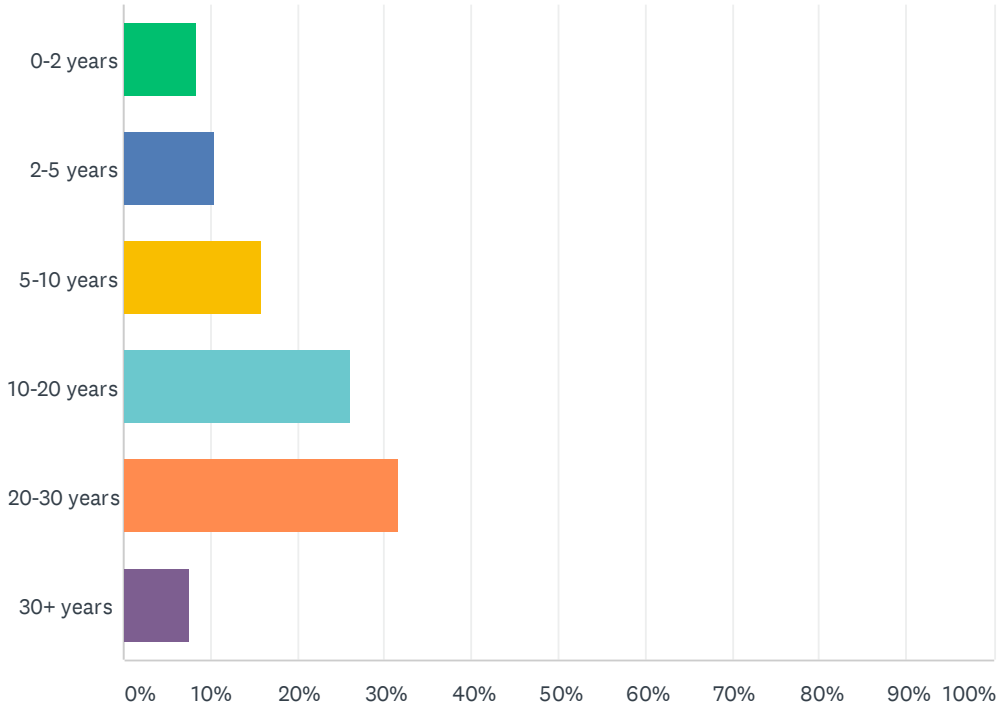
Answered: 530 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in RSM but my job is located somewhere else (pre-pandemic conditions)	44.53%	236
My job is in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions) but I live somewhere else	15.85%	84
I live and work in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions)	36.04%	191
I do not live or work in RSM	3.58%	19
TOTAL		530

Q2 How long have you lived in the City?

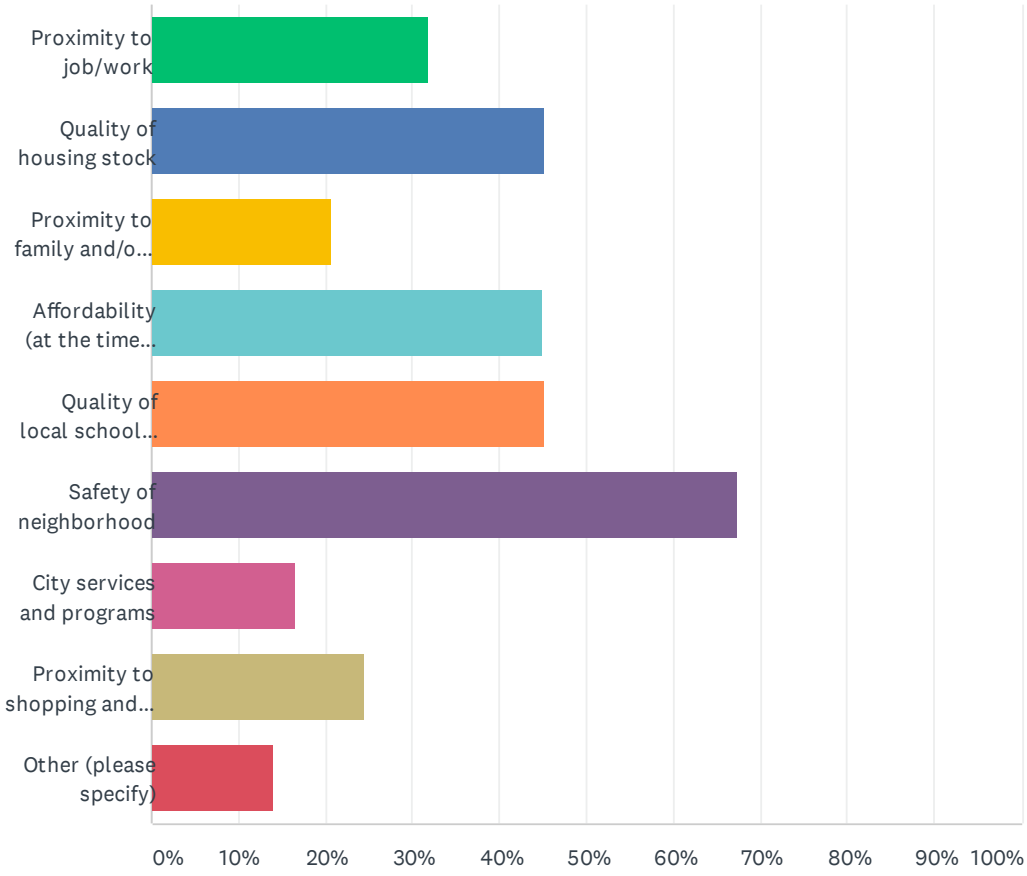
Answered: 423 Skipped: 110



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-2 years	8.27%	35
2-5 years	10.40%	44
5-10 years	15.84%	67
10-20 years	26.24%	111
20-30 years	31.68%	134
30+ years	7.57%	32
TOTAL		423

Q3 What made you decide to live here? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 421 Skipped: 112



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Proximity to job/work	31.83%	134
Quality of housing stock	45.13%	190
Proximity to family and/or friends	20.67%	87
Affordability (at the time I moved here)	44.89%	189
Quality of local school system	45.13%	190
Safety of neighborhood	67.46%	284
City services and programs	16.63%	70
Proximity to shopping and services	24.47%	103
Other (please specify)	14.01%	59
Total Respondents: 421		

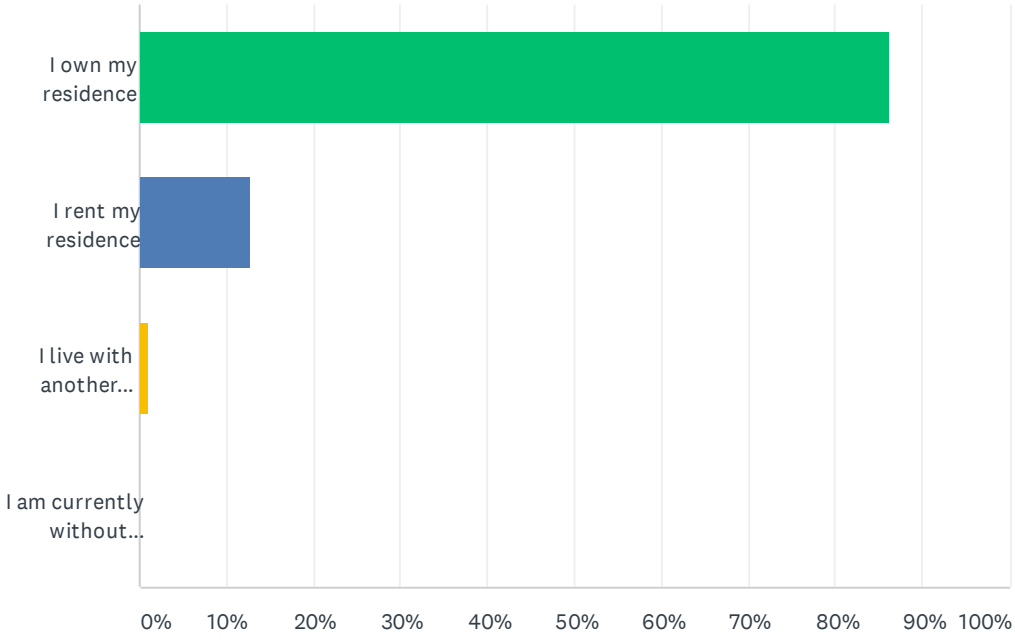
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	access to walking trails, less density of residences and small community feel, environmental conditions	3/3/2021 7:53 AM

2	The beautiful scenery of mountains, hills, canyons and open space.	3/2/2021 9:15 PM
3	Similar political ideologies	3/2/2021 8:44 PM
4	It was relatively still unpopulated.. rolling hills, horses.. you could still see stars at night..saddleback mountain and O'Neil park in my backyard	3/2/2021 2:31 PM
5	Family friendly community	3/2/2021 2:07 PM
6	quiet environment, closely knit community, lack of congestion	3/2/2021 10:47 AM
7	Openness and clean air, trails	3/2/2021 9:22 AM
8	Golf	3/2/2021 8:27 AM
9	Proximity to Santa Margarita Catholic High School	3/1/2021 6:55 PM
10	Safety and low crime rate. Quality of life.	3/1/2021 5:24 PM
11	Geographic beauty	3/1/2021 10:01 AM
12	Rural setting	2/28/2021 8:58 AM
13	Proximity to open space/ not densely populated	2/28/2021 7:53 AM
14	Reasonable association fees	2/28/2021 7:34 AM
15	Private schools	2/27/2021 8:27 PM
16	Beautiful city by the Saddleback mountains, no traffic.	2/27/2021 7:42 AM
17	Very low traffic and congestion	2/27/2021 7:28 AM
18	Beauty of the area!	2/26/2021 1:32 PM
19	quality of the neighborhood and environment	2/26/2021 10:27 AM
20	Proximity to Santa Margarita Catholic High School	2/25/2021 5:56 PM
21	Being in a small town city feel that could not expand much to keep it that small feel.	2/25/2021 3:51 PM
22	Lack of crowding, more single family homes, less apartments	2/25/2021 3:32 PM
23	Proximity to nature	2/25/2021 3:20 PM
24	Not a lot of room to build additional homes. Already an established city. No unknowns.	2/25/2021 2:42 PM
25	Proximity to St. John's episcopal school	2/25/2021 2:40 PM
26	Its a beautiful area to live in.	2/25/2021 2:20 PM
27	closeness to outdoor activities	2/25/2021 2:18 PM
28	Enjoyed the area and the fact it isn't overbuilt	2/25/2021 2:15 PM
29	Proximity to Dove Canyon	2/25/2021 2:10 PM
30	Gated communities	2/25/2021 2:07 PM
31	Not overpopulated	2/25/2021 2:07 PM
32	commitment to open space, parks, recreation	2/22/2021 9:15 PM
33	Nature preserves	2/17/2021 8:10 PM
34	Gated, next to Coto	2/17/2021 4:20 PM
35	Suburb feel , clean and safe	2/17/2021 3:02 PM
36	Space and Security	2/17/2021 9:25 AM
37	The quiet environment and lack of traffic.	2/13/2021 3:34 PM
38	Beautiful area	2/13/2021 6:31 AM
39	Location near the foothills	2/12/2021 8:12 PM

40	Proximity to nature parks	2/12/2021 10:53 AM
41	close to Church	2/12/2021 10:36 AM
42	Rancho is an attractive, well-managed, and well-planned community that has all the amenities I desired when planning to start a family.	2/12/2021 10:19 AM
43	School system	2/12/2021 9:56 AM
44	Live near natural areas and wildlife: mountain lions and deer	2/10/2021 11:59 AM
45	City plan	2/8/2021 3:45 PM
46	Beauty of the area and the fact that it was not crowded!	2/7/2021 6:47 PM
47	Larger backyards compared to other areas like Irvine, Aliso Viejo.	2/5/2021 4:28 PM
48	feels like being away from all the chaos that can be in OC	2/4/2021 8:07 PM
49	We found a good house here.	2/4/2021 2:59 PM
50	Beauty of the area	2/4/2021 11:16 AM
51	My mother moved us here when I was 17	2/4/2021 10:58 AM
52	Hiking trails and the view	2/4/2021 10:36 AM
53	Proximity to beautiful outdoor spaces	2/4/2021 9:52 AM
54	Live with my parents, who moved here due to affordability.	2/3/2021 9:39 AM
55	Wanted somewhere Warm.	2/1/2021 5:05 PM
56	Low density; quality of life	2/1/2021 1:47 PM
57	Amenities for families: pools, lagoon, walking trails, etc.	2/1/2021 1:38 PM
58	Quality of life	1/30/2021 9:13 AM
59	Child attending SM High	1/29/2021 7:59 PM

Q4 Do you currently own or rent your residence?

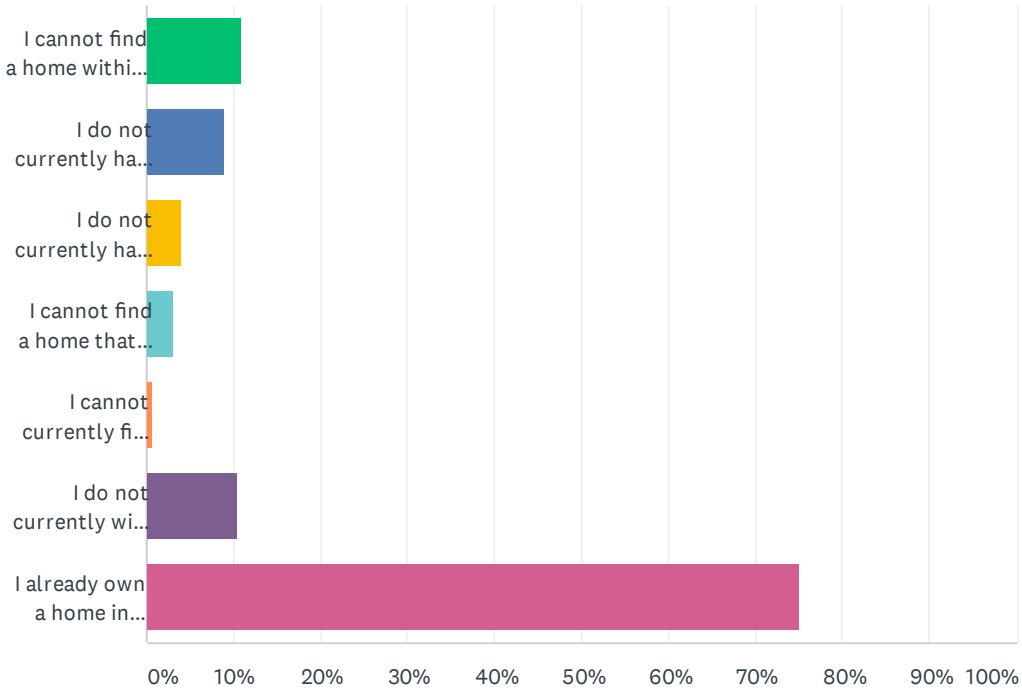
Answered: 499 Skipped: 34



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I own my residence	86.17%	430
I rent my residence	12.83%	64
I live with another household (neither own nor rent)	1.00%	5
I am currently without permanent shelter	0.00%	0
TOTAL		499

Q5 If you wish to own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita but do not currently own one, what issues are preventing you from owning a home at this time? Select all that apply.

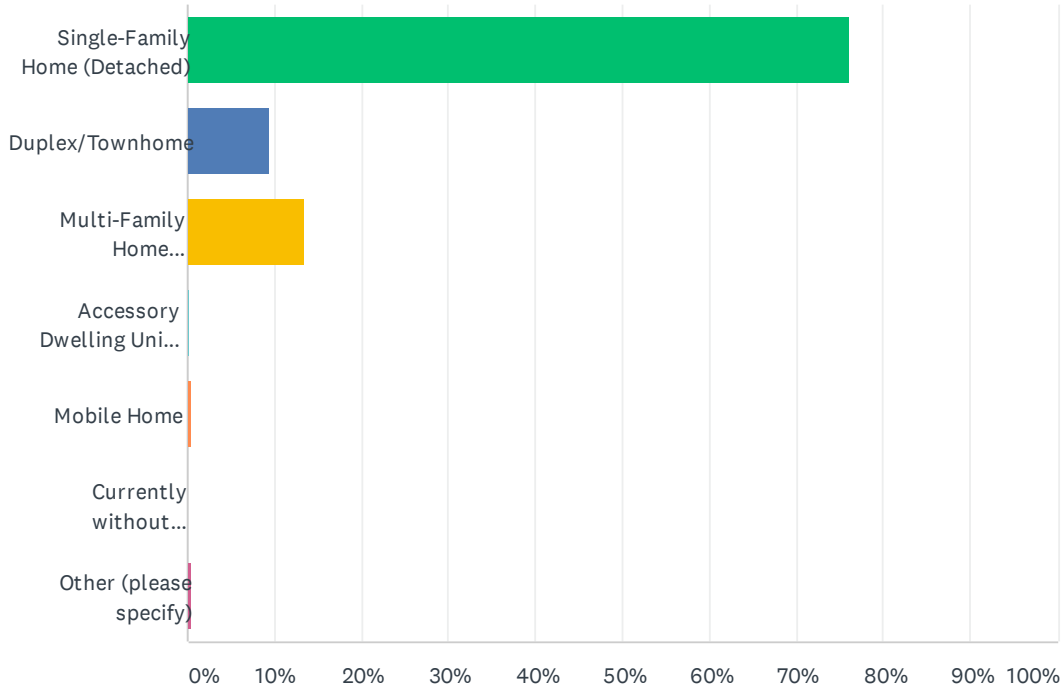
Answered: 473 Skipped: 60



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I cannot find a home within my target price range in Rancho Santa Margarita	10.78%	51
I do not currently have the financial resources for an appropriate down payment	9.09%	43
I do not currently have the financial resources for an adequate monthly mortgage payment	4.02%	19
I cannot find a home that suits my living needs in Rancho Santa Margarita (e.g., housing size, disability accommodations, floorplan)	3.17%	15
I cannot currently find a home that suits my quality standards in Rancho Santa Margarita (e.g., interior maintenance, finishes, landscaping)	0.63%	3
I do not currently wish to own or rent a home in Rancho Santa Margarita	10.36%	49
I already own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita	75.05%	355
Total Respondents: 473		

Q6 Select the type of housing that best describes your current home.

Answered: 496 Skipped: 37

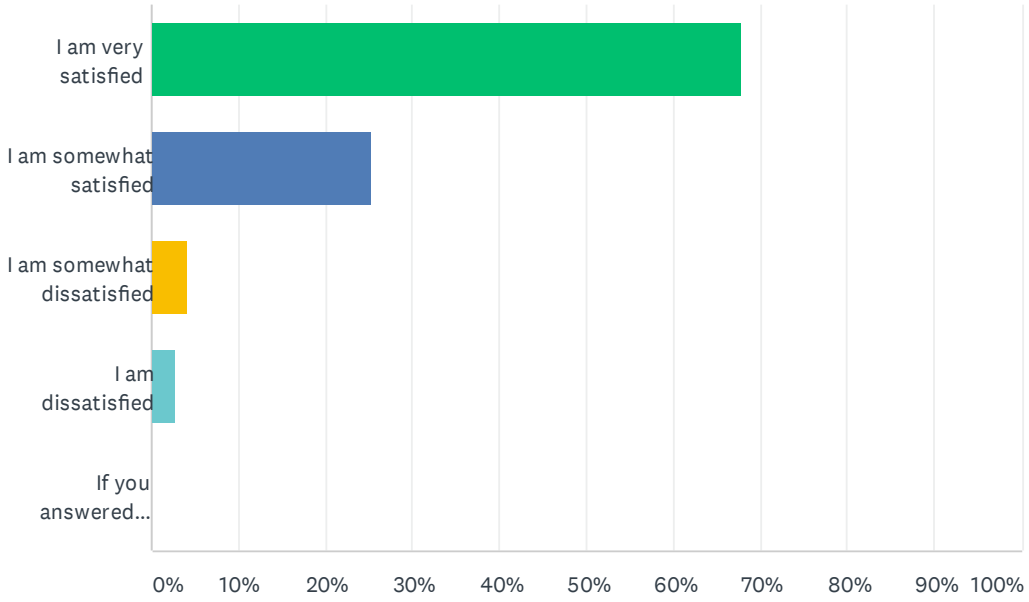


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single-Family Home (Detached)	76.21%	378
Duplex/Townhome	9.48%	47
Multi-Family Home (Apartment/Condominium)	13.31%	66
Accessory Dwelling Unit, Granny Flat, Guest House	0.20%	1
Mobile Home	0.40%	2
Currently without permanent shelter	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.40%	2
TOTAL		496

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Duplex but own outside like single-family home	2/28/2021 11:16 AM
2	I do not live in RSM.	2/4/2021 6:40 PM

Q7 How satisfied are you with your current housing situation?

Answered: 496 Skipped: 37



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am very satisfied	67.74%	336
I am somewhat satisfied	25.40%	126
I am somewhat dissatisfied	4.23%	21
I am dissatisfied	2.62%	13
If you answered somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied, please explain.	0.00%	0
TOTAL		496

#	IF YOU ANSWERED SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED, PLEASE EXPLAIN.	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q8 If you answered dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied to the prior question, please provide a reason below. (If not, please skip).

Answered: 75 Skipped: 458

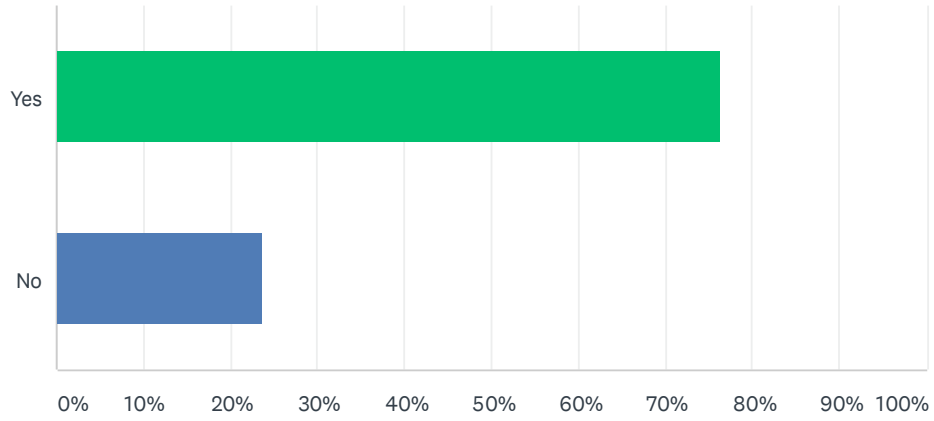
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I would like to move into a single family detached home in RSM.	3/2/2021 9:17 PM
2	Deterioration of environmental risks (drought, wildfire, etc.) and corresponding increase in homeowner insurance premiums with fewer companies offering coverage.	3/2/2021 7:00 PM
3	I can see that young people are being priced out of the housing market. Making it difficult for them to get started.	3/2/2021 4:50 PM
4	The cost of services continue too high.	3/2/2021 5:10 AM
5	There are a lot of apartments around us and we would prefer more single family homes built in the future.	3/1/2021 5:32 PM
6	Most homes are small for a family of 4	3/1/2021 4:25 PM
7	Paying way to much for an apartment.	2/28/2021 1:16 PM
8	Rude, noisy neighbors with little room between homes	2/28/2021 11:16 AM
9	Too small and too expensive	2/28/2021 12:26 AM
10	We are a family of 5 living in a 900sq ft condo. It really is not enough room but it's all we can afford	2/27/2021 11:56 PM
11	Too many steps for my didability, too small, too much money, too far from freeway	2/27/2021 9:41 PM
12	How old and not updated the house is	2/27/2021 8:57 PM
13	Unreasonable HOA policies	2/27/2021 8:52 PM
14	Lack of high speed internet options	2/27/2021 8:08 PM
15	Rude neighbors, high HOA fees	2/27/2021 7:01 PM
16	Am looking to downsize in the next few years...that is the only reason I'd consider moving. Nothing wrong with our current home, per se.	2/27/2021 5:32 PM
17	I am concerned that the city is going to change the current pan to allow the dove canyon center to be rezoned and turn it into affordable housing, reducing the quality of like, increasing traffic, and make it less safe for me and my family in the event of an emergency event. Additionally I am concerned of the impact on the ability of existing city services and utilities to provide water to another large group of homes being built. Additionally eliminating commercial space that provides services to us as residents.	2/26/2021 2:15 PM
18	drainage issues	2/26/2021 2:48 AM
19	Do not want high density housing in the dove canyon plaza to be built. Any low income high density housing will diminish My desire to stay in RSM as it will create more crime; development in dove canyon plaza will create a traffic jam	2/26/2021 12:00 AM
20	Generic	2/25/2021 2:22 PM
21	I’m in Dove Canyon. We’d like a bigger home eventually.	2/25/2021 2:18 PM
22	N/A	2/25/2021 2:16 PM
23	Would prefer single story	2/25/2021 2:07 PM
24	climte change & rash of wildfires close by	2/23/2021 3:48 PM

25	Association at my community and RSM association	2/23/2021 3:21 PM
26	HOA is awful, needs regulation	2/20/2021 12:25 PM
27	Association limits what I can do	2/18/2021 10:04 AM
28	Too high density; too many investment properties	2/17/2021 11:59 AM
29	would be nice to be a townhome or detach home	2/16/2021 4:17 PM
30	My mom lives with me and bedrooms are all upstairs	2/16/2021 12:04 PM
31	Rent/Mortgages are extremely expensive	2/16/2021 11:18 AM
32	Condo is too small for a family of 5	2/16/2021 8:16 AM
33	No driveway, noise from major road	2/15/2021 6:08 PM
34	Privacy, theft, disabled access, noise level of neighbors unchecked cost high for studio	2/14/2021 12:39 PM
35	No yard, connected walls.	2/13/2021 11:19 PM
36	I would like instead of paying rent to be paying my own house but the costs of the house are very high in Rancho Santa Margarita	2/13/2021 6:23 AM
37	Need 3 bedroom options	2/12/2021 11:07 PM
38	HOA fees are much too high	2/12/2021 7:46 PM
39	Noise barrier and the constant high rent	2/12/2021 7:40 PM
40	My neighborhood is not very good, an my commute to RSM very long	2/12/2021 7:38 PM
41	Would like to own	2/12/2021 6:53 PM
42	Would like something bigger	2/12/2021 2:33 PM
43	housing is expensive and crowded. neighbors loud	2/12/2021 2:06 PM
44	Residents drive too fast.	2/12/2021 1:08 PM
45	I currently live in a townhome built 2013 that I wish have a small back yard for kids/pet/gardening.	2/12/2021 11:59 AM
46	Hope to move into a larger home due to expanding family	2/12/2021 11:24 AM
47	Too small, Noisy neighbor	2/12/2021 11:16 AM
48	I would like to live closer to my work and the home I live in is older and needs repair.	2/12/2021 10:51 AM
49	Would prefer a home with more room, back and front yard	2/12/2021 10:31 AM
50	Commute	2/12/2021 10:11 AM
51	Prices are extremently hight even for rent	2/12/2021 10:06 AM
52	No privacy houses to close together	2/12/2021 10:05 AM
53	Would really love to purchase a home in RSM	2/12/2021 10:03 AM
54	too far from work	2/12/2021 10:03 AM
55	Issues with neighbor	2/12/2021 9:59 AM
56	High rent cost.	2/12/2021 9:56 AM
57	Houses are on top of each other. How many more can you cram into this city?	2/12/2021 9:52 AM
58	I wish we could afford a larger home or to own a home in this neighborhood.	2/12/2021 9:11 AM
59	I wish I could afford a larger place to live	2/10/2021 12:03 PM
60	My HOA and samlarc have too many guidelines to follow	2/9/2021 1:13 PM
61	Too many cars parked in neighborhood. Have overflow parking from Avila apartments	2/7/2021 10:04 PM

62	Parking issues. Most neighbors don't park their cars in their garage and park on the streets.	2/7/2021 2:18 PM
63	Note, while I love where I live, I am extremely concerned about how this city will handle evacuations in a wildfire emergency, especially since Dove Canyon has only 1 exit.	2/5/2021 4:28 PM
64	I see that our community is aging and that we are not updating our fairways and landscaping in town to complete with communities like Ladera Ranch. I also see there is a strong focus with the success of business in town center but shopping centers to the east and west of the community are aging and have not overall community support for success. Many of the business struggle and there is no overall city focus redevelop those properties and to encourage small business growth and to meet the initial vision of our community of working and living in town. I am NOT recommending that we build dense mixed use buildings on these properties that increase traffic and crime, yet I do think we can give them facelifts or create an amazing outdoor experience that give us a small town feel with outdoor dining, shopping, and places for families to gather. Example Dove Canyon Plaza can be transformed into an outdoor experience where people are willing to travel to day or night with their family. The area can have grass, outdoor dinning, coffee shops, outdoor music, shopping, entertainment, and much more but a space that people want to visit. I would start with that location first encouraging an amazing city backed redevelopment and the focus on the Empressa shopping center where the driveways are cracking and business are struggling. Use the same elements of Dove Canyon there followed by the Trabuco Shopping Center where a nice terraced mixed use redevelopment could be used where shops below and more affordable living above. This could bring more people to that side of town and support not only the Trabuco Shopping Center but also the support Dove Canyon and improve our overall tax base. These types of projects should satisfy not only the residents of Dove Canyon but our overall community.	2/4/2021 9:55 PM
65	our particular apartment complex isnt maintained too well	2/4/2021 8:10 PM
66	Noisy, cramped	2/4/2021 10:59 AM
67	Floor plan, size, cost of utilities	2/4/2021 10:29 AM
68	Affordability	2/3/2021 3:54 PM
69	skip	2/3/2021 11:00 AM
70	High HOA for Samlac and My Belflora HOA	2/3/2021 2:08 AM
71	I don’t like to see the housing packed in	2/1/2021 6:54 PM
72	Not much GoingOn for Single people.	2/1/2021 5:07 PM
73	Yard is too small	2/1/2021 3:27 PM
74	Too expensive	2/1/2021 2:21 PM
75	fire insurance is difficult to obtain in RSM fire risk areas	1/29/2021 4:18 PM

Q9 Do you think that the range of housing options currently available in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita meets the needs of the community?

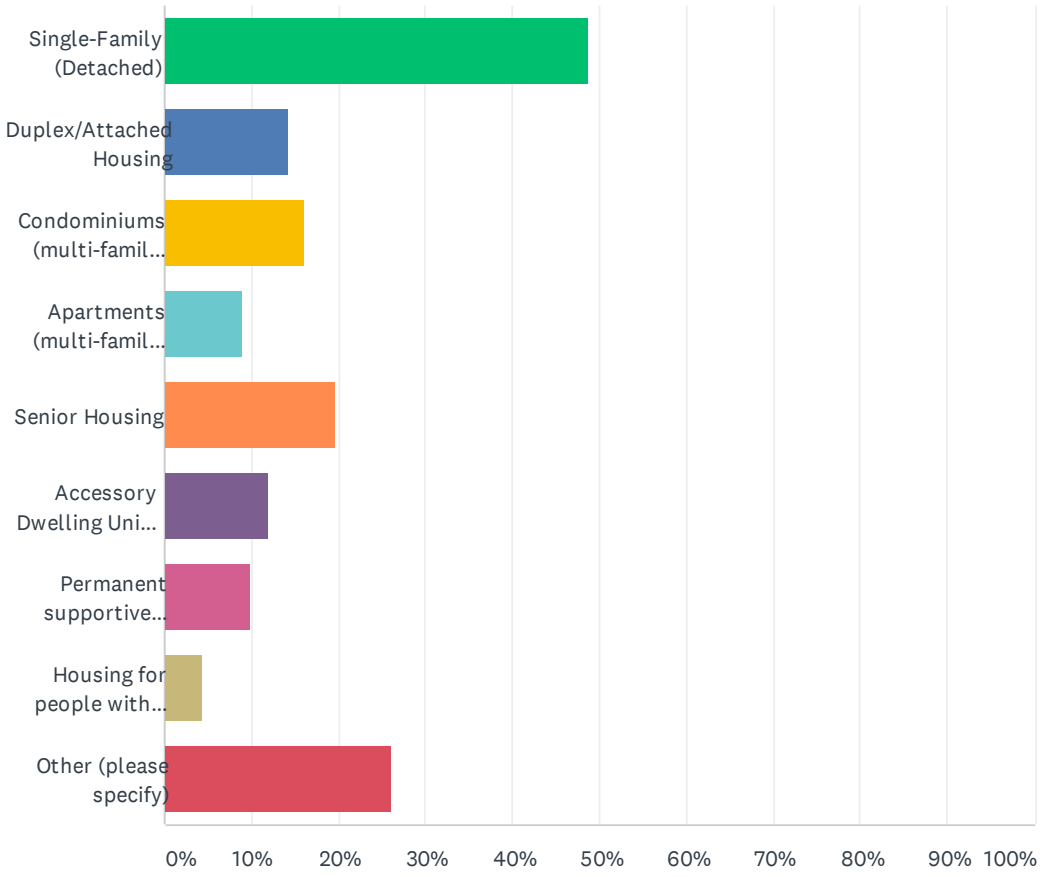
Answered: 471 Skipped: 62



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	76.43%	360
No	23.57%	111
TOTAL		471

Q10 What types of additional housing are most needed in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 453 Skipped: 80



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single-Family (Detached)	48.79%	221
Duplex/Attached Housing	14.13%	64
Condominiums (multi-family ownership homes)	16.11%	73
Apartments (multi-family rental homes)	9.05%	41
Senior Housing	19.65%	89
Accessory Dwelling Unit, Granny Flat, Guest House	11.92%	54
Permanent supportive housing (for the homeless, transitional housing, etc.)	9.93%	45
Housing for people with disabilities (please specify in comment field below)	4.42%	20
Other (please specify)	26.05%	118
Total Respondents: 453		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE

1	None	3/3/2021 9:18 AM
2	None, we are built out	3/3/2021 8:07 AM
3	Because of environmental conditions, and parts of RSM being in high risk fire areas, it is important to be VERY CAREFUL about choosing where additional housing units are built!!! People must have emergency exits supported by RSM infrastructure! Dove Canyon Plaza does not fit this description, but possibly other areas can. Still, it is unfortunate that the State is forcing growth upon RSM, which operates well at its current size. Our original General Plan was very good!!!	3/3/2021 8:00 AM
4	enough - no more building	3/3/2021 6:44 AM
5	None	3/3/2021 5:23 AM
6	None	3/2/2021 10:45 PM
7	We live in Dove Canyon, is this RSM?	3/2/2021 9:13 PM
8	No additional housing is needed.	3/2/2021 5:12 PM
9	But smaller starter homes.	3/2/2021 4:50 PM
10	I believe this area has been built up to maximum capacity. Please leave what little open land available.. Open land !	3/2/2021 2:34 PM
11	I feel none	3/2/2021 2:09 PM
12	none	3/2/2021 1:42 PM
13	City is presently adequately supplied	3/2/2021 10:50 AM
14	No 3-4 story crammed in dwellings like Dahlia Court	3/2/2021 9:25 AM
15	None	3/2/2021 8:24 AM
16	I believe no more housing is necessary.	3/2/2021 8:16 AM
17	Physical disabilities	3/2/2021 5:10 AM
18	No additional housing is needed.	3/1/2021 5:25 PM
19	We have plenty of housing for our community	3/1/2021 9:58 AM
20	More affordable housing	2/28/2021 9:09 PM
21	None - it’s fine as is	2/28/2021 5:25 PM
22	We have all the appropriate housing options mentioned above.	2/28/2021 9:00 AM
23	I feel this city has enough of homes and apartments and condos for the space.	2/28/2021 8:10 AM
24	We have enough high density housing	2/28/2021 7:55 AM
25	Single family with large lots	2/28/2021 7:17 AM
26	More single story homes with 3+ bedrooms	2/27/2021 9:41 PM
27	None	2/27/2021 7:01 PM
28	Assisted Living Communities, but without everyone being in "one building" like Park Terrace and etc. ALSO, duplex (marginally attached housing that is single story) for those with mobility issues. Ideally located within walking distance of the City Center (from Pavilions/Library to Target/Walgreens)	2/27/2021 5:32 PM
29	RSM does not need any more houses	2/27/2021 5:13 PM
30	No other housing is needed. The city is well planned. No new housing.	2/27/2021 7:46 AM
31	None	2/27/2021 7:31 AM
32	We need more luxury homes	2/27/2021 6:45 AM
33	none	2/26/2021 2:48 AM

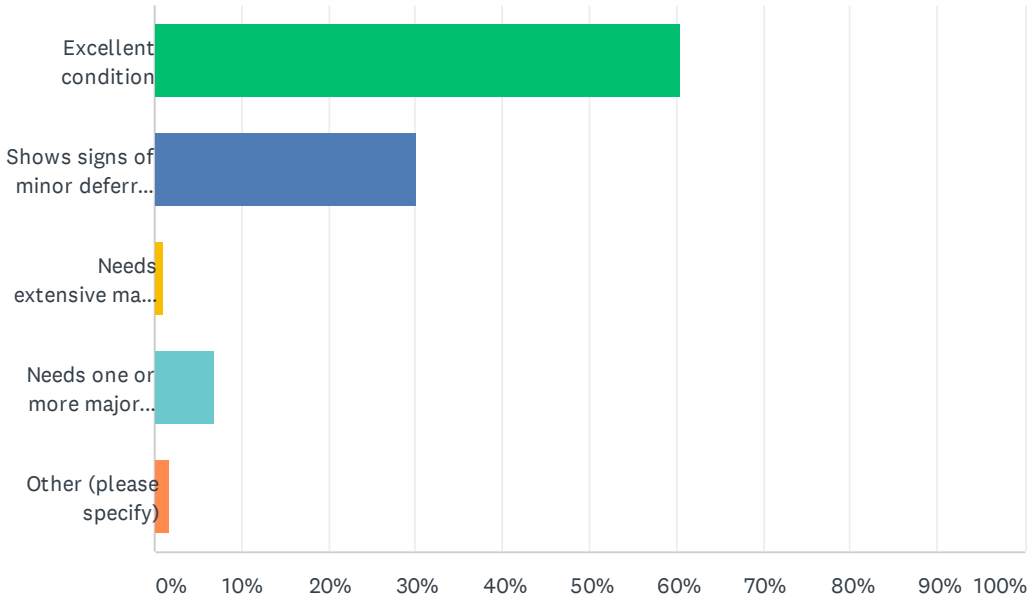
34	None. We are already over built.	2/25/2021 8:31 PM
35	It's pretty crowded in RSM	2/25/2021 5:30 PM
36	NONE	2/25/2021 5:17 PM
37	No additional housing needed!	2/25/2021 3:13 PM
38	Mo more housing	2/25/2021 2:55 PM
39	None	2/25/2021 2:54 PM
40	None. I don't want any more homes built here.	2/25/2021 2:43 PM
41	None. it's over crowded already	2/25/2021 2:30 PM
42	none it’s crowded already	2/25/2021 2:27 PM
43	There is no room for additional housing - we are full.	2/25/2021 2:18 PM
44	None	2/25/2021 2:18 PM
45	The current housing plan was satisfactory	2/25/2021 2:17 PM
46	None	2/25/2021 2:08 PM
47	None	2/23/2021 5:17 PM
48	Not sure	2/23/2021 3:21 PM
49	None	2/23/2021 1:05 PM
50	none, we are built out	2/23/2021 12:25 PM
51	None. Don't build on parks or open space!	2/22/2021 9:18 PM
52	single story - no stairs	2/22/2021 1:51 PM
53	No more housing needed please	2/21/2021 4:38 PM
54	Low-income	2/20/2021 12:25 PM
55	None	2/17/2021 3:24 PM
56	none	2/17/2021 9:11 AM
57	None	2/16/2021 4:32 PM
58	Downstairs bedroom	2/16/2021 12:04 PM
59	Many dwelling owners are grandfathered in with minimal assistance	2/14/2021 12:39 PM
60	None	2/14/2021 7:38 AM
61	None	2/13/2021 4:23 PM
62	More economical maybe 5 homes shared drive way time of homes	2/13/2021 9:13 AM
63	I’d like to see housing for veterans	2/12/2021 9:37 PM
64	Affordable homes for middle class	2/12/2021 6:53 PM
65	We are filled up already! We have as much housing as we can fit in our city	2/12/2021 2:27 PM
66	Lower priced housing	2/12/2021 2:11 PM
67	Duplex/townhomes should be required to have a small back yard for kids/pets/gardening	2/12/2021 11:59 AM
68	None .. I purchased a MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITY, no expansion outside of master plan!!	2/12/2021 10:49 AM
69	We have enough housing, we need open space!	2/12/2021 10:37 AM
70	It seems many of the single-family, detached homes are on the large side. More and newer well-built 1,600-1,800sqft homes with small back yards for kids would have been welcome.	2/12/2021 10:22 AM

71	Affordable (but this is also true of all of Orange County)	2/12/2021 10:19 AM
72	afortable for a single family	2/12/2021 10:06 AM
73	lower income housing	2/12/2021 10:03 AM
74	Downstairs bedroom	2/12/2021 9:58 AM
75	Single Story Housing	2/12/2021 9:55 AM
76	Adult 55+	2/12/2021 9:55 AM
77	Housing with bigger backyards (more than patio furniture)	2/12/2021 9:54 AM
78	Housing with more land. You dont need to bring more people here unless you grow the footprint	2/12/2021 9:52 AM
79	Affordable housing	2/12/2021 9:51 AM
80	None	2/12/2021 9:19 AM
81	A shelter for those who have ties to RSM. Also I live in the unincorporated area next to RSM so consider myself part of RSM.	2/10/2021 4:11 PM
82	I think we are built out... I don’t see areas for expansion without encroaching on wildlife that needs this area to survive	2/10/2021 12:03 PM
83	No more housing needed.	2/9/2021 7:06 AM
84	None, way too crowded now.	2/8/2021 10:29 AM
85	NONE is needed	2/8/2021 8:20 AM
86	None	2/8/2021 8:01 AM
87	None	2/8/2021 6:56 AM
88	We don’t need new housing. The city is maxed out. Beyond what it was envisioned to be. If you must build more, build parking complexes for the over burdened apartment complexes.	2/7/2021 6:50 PM
89	No need for any new housing	2/7/2021 5:03 PM
90	None. Our street are already overcrowded. We are a 0lanned community that is alteady built out and we don't need more traffic.	2/7/2021 3:13 PM
91	None is needed	2/7/2021 2:51 PM
92	None	2/7/2021 2:18 PM
93	No additional needs	2/7/2021 9:52 AM
94	RSM has everything. Well planned out with every type of home accommodation (apartments, townhome, single family)	2/7/2021 6:17 AM
95	We don't need any additional housing in RSM! Part of the appeal was the wide open spaces! We are built out and should not be forced to squeeze in additional housing! Out of 58 counties in CA, only 6 have been targeted for additional housing! How fair is that? People should strongly consider how dangerous our situation already is in regards to wildfire, and that Coto de Caza has been called the next "Paradise!" RSM has only two ways out: Antonio and Santa Margarita. If either are blocked, it would be a nightmare to try to evacuate all the residents safely! How can people, in good conscience, force additional housing on us, knowing fully well that many homeowners' insurance policies have been canceled!	2/5/2021 4:28 PM
96	No additional housing is needed	2/5/2021 7:42 AM
97	Opportunity for First Time home buyers.	2/4/2021 9:55 PM
98	more accessible with navigating residence with a disability or more affordable housing	2/4/2021 8:10 PM
99	Affordable housing	2/4/2021 6:40 PM
100	None	2/4/2021 1:59 PM
101	None, keep the city's charm by resisting over development	2/4/2021 1:33 PM

102	None	2/4/2021 1:26 PM
103	Joint work-live projects	2/4/2021 11:19 AM
104	None	2/4/2021 10:38 AM
105	n/a	2/4/2021 9:18 AM
106	None. Like it the way it is.	2/4/2021 6:46 AM
107	Affordable multi-family housing	2/3/2021 3:54 PM
108	Needs to be close to bus stops. Some housing in Rancho require a two mile walk to nearest bus stop. Harder on people with limited mobility.	2/3/2021 9:46 AM
109	No more housing is needed. We are over crowded.	2/2/2021 9:51 AM
110	Affordable apartment living	2/1/2021 10:58 PM
111	Any type of low income housing	2/1/2021 5:44 PM
112	Affordable housing at a range of income levels; PSH for people with disabilities	2/1/2021 5:42 PM
113	None. More houses would be bad for the city and community.	2/1/2021 2:41 PM
114	None	2/1/2021 1:57 PM
115	None	1/30/2021 9:16 AM
116	No new housing is needed	1/30/2021 7:58 AM
117	None of the above. We are constantly live in fear of emergency evacuation in case of wild fire.	1/29/2021 8:28 PM
118	affordable housing for the many who work in our cummunity at lower paying jobs	1/29/2021 3:20 PM

Q11 How would you rate the physical condition of the residence you live in?

Answered: 496 Skipped: 37

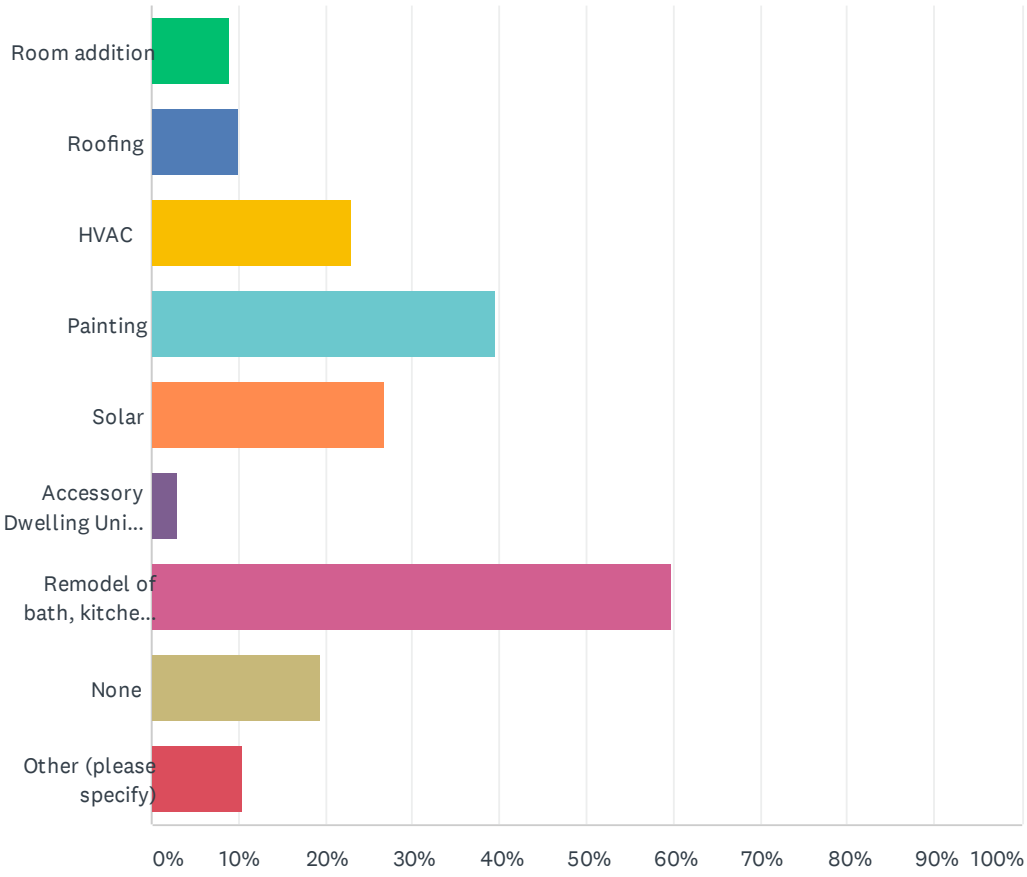


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent condition	60.48%	300
Shows signs of minor deferred maintenance (e.g., peeling paint, chipped stucco, etc.)	30.04%	149
Needs extensive major repairs or renovation (teardown/rebuild)	1.01%	5
Needs one or more major systems upgrades (e.g., new roof, windows, electrical, plumbing, HVAC system, etc.)	6.85%	34
Other (please specify)	1.61%	8
TOTAL		496

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Landscape issue	3/2/2021 3:36 PM
2	Needs minor upgrades	3/2/2021 8:46 AM
3	Upgrade interior decor	2/25/2021 2:19 PM
4	check the roots of the trees by the streets close to homes	2/12/2021 10:40 AM
5	Home built in 61 so can be updated.	2/12/2021 10:19 AM
6	affordable	2/12/2021 10:03 AM
7	Its ok for a cheap track house	2/12/2021 9:52 AM
8	I do not live in RSM.	2/4/2021 6:40 PM

Q12 Which of the following housing upgrades or expansions have you considered making on your home?

Answered: 486 Skipped: 47



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Room addition	9.05%	44
Roofing	10.08%	49
HVAC	23.05%	112
Painting	39.51%	192
Solar	26.75%	130
Accessory Dwelling Unit, Granny Flat, Guest House	2.88%	14
Remodel of bath, kitchen or other facility	59.88%	291
None	19.55%	95
Other (please specify)	10.49%	51
Total Respondents: 486		

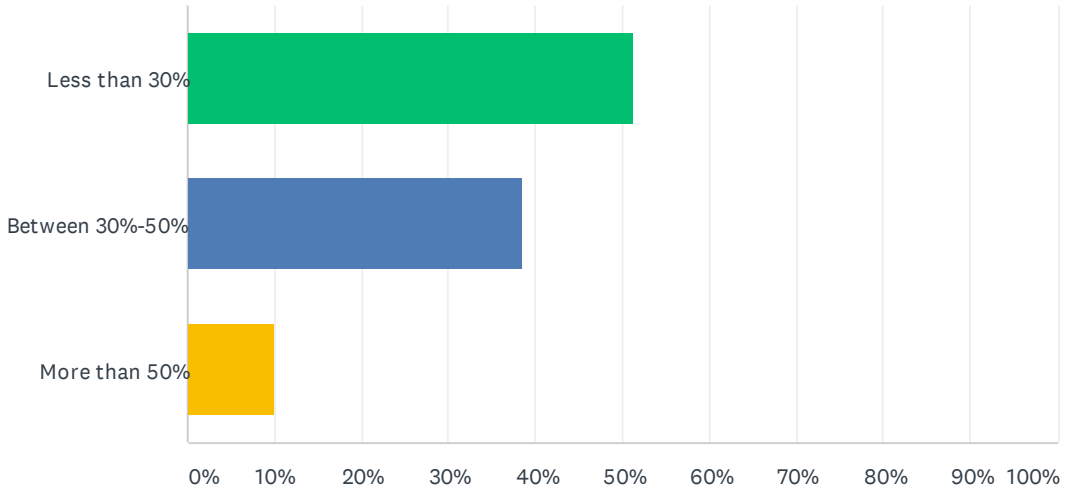
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE

1	Yard reno	3/3/2021 9:18 AM
2	improve backyard privacy, build an outdoor seating area.	3/2/2021 9:17 PM
3	Several of these have already been completed.	3/2/2021 9:13 PM
4	backyard remodel	3/1/2021 7:45 PM
5	Flooring, windows and window treatments	3/1/2021 6:43 PM
6	Outdoor kitchen/backyard remodel	3/1/2021 4:41 PM
7	We're renting	3/1/2021 4:25 PM
8	Covered outdoor living area	2/28/2021 9:09 PM
9	Windows	2/28/2021 4:48 PM
10	I rent an apartment.	2/28/2021 1:16 PM
11	Patio cover	2/27/2021 10:54 PM
12	already did room addition, solar, paint, remodel, etc... we've been in our home for 20 years.	2/27/2021 5:32 PM
13	all of the above were done in the last several years	2/26/2021 10:29 AM
14	pool addition	2/25/2021 2:43 PM
15	New Landscaping	2/25/2021 2:30 PM
16	Have done a remodel of baths, kitchen and exterior in last 10 years	2/25/2021 2:17 PM
17	Elevator / handicap access	2/25/2021 2:11 PM
18	Done several already on the list	2/23/2021 5:17 PM
19	new windows	2/23/2021 3:48 PM
20	Already upgraded Kitchen, HVAC, Paint, Remodeled bathroom	2/16/2021 12:04 PM
21	We rent the condo	2/16/2021 8:16 AM
22	I rent	2/14/2021 12:39 PM
23	Window replacement	2/13/2021 3:36 PM
24	Window replacement	2/12/2021 8:13 PM
25	I rent	2/12/2021 7:38 PM
26	We've already done everything needed	2/12/2021 2:15 PM
27	Landscaping, backyard	2/12/2021 11:24 AM
28	Re-piping of plumbing supply lines. New windows.	2/12/2021 10:22 AM
29	Landscaping	2/12/2021 10:08 AM
30	Fencing	2/12/2021 10:05 AM
31	NA	2/12/2021 10:03 AM
32	Landscape	2/12/2021 9:55 AM
33	re-pipe, electrical, windows...	2/12/2021 9:55 AM
34	Solar seems that is not allow by HOA	2/12/2021 9:55 AM
35	Fencing	2/12/2021 9:54 AM
36	We rent, so it’s not my decision	2/12/2021 9:11 AM
37	Update flooring, countertops	2/10/2021 9:10 PM
38	Windows	2/8/2021 12:37 AM

39	We have already painted and added solar.	2/7/2021 3:13 PM
40	Remodel back yard	2/6/2021 5:25 PM
41	New garage doors	2/5/2021 4:28 PM
42	I do not live in RSM.	2/4/2021 6:40 PM
43	Flooring	2/4/2021 3:01 PM
44	swimming pool	2/4/2021 11:19 AM
45	None because I’m renting	2/4/2021 10:29 AM
46	I have remodeled over the years and enjoy a comfortable living. I am not in favor of massive apartment complexes that will adversely impact quality of life and traffic conjestion.	2/3/2021 1:19 PM
47	Double panes Window	2/1/2021 6:54 PM
48	Pool	2/1/2021 3:13 PM
49	landscaping improvements	2/1/2021 1:50 PM
50	Outdoor living	2/1/2021 1:48 PM
51	We have made improvements over the last 33 years; (loft, pool, dual paned windows, etc).	1/30/2021 9:16 AM

Q13 Based on your monthly income before taxes, how much of your monthly income do you spend on housing?

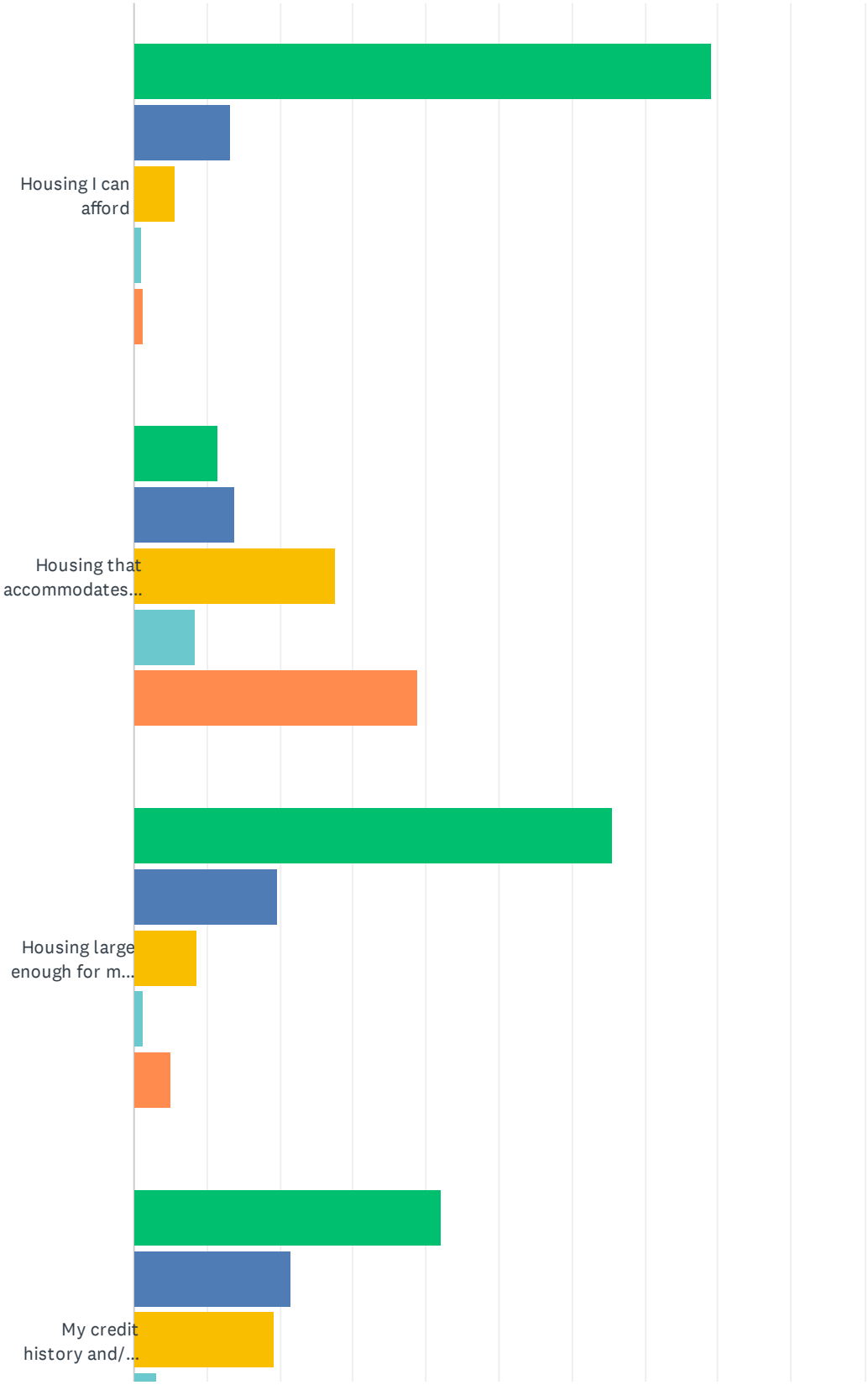
Answered: 444 Skipped: 89

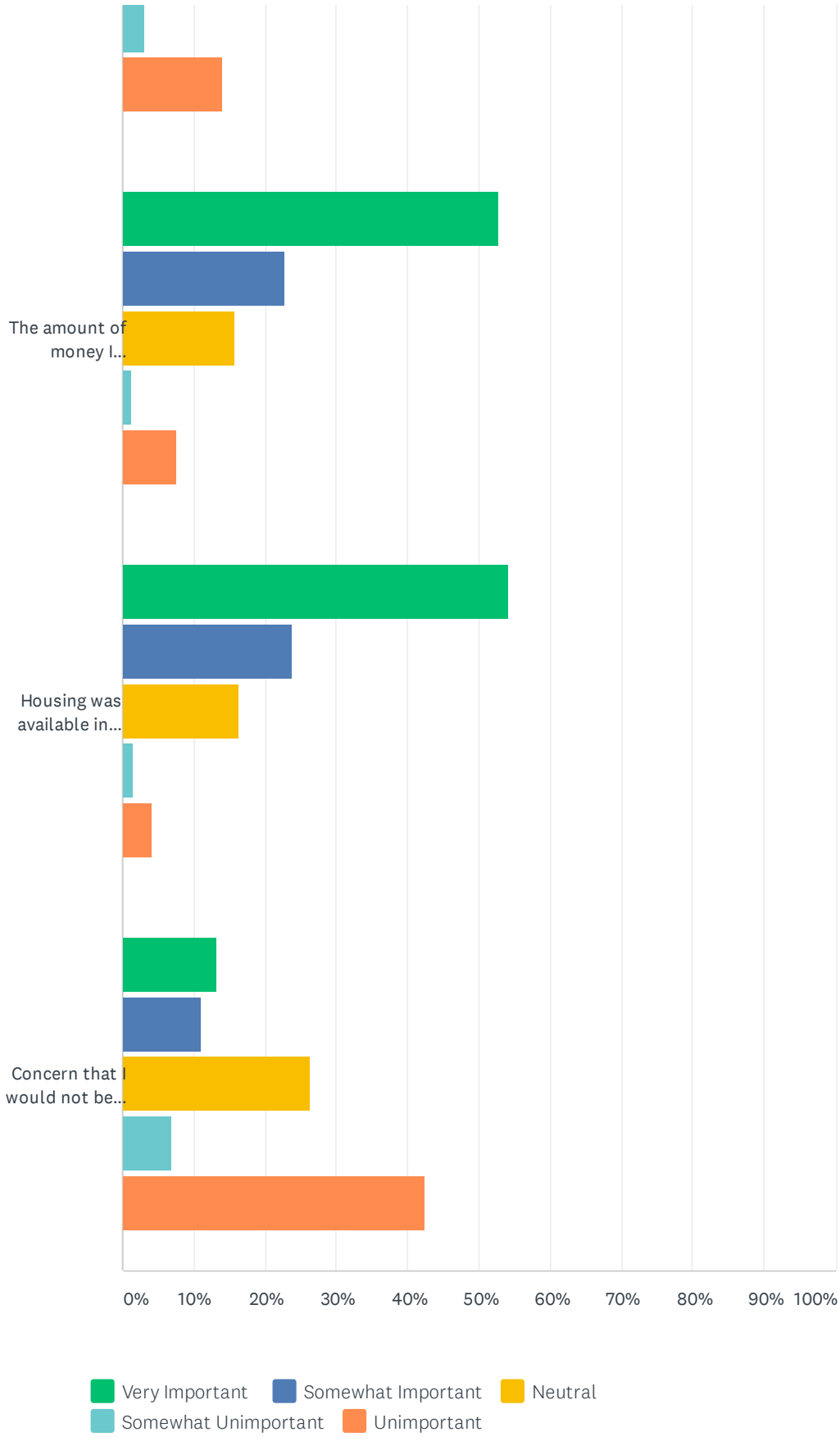


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 30%	51.35%	228
Between 30%-50%	38.51%	171
More than 50%	10.14%	45
TOTAL		444

Q14 How important are the following factors in your housing choice? (If a statement does not pertain to you, please leave blank.) (1-5 scale)

Answered: 437 Skipped: 96



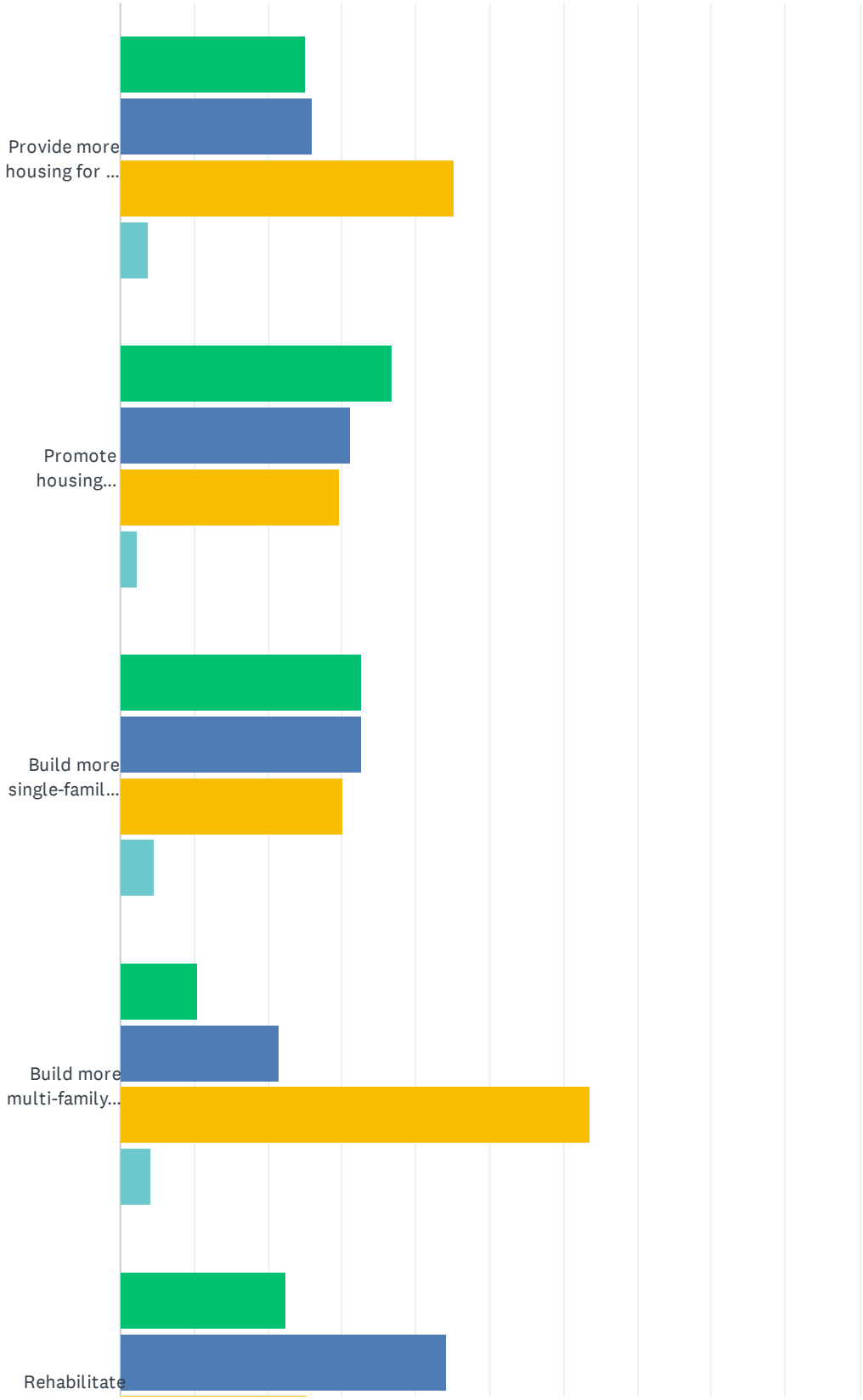

The amount of money I...
Housing was available in...
Concern that I would not be...
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Very Important
Somewhat Important
Neutral
Somewhat Unimportant
Unimportant

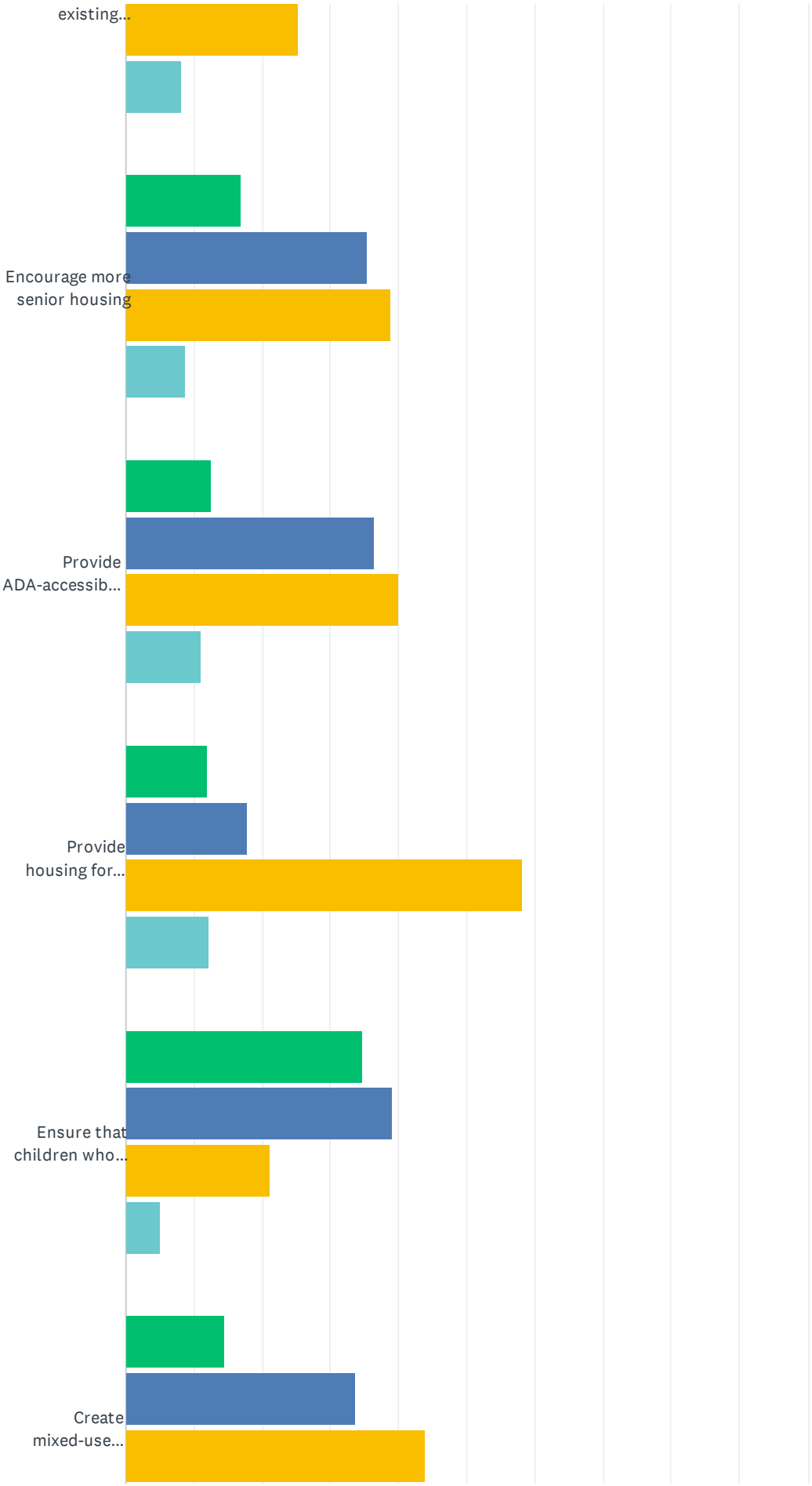
	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	SOMEWHAT UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Housing I can afford	79.02% 324	13.17% 54	5.61% 23	0.98% 4	1.22% 5	410	1.32
Housing that accommodates disability of household member	11.57% 42	13.77% 50	27.55% 100	8.26% 30	38.84% 141	363	3.49
Housing large enough for my household	65.56% 276	19.71% 83	8.55% 36	1.19% 5	4.99% 21	421	1.60
My credit history and/or credit score	42.01% 163	21.65% 84	19.33% 75	3.09% 12	13.92% 54	388	2.25
The amount of money I have/had for deposit	52.74% 212	22.89% 92	15.67% 63	1.24% 5	7.46% 30	402	1.88
Housing was available in the neighborhood I chose at the time I needed it	54.26% 223	23.84% 98	16.30% 67	1.46% 6	4.14% 17	411	1.77
Concern that I would not be welcome in that neighborhood	13.17% 49	11.02% 41	26.34% 98	6.99% 26	42.47% 158	372	3.55

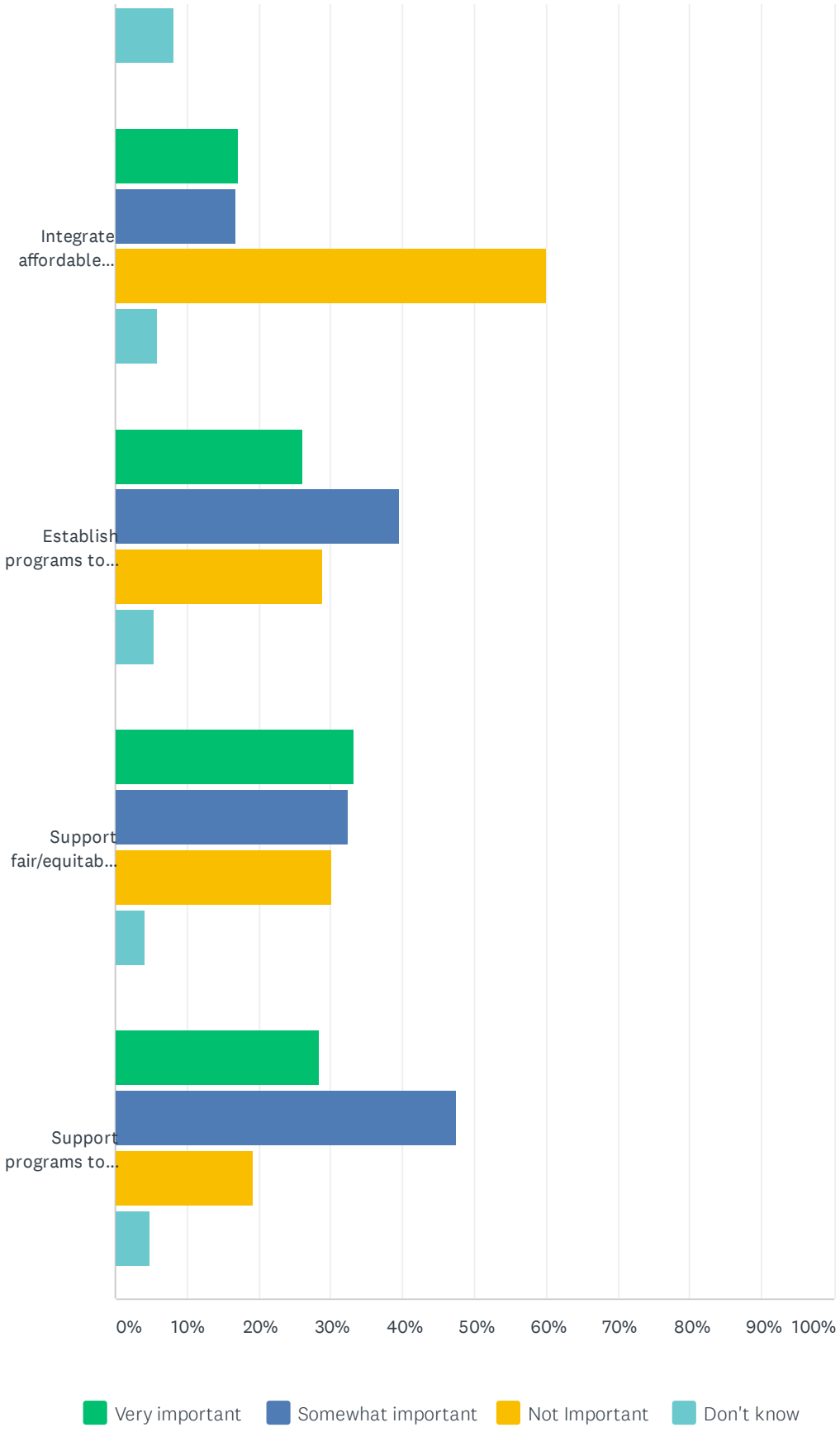
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	What kind of question is this?	3/2/2021 8:50 PM
2	Home size, floor plan, view, location, condition, price, interest rates.	3/1/2021 5:28 PM
3	As I mentioned previously, a ones-story home will be our target when we downsize. Single family home or duplex (at worst). Not a lot of those within walking distance of the "City Center" shopping.	2/27/2021 5:37 PM
4	safety, appreciation	2/25/2021 9:07 PM
5	peaceful location	2/23/2021 4:23 PM
6	lack of crime in my neighborhood	2/22/2021 9:29 PM
7	residence are too small	2/16/2021 8:24 AM
8	Demographics should be more balanced	2/12/2021 2:16 PM
9	Size of backyard	2/12/2021 9:59 AM
10	Can we include more housing options for families and individuals who work in RSM but can't afford to live in RSM.	2/10/2021 4:15 PM
11	Really poorly drafted question	2/8/2021 10:31 AM
12	I already own a home and it does not apply to me.	2/4/2021 10:03 PM
13	quality of life and safety	2/4/2021 12:35 PM
14	excellent public safety	2/3/2021 7:32 PM
15	Cost of homes, fire risk or seismic zoning, insurance costs	1/29/2021 4:25 PM

Q15 How important are the following housing priorities to you and your household?

Answered: 445 Skipped: 88



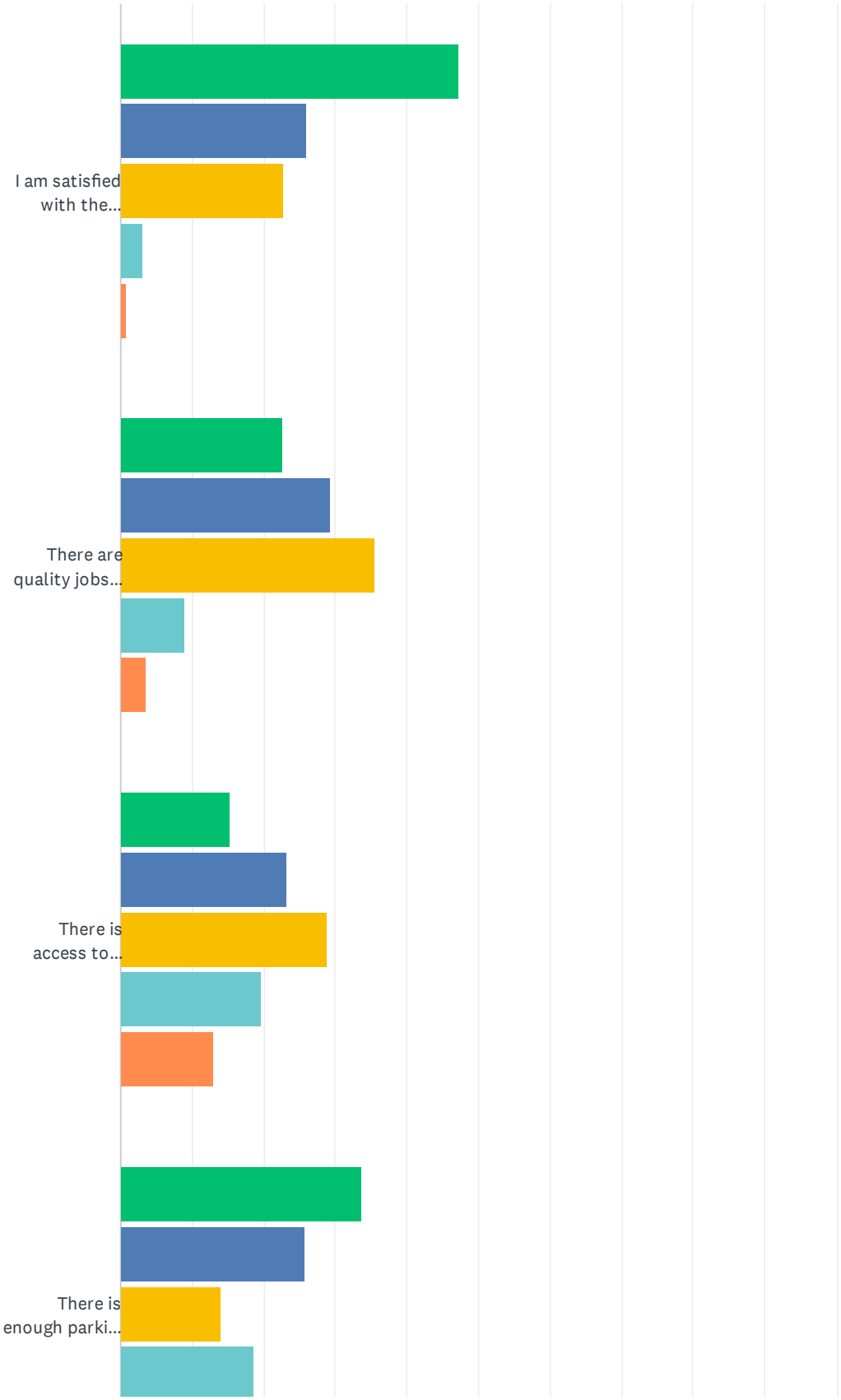

existing...
Encourage more senior housing
Provide ADA-accessib...
Provide housing for...
Ensure that children who...
Create mixed-use...

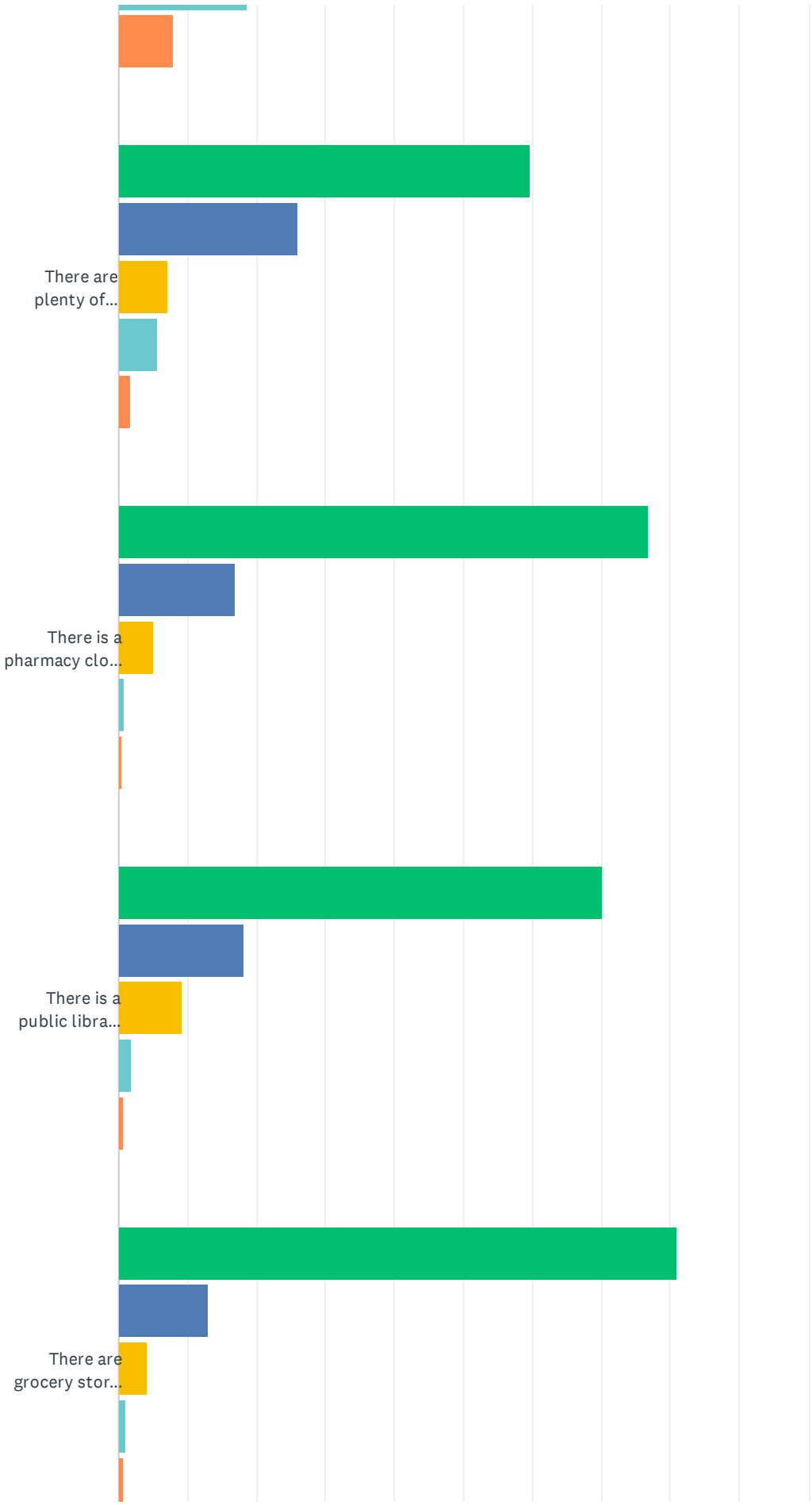

Integrate affordable...
Establish programs to...
Support fair/equitab...
Support programs to...
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Very important
Somewhat important
Not Important
Don't know

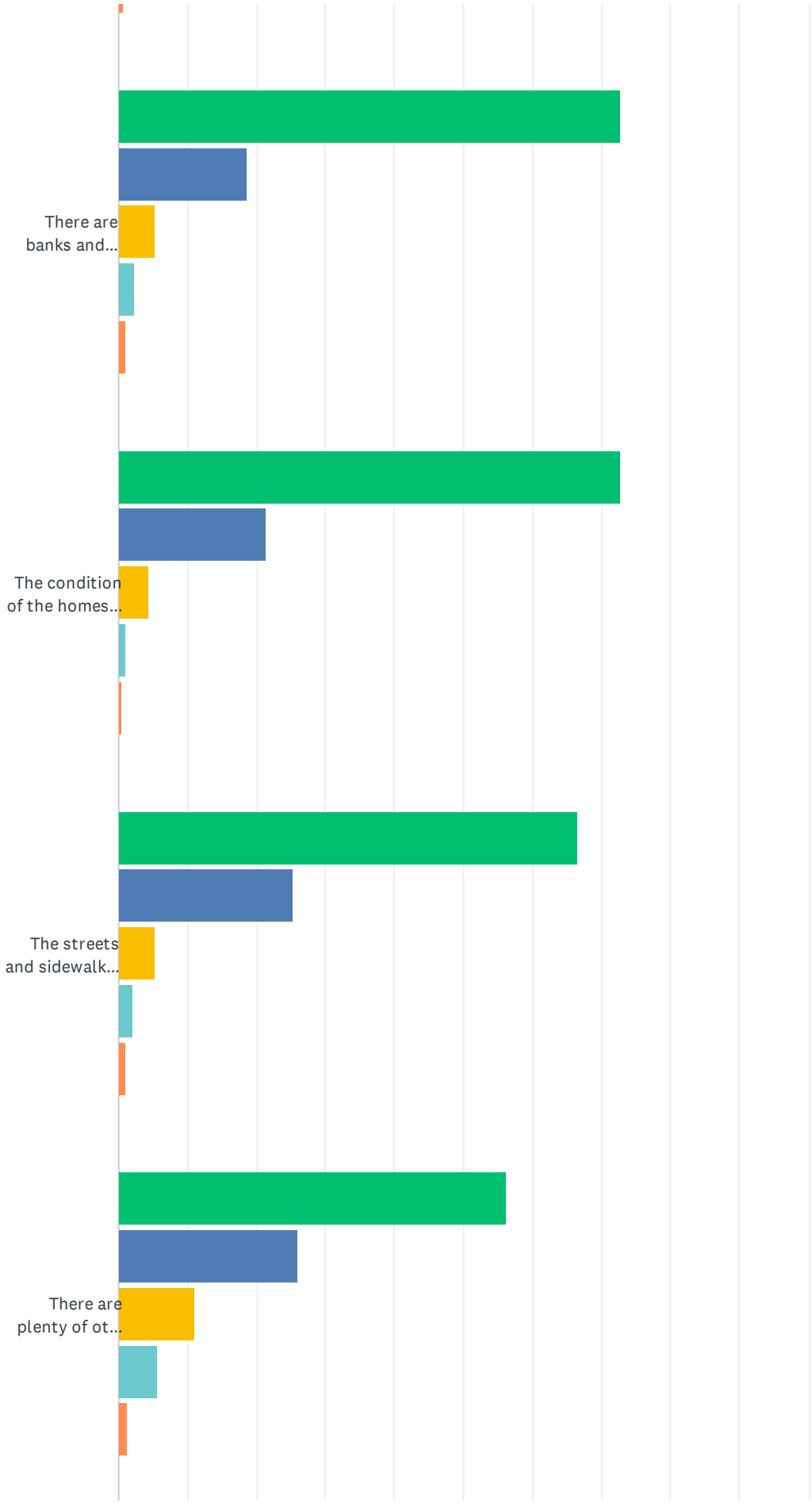
	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Provide more housing for all income levels	25.06% 109	25.98% 113	45.29% 197	3.68% 16	435	2.28
Promote housing affordable to working families	36.87% 160	31.11% 135	29.72% 129	2.30% 10	434	1.97
Build more single-family housing	32.64% 142	32.64% 142	30.11% 131	4.60% 20	435	2.07
Build more multi-family housing (apartments, condos, etc.)	10.54% 45	21.55% 92	63.70% 272	4.22% 18	427	2.62
Rehabilitate existing housing	22.30% 95	44.13% 188	25.35% 108	8.22% 35	426	2.19
Encourage more senior housing	16.90% 73	35.42% 153	38.89% 168	8.80% 38	432	2.40
Provide ADA-accessible housing	12.59% 53	36.34% 153	39.90% 168	11.16% 47	421	2.50
Provide housing for homeless	11.88% 50	17.81% 75	58.19% 245	12.11% 51	421	2.71
Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults	34.63% 151	39.22% 171	21.10% 92	5.05% 22	436	1.97
Create mixed-use (commercial/office and residential) projects to bring different land uses closer together	14.39% 62	33.64% 145	43.85% 189	8.12% 35	431	2.46
Integrate affordable housing throughout the community to create mixed-income neighborhoods	17.25% 74	16.78% 72	60.14% 258	5.83% 25	429	2.55
Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs	26.10% 113	39.49% 171	28.87% 125	5.54% 24	433	2.14
Support fair/equitable housing opportunities	33.33% 142	32.39% 138	30.05% 128	4.23% 18	426	2.05
Support programs to help maintain and secure neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures	28.50% 122	47.43% 203	19.16% 82	4.91% 21	428	2.00

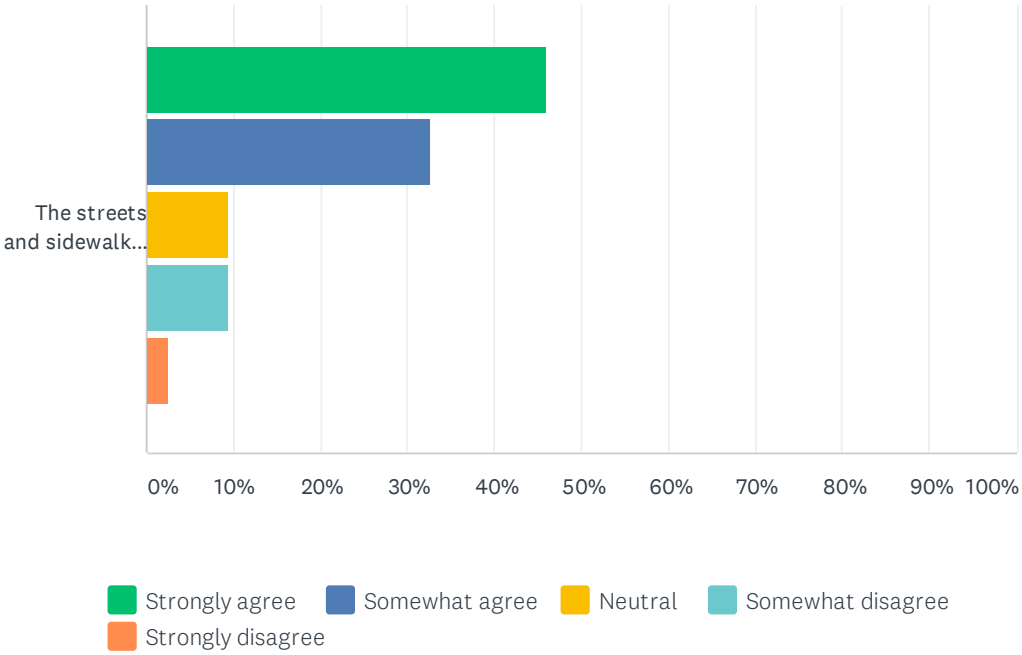
Q16 Please respond to each statement: (1-5 scale)

Answered: 448 Skipped: 85




There are plenty of...
There is a pharmacy clo...
There is a public libra...
There are grocery stor...


There are banks and...
The condition of the homes...
The streets and sidewalk...
There are plenty of ot...

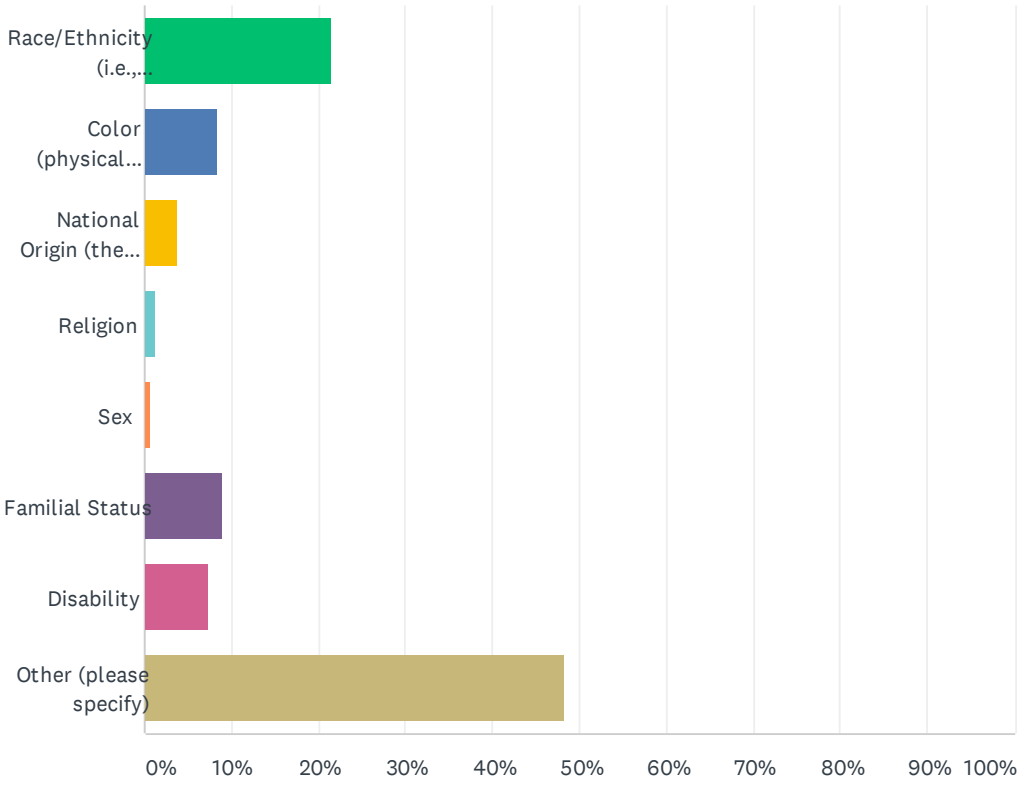

The streets and sidewalk...
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%

Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
Neutral
Somewhat disagree
Strongly disagree

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEUTRAL	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
I am satisfied with the schools in my area	47.30% 210	25.90% 115	22.75% 101	3.15% 14	0.90% 4	444	1.84
There are quality jobs in my neighborhood	22.62% 100	29.19% 129	35.52% 157	9.05% 40	3.62% 16	442	2.42
There is access to public transit close to my neighborhood	15.35% 68	23.25% 103	28.89% 128	19.64% 87	12.87% 57	443	2.91
There is enough parking in my area of town	33.78% 150	25.68% 114	13.96% 62	18.69% 83	7.88% 35	444	2.41
There are plenty of parks, playgrounds, or green space near me	59.64% 266	26.01% 116	7.17% 32	5.61% 25	1.57% 7	446	1.63
There is a pharmacy close to my house	76.85% 342	16.85% 75	4.94% 22	0.90% 4	0.45% 2	445	1.31
There is a public library close to my house	70.05% 311	18.24% 81	9.23% 41	1.80% 8	0.68% 3	444	1.45
There are grocery stores close to my neighborhood	80.94% 361	13.00% 58	4.26% 19	1.12% 5	0.67% 3	446	1.28
There are banks and credit unions near where I live	72.87% 325	18.61% 83	5.16% 23	2.24% 10	1.12% 5	446	1.40
The condition of the homes in my neighborhood are acceptable	72.71% 325	21.25% 95	4.47% 20	1.12% 5	0.45% 2	447	1.35
The streets and sidewalks near my home are well kept	66.44% 295	25.23% 112	5.18% 23	2.03% 9	1.13% 5	444	1.46
There are plenty of other public spaces near my home	56.18% 250	25.84% 115	11.01% 49	5.62% 25	1.35% 6	445	1.70
The streets and sidewalks in my neighborhood have adequate lighting	46.09% 206	32.66% 146	9.40% 42	9.40% 42	2.46% 11	447	1.89

Q17 The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. Of those, which do you think is the biggest problem in housing discrimination in RSM?

Answered: 382 Skipped: 151



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Race/Ethnicity (i.e., Caucasian, Asian, Latino, etc.)	21.47%	82
Color (physical appearance)	8.38%	32
National Origin (the country where a person was born)	3.66%	14
Religion	1.31%	5
Sex	0.52%	2
Familial Status	8.90%	34
Disability	7.33%	28
Other (please specify)	48.43%	185
TOTAL		382

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	None	3/3/2021 9:22 AM

2	none. If you can afford to live here, you can live here. We have several people in our community with disabilities, and the community embraces them, families, care for them but I don't know if they receive other services from the government. I don't feel this is necessarily a City government responsibility. In the past it has been handles by State and County and Federal governments to offer assistive programs.	3/3/2021 8:15 AM
3	There is no problem	3/2/2021 10:52 PM
4	I don't know	3/2/2021 9:23 PM
5	none where we live	3/2/2021 9:23 PM
6	None.	3/2/2021 8:50 PM
7	I don’t perceive we have any problems with discrimination.	3/2/2021 5:20 PM
8	I have no knowledge of this.	3/2/2021 4:56 PM
9	Not aware that there was discrimination in RSM housing.	3/2/2021 2:43 PM
10	none	3/2/2021 2:29 PM
11	Not sure	3/2/2021 2:14 PM
12	none of these	3/2/2021 1:45 PM
13	Not aware of any	3/2/2021 12:27 PM
14	I don't see any of these as a problem in RSM	3/2/2021 10:58 AM
15	No issues I’ve noticed	3/2/2021 9:32 AM
16	None	3/2/2021 8:49 AM
17	None of the above	3/2/2021 8:38 AM
18	Loaded question. I don't believe dicrimination is a problem	3/2/2021 8:31 AM
19	Do not know of a problem	3/2/2021 8:23 AM
20	Don’t see discrimination	3/2/2021 8:22 AM
21	There is no problem	3/2/2021 7:39 AM
22	None	3/2/2021 5:11 AM
23	There is no problem.	3/1/2021 11:14 PM
24	Not aware	3/1/2021 7:18 PM
25	none, all those that qualify for financing can buy a house anywhere the so choose.	3/1/2021 5:38 PM
26	I do not perceive any FHA compliance challenges in RSM	3/1/2021 5:28 PM
27	none	3/1/2021 4:32 PM
28	I’m don’t think discrimination is a problem, it’s just an expensive and nice place to live. People work hard for that.	3/1/2021 1:13 PM
29	cost of living i assume is an issue	3/1/2021 10:02 AM
30	$$	2/28/2021 5:28 PM
31	It is my understanding there are many apartment/condo units under section 8 which has changed the dynamics of our elementary school.. the rating has substantially lowered in school ratings in the last several years as a result	2/28/2021 12:16 PM
32	I have not experienced an issue	2/28/2021 10:30 AM
33	More concerned with multiple families living in single family units.	2/28/2021 9:07 AM
34	Senior affordability	2/28/2021 8:58 AM
35	I do not see discrimination in RSM. We have all backgrounds and section 8 apts here.	2/28/2021 8:16 AM

36	I don’t know	2/28/2021 7:39 AM
37	None	2/28/2021 7:22 AM
38	None	2/28/2021 5:31 AM
39	I have not witnessed any of the above	2/28/2021 12:08 AM
40	Incone	2/27/2021 10:58 PM
41	None	2/27/2021 9:35 PM
42	None	2/27/2021 8:14 PM
43	None	2/27/2021 6:20 PM
44	I am not aware of any housing discrimination. Then again, I have not purchased or rented in the past 20 years since we bought our current home.	2/27/2021 5:37 PM
45	have not seen any issues	2/27/2021 5:18 PM
46	none	2/27/2021 7:40 AM
47	None, community open to all.	2/27/2021 7:35 AM
48	None	2/26/2021 11:05 PM
49	NA - none	2/26/2021 10:15 PM
50	I believe that the city discriminates against catholics and the way that the catholic schools are treated vs public schools, especially when it comes to transportation and facilities. The city forced one parochial school to eliminate portable facilities on their property yet allowed public schools to have them. They would not cooperate with traffic control for the parochial school yet the public school had even larger issues and never once did anything about it.	2/26/2021 2:21 PM
51	No Opinion	2/26/2021 1:38 PM
52	No discrimination	2/26/2021 12:17 PM
53	have not noticed any issue	2/26/2021 10:34 AM
54	None are a problem	2/25/2021 9:59 PM
55	I don't believe there are any!	2/25/2021 9:47 PM
56	I don't see discrimination	2/25/2021 9:07 PM
57	None	2/25/2021 8:35 PM
58	Political affiliation	2/25/2021 5:31 PM
59	No discrimination	2/25/2021 5:20 PM
60	Have not observed any apparent discriminatory processes related to housing	2/25/2021 4:59 PM
61	I don’t know	2/25/2021 4:54 PM
62	None	2/25/2021 4:12 PM
63	None	2/25/2021 3:57 PM
64	none of the above	2/25/2021 3:52 PM
65	There are no problems here, all races welcome and everyone gets along	2/25/2021 3:40 PM
66	None	2/25/2021 3:37 PM
67	Unaware of any discrimination	2/25/2021 3:36 PM
68	None	2/25/2021 3:18 PM
69	I see no evidence of housing discrimination in RSM.	2/25/2021 3:18 PM
70	None of these issues exist	2/25/2021 3:05 PM

71	I am unaware of any discrimination	2/25/2021 2:47 PM
72	No knowledge of any of these problems	2/25/2021 2:46 PM
73	This question is biased in that it presumes there is a "problem"	2/25/2021 2:40 PM
74	biggest issue is affordability	2/25/2021 2:38 PM
75	No discrimination	2/25/2021 2:38 PM
76	None	2/25/2021 2:37 PM
77	None	2/25/2021 2:36 PM
78	No discrimination exists	2/25/2021 2:31 PM
79	no problems here	2/25/2021 2:30 PM
80	No idea it was a problem	2/25/2021 2:27 PM
81	I do not have experience of any discrimination first hand.	2/25/2021 2:26 PM
82	I dont think any of these are an issue	2/25/2021 2:24 PM
83	Not sure	2/25/2021 2:24 PM
84	I see no discrimination in RSM	2/25/2021 2:22 PM
85	Not aware of any	2/25/2021 2:21 PM
86	None of those. . money	2/25/2021 2:21 PM
87	Do not know	2/25/2021 2:20 PM
88	No issues	2/25/2021 2:18 PM
89	I don't feel that there is discrimination	2/25/2021 2:16 PM
90	I don’t think there is one	2/25/2021 2:14 PM
91	None	2/25/2021 2:12 PM
92	None stop with the bs	2/23/2021 5:19 PM
93	leaving homeless options to other cities and not doing our part	2/23/2021 4:23 PM
94	No comment	2/23/2021 3:26 PM
95	I don’t know	2/23/2021 3:16 PM
96	none	2/23/2021 12:32 PM
97	RSM is open to all those who work hard enough to afford it.	2/22/2021 9:29 PM
98	unknown	2/22/2021 1:55 PM
99	None	2/21/2021 4:43 PM
100	None	2/17/2021 9:48 AM
101	Unaware of any Discrimination	2/17/2021 9:30 AM
102	Don’t know if there is a problem	2/16/2021 4:36 PM
103	None	2/16/2021 1:29 PM
104	Enough income/stable job	2/16/2021 11:54 AM
105	Income	2/16/2021 11:22 AM
106	none	2/16/2021 10:02 AM
107	i don't personally know any.	2/16/2021 6:14 AM
108	unknown	2/14/2021 11:05 AM

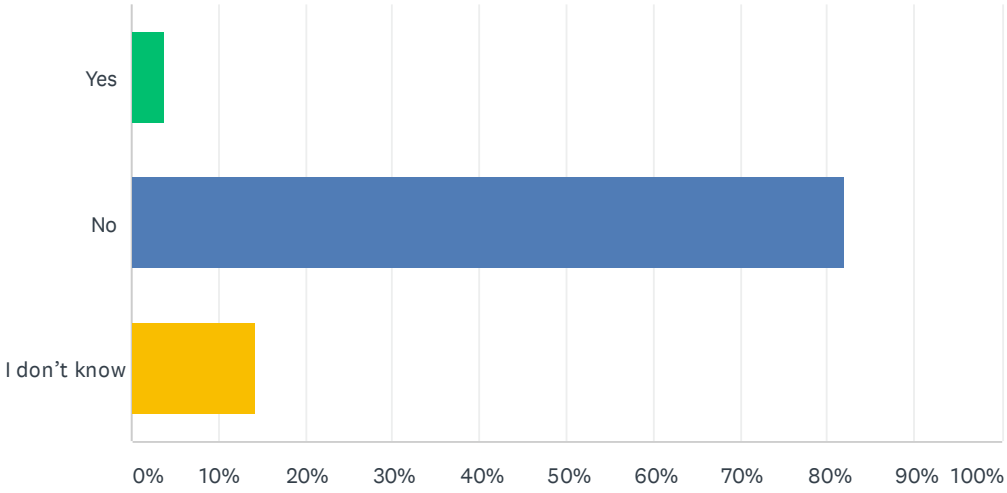
109	Not aware that there is any discrimination	2/13/2021 3:44 PM
110	I have never had any kind of discrimination.	2/13/2021 6:36 AM
111	None of the above. It is more about wealth status the color green, as in money.	2/12/2021 9:49 PM
112	I don’t know.	2/12/2021 2:45 PM
113	Disagree, we don’t have a discrimination problem. We have a high degree of diversity that proves this.	2/12/2021 2:36 PM
114	No idea	2/12/2021 2:20 PM
115	N/A	2/12/2021 1:56 PM
116	None	2/12/2021 12:47 PM
117	Not sure	2/12/2021 10:55 AM
118	I'm unaware of any issues of unfair housing. Socioeconomic factors should determine home sales and rentals.	2/12/2021 10:54 AM
119	none	2/12/2021 10:47 AM
120	I don't see any discriminatory problems with housing here.	2/12/2021 10:33 AM
121	I don't have any first-hand experience in being rejected for a home on one of these bases, and haven't prevented a sale to anyone on any of these bases. I don't know anyone that has.	2/12/2021 10:25 AM
122	I don't know	2/12/2021 10:07 AM
123	?	2/12/2021 10:07 AM
124	I'm not aware of any discrimination	2/12/2021 10:05 AM
125	Don't see discrimination	2/12/2021 9:59 AM
126	none	2/12/2021 9:58 AM
127	do not know of anyone discrimination to know	2/12/2021 9:56 AM
128	Why does everyone automatically attach race to everything. Stop these stupid questions.	2/12/2021 9:55 AM
129	None	2/12/2021 9:25 AM
130	Don't know	2/10/2021 9:30 PM
131	I am not aware of any discrimination	2/10/2021 12:10 PM
132	Not making enough money to live here--pay tolls, etc. We are remote.	2/9/2021 2:53 PM
133	NA	2/9/2021 1:19 PM
134	None	2/9/2021 9:34 AM
135	None	2/9/2021 7:10 AM
136	Have seen no issues with racism	2/8/2021 3:56 PM
137	None	2/8/2021 10:43 AM
138	None	2/8/2021 10:31 AM
139	nothing	2/8/2021 8:24 AM
140	None	2/8/2021 7:00 AM
141	none	2/7/2021 7:32 PM
142	None- we have a wonderfully diverse neighborhood	2/7/2021 6:54 PM
143	None	2/7/2021 5:08 PM
144	None	2/7/2021 3:24 PM
145	None	2/7/2021 2:55 PM

146	None	2/7/2021 2:01 PM
147	No problems	2/7/2021 9:56 AM
148	None	2/7/2021 8:08 AM
149	In not aware that this is an issue	2/7/2021 6:26 AM
150	I am not looking for housing but feel there is no discrimination.	2/6/2021 5:31 PM
151	I don't think RSM has a problem with housing discrimination	2/5/2021 4:28 PM
152	none	2/5/2021 10:33 AM
153	Rsm aligns with demographics of OC	2/5/2021 7:47 AM
154	none	2/4/2021 10:03 PM
155	more a combo of race, color, and sex	2/4/2021 8:15 PM
156	I do not live in RSM.	2/4/2021 6:42 PM
157	None	2/4/2021 2:04 PM
158	I don't see any discrimination beyond affordability which the city can not address without increasing the population of rsm and destroying the life style we moved here for. We are original owners.	2/4/2021 1:42 PM
159	Income	2/4/2021 10:34 AM
160	n/a	2/4/2021 9:25 AM
161	I don't think there is discrimination here.	2/4/2021 6:51 AM
162	I don’t think there is a problem in this area	2/4/2021 5:43 AM
163	NONE of the above	2/3/2021 8:56 PM
164	None of the above. My neighborhood is very diverse.	2/3/2021 7:32 PM
165	None	2/3/2021 7:23 PM
166	I don't believe there is any housing discrimination in RSM.	2/3/2021 1:23 PM
167	Not sure there is much discrimination- not able to answer.	2/3/2021 9:54 AM
168	None of these. It is a financial issue. Home prices are a deterrent	2/3/2021 9:38 AM
169	bot sure there is a problem	2/2/2021 9:44 PM
170	I don’t think there is a problem.	2/2/2021 9:13 AM
171	Low income housing for seniors	2/2/2021 8:02 AM
172	I don’t know	2/1/2021 7:00 PM
173	I believe RSM follows the laws and does not discriminate.	2/1/2021 2:47 PM
174	No problem.	2/1/2021 2:13 PM
175	None	2/1/2021 1:53 PM
176	None	2/1/2021 1:52 PM
177	Not sure that any of these apply in RSM. It seems like there is a good mix of housing options and a good mix of residents	2/1/2021 1:44 PM
178	Political Affiliation	2/1/2021 1:23 PM
179	Not a problem	2/1/2021 1:21 PM
180	I don't think this is a problem in rsm	2/1/2021 1:17 PM
181	none	2/1/2021 12:13 PM

182	None	1/30/2021 9:30 AM
183	None apparent	1/30/2021 8:05 AM
184	Cost of homes, obtaining insurance coverage, transportation	1/29/2021 4:25 PM
185	I have no idea	1/29/2021 3:23 PM

Q18 Have you ever experienced or witnessed housing discrimination in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? (Reminder: Housing discrimination occurs when factors like a person's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability are used in making decisions related to in the sale, rental, or financing of housing).

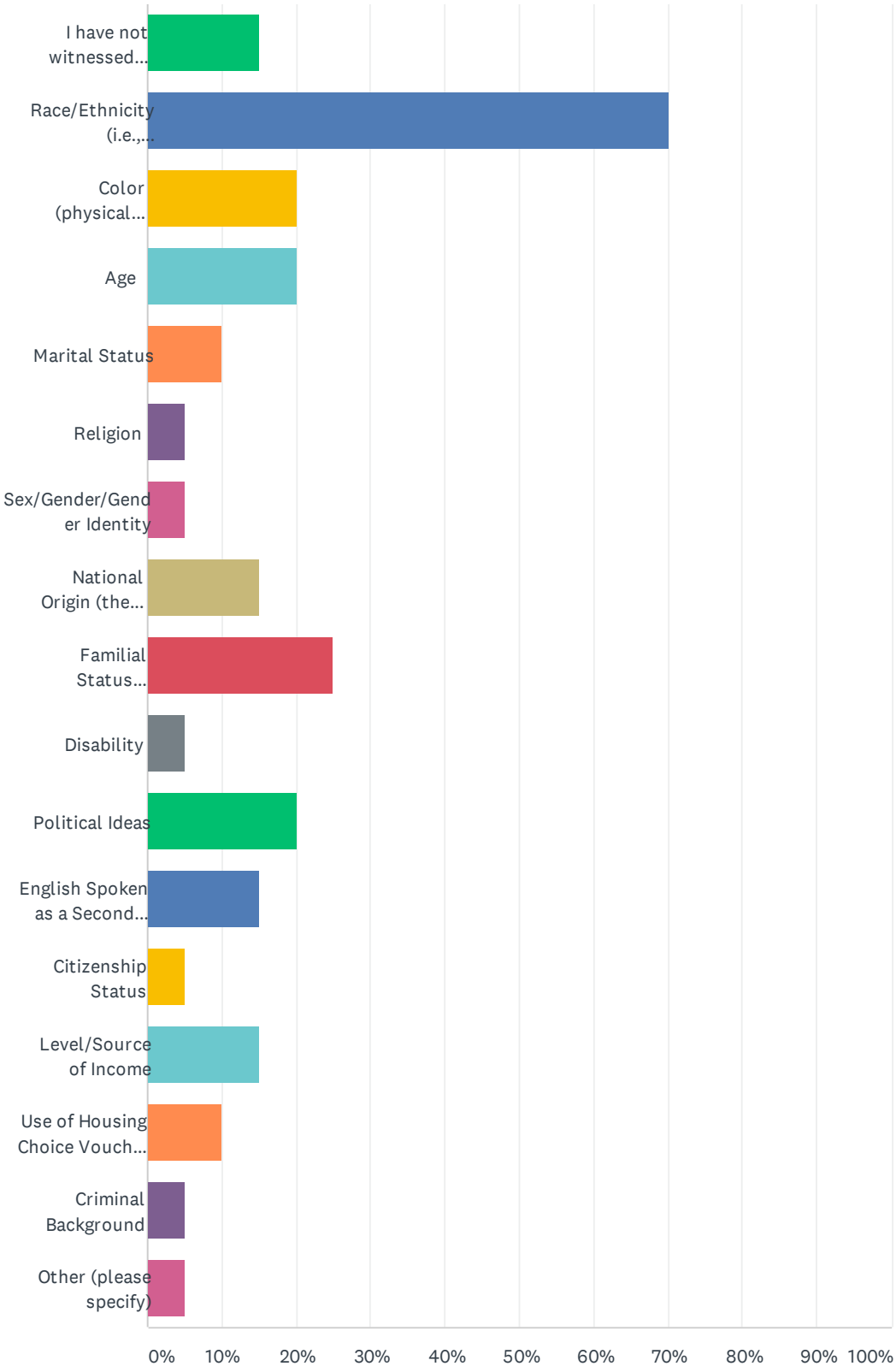
Answered: 443 Skipped: 90



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	3.84%	17
No	81.94%	363
I don’t know	14.22%	63
TOTAL		443

Q19 On what grounds do you believe you witnessed housing discrimination in RSM? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 20 Skipped: 513

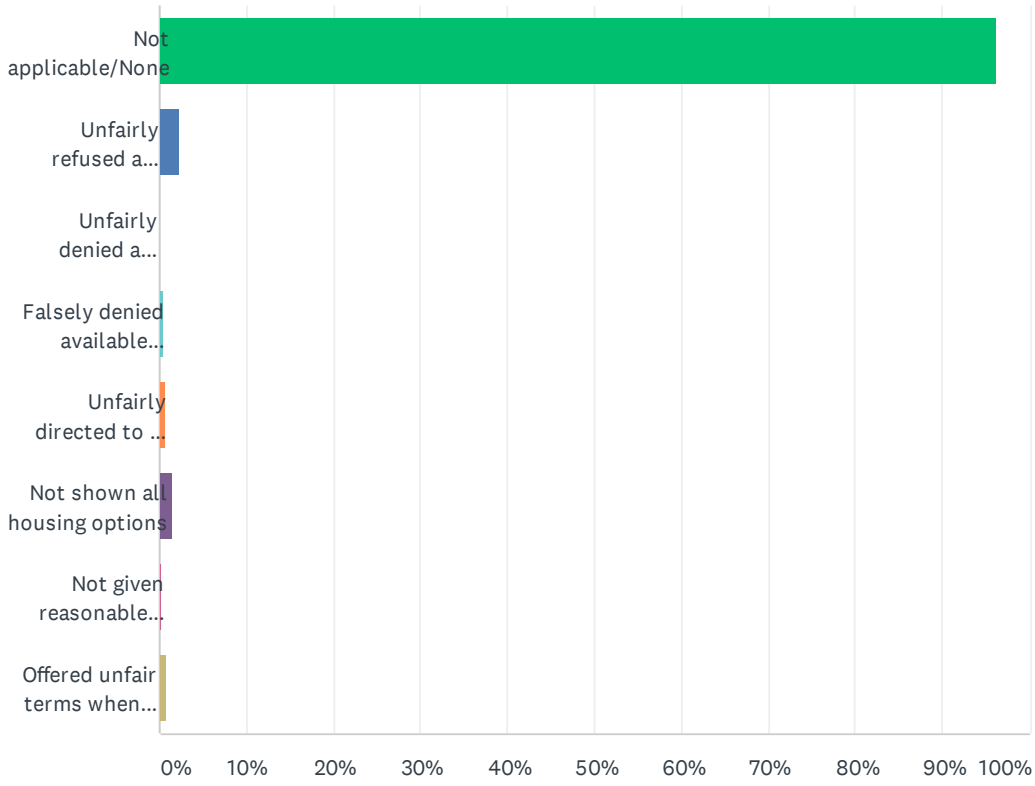

I have not witnessed...
Race/Ethnicity (i.e.,...
Color (physical...
Age
Marital Status
Religion
Sex/Gender/Gender Identity
National Origin (the...
Familial Status...
Disability
Political Ideas
English Spoken as a Second...
Citizenship Status
Level/Source of Income
Use of Housing Choice Vouch...
Criminal Background
Other (please specify)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I have not witnessed housing discrimination	15.00%	3
Race/Ethnicity (i.e., Caucasian, Asian, Latino, etc.)	70.00%	14
Color (physical appearance)	20.00%	4
Age	20.00%	4
Marital Status	10.00%	2
Religion	5.00%	1
Sex/Gender/Gender Identity	5.00%	1
National Origin (the country where a person was born)	15.00%	3
Familial Status (Families with Children)	25.00%	5
Disability	5.00%	1
Political Ideas	20.00%	4
English Spoken as a Second Language	15.00%	3
Citizenship Status	5.00%	1
Level/Source of Income	15.00%	3
Use of Housing Choice Voucher or other assistance	10.00%	2
Criminal Background	5.00%	1
Other (please specify)	5.00%	1
Total Respondents: 20		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I don't know if I've witnessed it.	2/23/2021 4:24 PM

Q20 Do you know of anyone in Rancho Santa Margarita who has faced the following: (select all that apply)

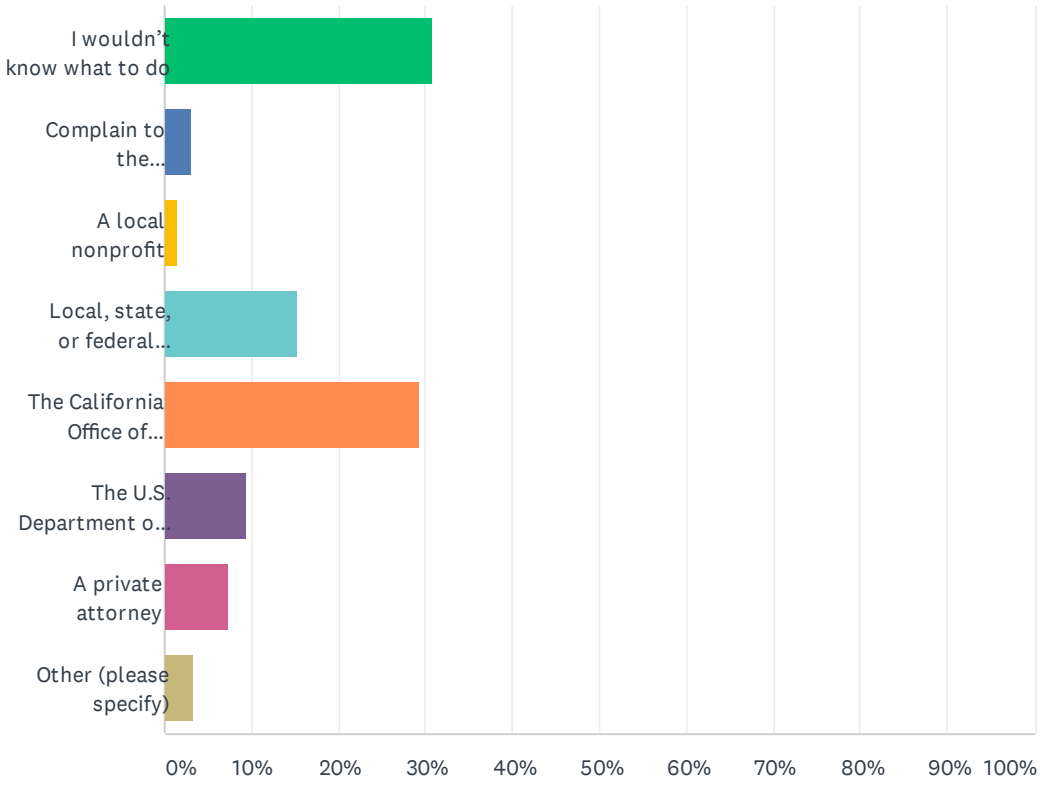
Answered: 428 Skipped: 105



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not applicable/None	96.26%	412
Unfairly refused a rental or sale agreement	2.34%	10
Unfairly denied a mortgage	0.00%	0
Falsely denied available housing options	0.47%	2
Unfairly directed to a certain neighborhood and/or locations	0.70%	3
Not shown all housing options	1.40%	6
Not given reasonable accommodate for a disability	0.23%	1
Offered unfair terms when buying or selling	0.93%	4
Total Respondents: 428		

Q21 Where would you refer someone if they felt their fair housing rights had been violated?

Answered: 438 Skipped: 95



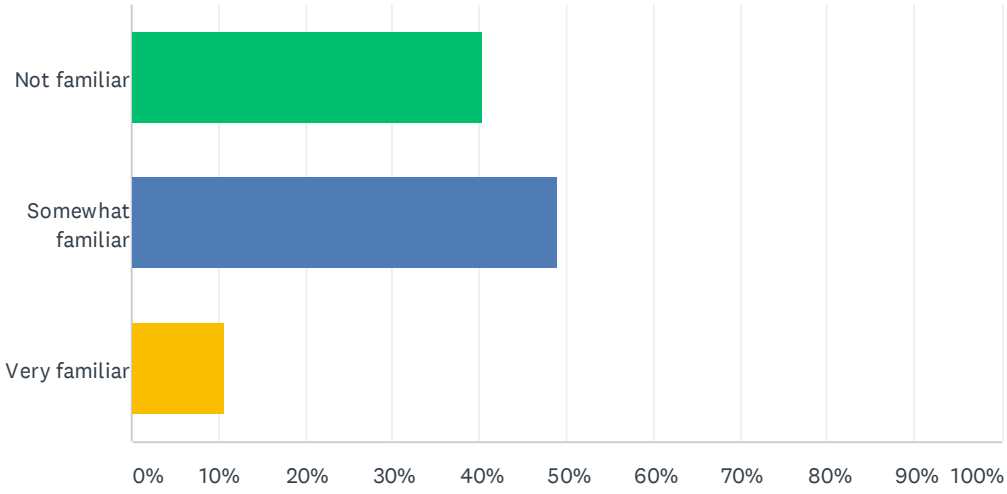
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I wouldn't know what to do	30.82%	135
Complain to the individual/organization discriminating	3.20%	14
A local nonprofit	1.37%	6
Local, state, or federal government	15.30%	67
The California Office of Housing and Community Development	29.22%	128
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	9.36%	41
A private attorney	7.31%	32
Other (please specify)	3.42%	15
TOTAL		438

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I have been discriminated against in the past, but if you are not a minority, the Dept of Fair Housing will not help you.	3/3/2021 8:19 AM
2	I wouldn't	3/2/2021 1:46 PM
3	California Association of Realtors	2/27/2021 6:20 PM

4	Google	2/27/2021 5:37 PM
5	Look it up	2/25/2021 8:36 PM
6	Dept of Fair Employment and Housing	2/25/2021 5:03 PM
7	California Department of Fair Employment and Housing	2/25/2021 4:50 PM
8	We would research the best path forward and assist	2/25/2021 3:53 PM
9	Are you kidding me this question is ridiculous	2/25/2021 3:41 PM
10	Perhaps someone I know in the real estate field, such as an agent.	2/12/2021 10:27 AM
11	Talk to Joe Biden	2/12/2021 9:56 AM
12	I would not get involved	2/8/2021 10:44 AM
13	Publicly blast them online. Watch out.	2/4/2021 8:11 PM
14	City and state hoising thority	2/4/2021 1:44 PM
15	Shame the shit out of their realtor/seller on Facebook.	2/4/2021 8:23 AM

Q22 How familiar are you with Fair Housing Laws?

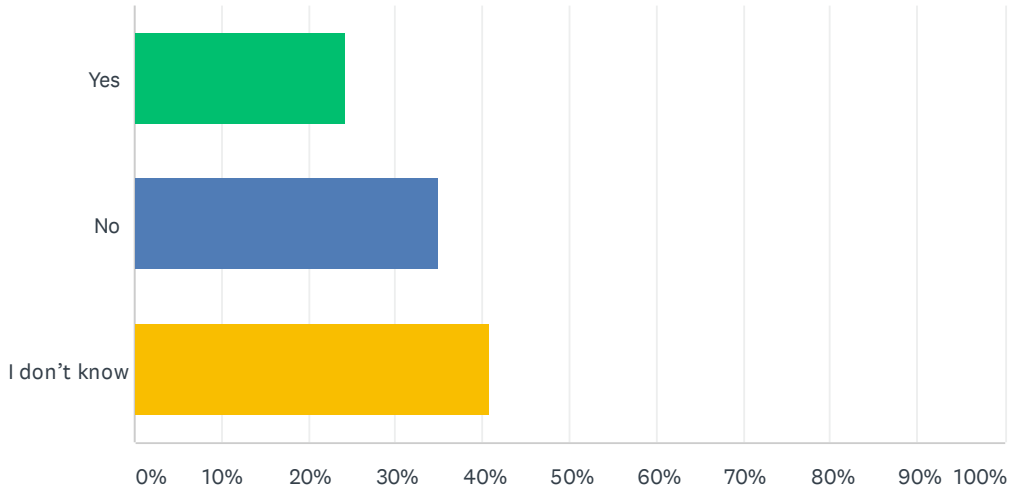
Answered: 440 Skipped: 93



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not familiar	40.45%	178
Somewhat familiar	48.86%	215
Very familiar	10.68%	47
TOTAL		440

Q23 Do you think Federal and/or State Fair Housing Laws are difficult to understand or follow?

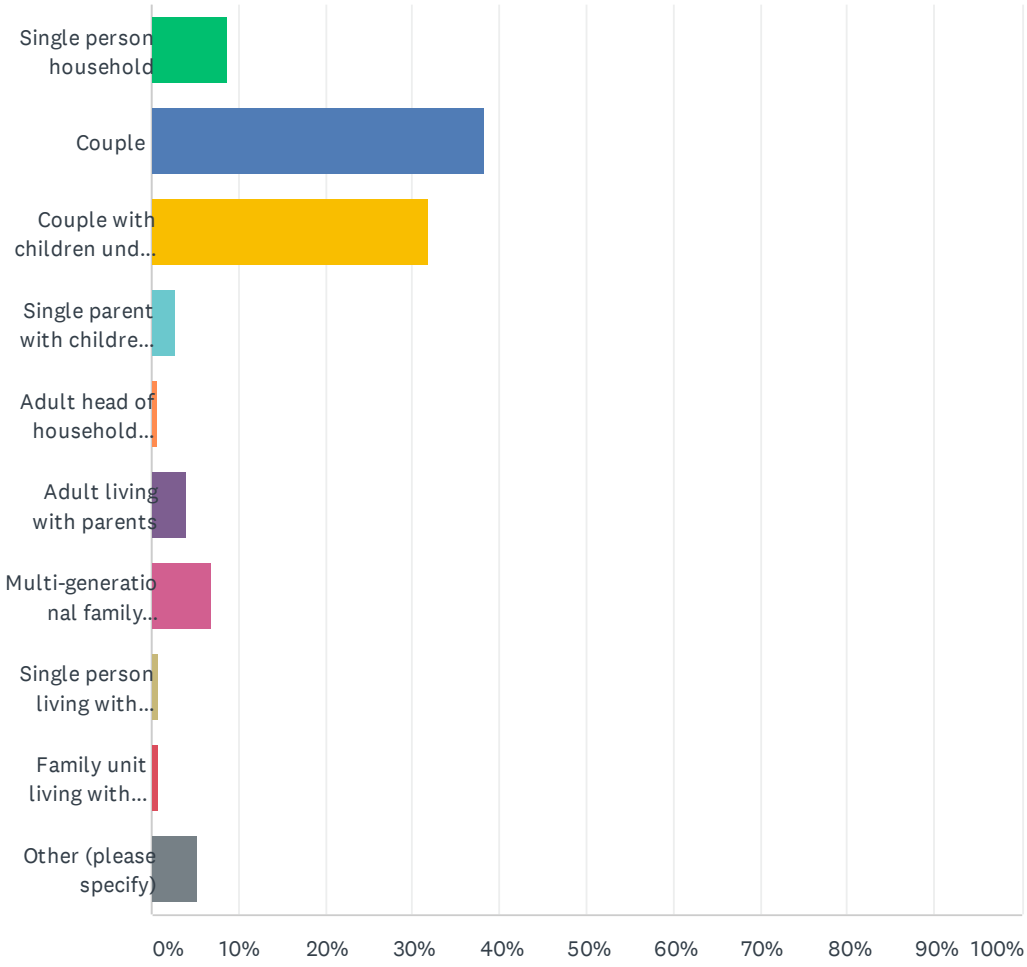
Answered: 441 Skipped: 92



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	24.26%	107
No	34.92%	154
I don't know	40.82%	180
TOTAL		441

Q24 Which of the following best describes your household type?

Answered: 437 Skipped: 96

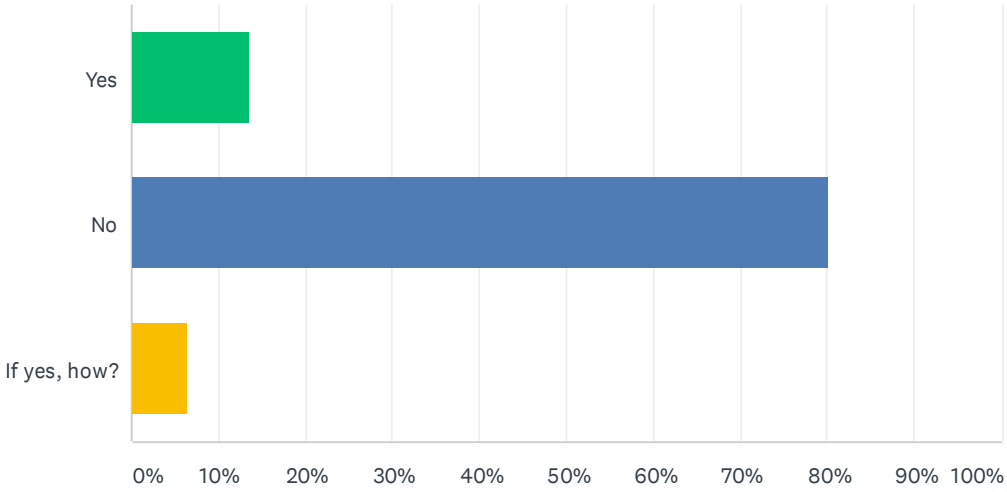


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single person household	8.70%	38
Couple	38.22%	167
Couple with children under 18	31.81%	139
Single parent with children under 18	2.75%	12
Adult head of household (non-parent) with children under 18	0.69%	3
Adult living with parents	3.89%	17
Multi-generational family household (grandparents, children, and/or grandchildren all under the same roof)	6.86%	30
Single person living with roommates	0.92%	4
Family unit living with roommates	0.92%	4
Other (please specify)	5.26%	23
TOTAL		437

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Single parent with 19 year old. He was 4 when we moved here.	3/2/2021 9:25 PM
2	Couple with children over 18.	3/2/2021 5:22 PM
3	Couple with College age (18+) children	3/2/2021 9:46 AM
4	Couple with children over and under 18	3/1/2021 5:44 PM
5	Married with children	3/1/2021 5:30 PM
6	currently empty nesters with possibility of older family member moving in soon	2/25/2021 3:54 PM
7	Family of 4. 2 college children	2/25/2021 3:33 PM
8	Couple with 18 year old twins	2/25/2021 3:32 PM
9	Parent w kids over 18	2/23/2021 3:17 PM
10	couple with children over 18	2/17/2021 3:41 PM
11	My mom lives with me - kids are grown	2/16/2021 12:15 PM
12	couple with over 18 child	2/16/2021 6:17 AM
13	Couple with adult child at home	2/12/2021 9:45 PM
14	Couple with college aged children	2/12/2021 4:16 PM
15	I don’t believe in stereotyping people	2/12/2021 2:39 PM
16	Couple w child over 18, child can’t afford a house	2/12/2021 2:19 PM
17	Couple with daughter over 18	2/12/2021 12:52 PM
18	Couple with children over 18 going to college and working from home.	2/12/2021 11:30 AM
19	Couple living with a child over 18	2/12/2021 10:42 AM
20	Couple with parent	2/12/2021 10:04 AM
21	Family with children over 18	2/12/2021 9:59 AM
22	Couple with 20yr old child	2/9/2021 1:22 PM
23	Couple with children over 18	2/2/2021 11:01 AM

Q25 Has the Coronavirus impacted your housing situation?

Answered: 436 Skipped: 97



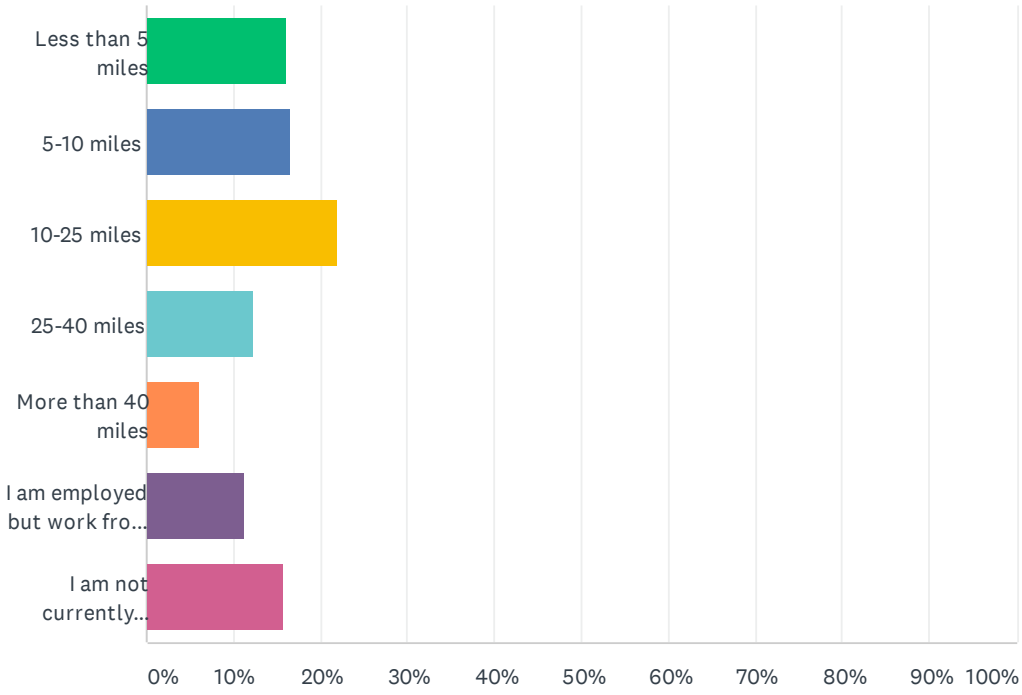
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	13.53%	59
No	80.05%	349
If yes, how?	6.42%	28
TOTAL		436

#	IF YES, HOW?	DATE
1	Children lost jobs temporarily and moved back home.	3/2/2021 5:22 PM
2	House is too small with both working from home	2/25/2021 7:45 PM
3	More crowded working from home and virtual school	2/25/2021 3:23 PM
4	Permitted us to move to RSM due to working remotely	2/25/2021 2:44 PM
5	Sister Died , Father-in-law Passed	2/16/2021 12:29 PM
6	My daughter lost her job and finding it hard to find a new one.	2/16/2021 11:24 AM
7	adult children with job loss and now living with me	2/16/2021 10:04 AM
8	School closure, lack of activities hurting my children	2/14/2021 8:29 PM
9	Loss of pay. Had to put mortgage payments on hold (forebearance)	2/13/2021 10:12 AM
10	Adult child forced back home	2/12/2021 9:45 PM
11	My wife & I work out of our home.	2/12/2021 2:22 PM
12	both of us work from home with our toddler also at home. crowded	2/12/2021 2:12 PM
13	College student moved home due to 100% virtual on-line classes.	2/12/2021 11:30 AM
14	Remote schooling has greatly impact my housing situation and children's education. Please pressure schools to follow the science and return to full in person learning.	2/12/2021 11:05 AM
15	We both work from home so utilities are little higher...but otherwise no.	2/12/2021 10:30 AM
16	My condo proved to small due to my wife and I working from home. We needed a yard for our	2/12/2021 10:28 AM

	child to play in, as well. Therefore, we moved into a larger home.	
17	Adult kids at home instead of college campus	2/7/2021 8:44 AM
18	I've had to relocate from Orange County to Los Angeles.	2/4/2021 12:10 PM
19	Can’t get repairs	2/4/2021 10:37 AM
20	Work from home, pay cuts	2/4/2021 8:42 AM
21	This is a terrible question, should be more specific. COVID impacted my household by making it difficult to feel safe in public. Wife is pregnant, so being safe for her.	2/4/2021 5:47 AM
22	lost help of relatives in different households	2/3/2021 12:51 PM
23	lost some hours of work on my 2nd job, no over time.	2/2/2021 9:45 PM
24	Husband working from home and don’t have enough space for an office	2/2/2021 11:11 AM
25	Potentially. Lost my job and trying to find another job	2/1/2021 7:02 PM
26	Husband has to work from home and make a room into an office.	2/1/2021 2:50 PM
27	force to convert bedrooms to work offices	2/1/2021 1:55 PM
28	Lost my job	2/1/2021 1:24 PM

Q26 If you are currently employed, approximately how long is your one-way commute to work? (If your commute has changed due to the Coronavirus, please answer this question based on your commute before the pandemic's impact on your travel patterns).

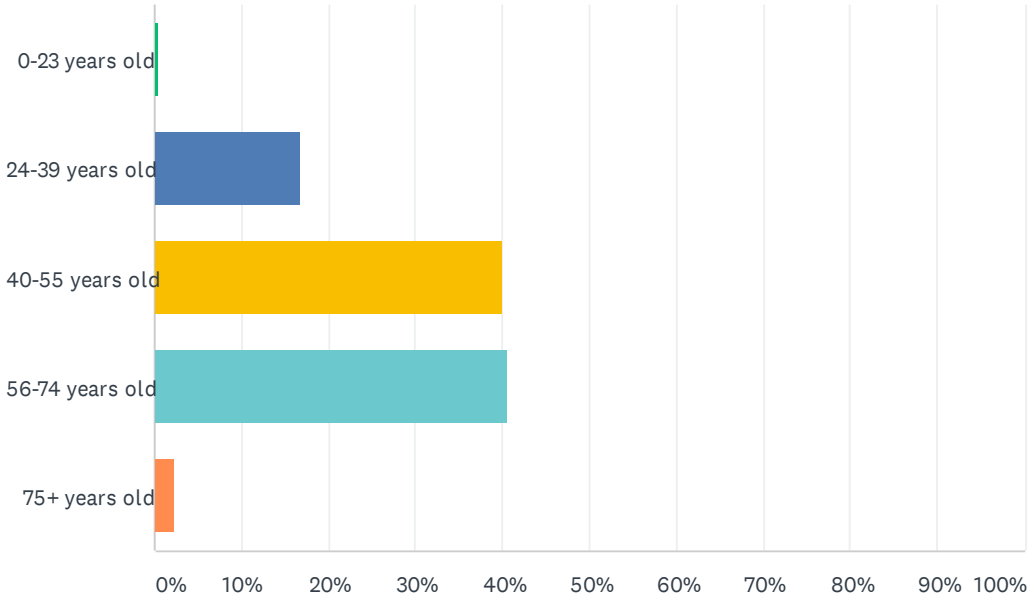
Answered: 432 Skipped: 101



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 5 miles	16.20%	70
5-10 miles	16.44%	71
10-25 miles	21.99%	95
25-40 miles	12.27%	53
More than 40 miles	6.02%	26
I am employed but work from my home (pre-pandemic)	11.34%	49
I am not currently employed	15.74%	68
TOTAL		432

Q27 What age range most accurately describes you?

Answered: 436 Skipped: 97



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-23 years old	0.46%	2
24-39 years old	16.74%	73
40-55 years old	39.91%	174
56-74 years old	40.60%	177
75+ years old	2.29%	10
TOTAL		436

Note: Pages 58-68 contain the contact information for persons who signed-up for notifications. This information has been removed from this summary.

APPENDIX C

RSM Housing Element Update Development Type Survey

Introduction

The City is in the process of updating the Housing Element of the General Plan for the 2021-2029 period as required by State law. The Housing Element establishes policies and programs to address RSM's existing and projected housing needs, including the City's "fair share" of the regional housing need (or "RHNA"). The RHNA allocated to RSM by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is 680 housing units. For additional information on the RHNA, please visit http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021.

This survey is intended for residents and interested parties to provide input regarding the types of development which should be further explored as the City plans to meet the State-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 680 units.

This survey will assist the City to develop a list of potential development types which will be presented in a future survey for further input. We recognize that some residents may feel that new housing is not needed or desired in Rancho Santa Margarita, however, the City is required by State law to plan for 680 new housing units divided among the following income categories: very low (209), low (120), moderate (125), above moderate (226). State law requires that the City identify specific sites where housing can be developed.

The results of this survey, along with other public engagement efforts such as focus groups, will be used by the City to determine the best way to plan for the State-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 680 units. Public input will be sought at every step of the process.

RSM Housing Element Update Development Type Survey

Development Type Descriptions

A variety of development types are listed below for consideration. The options presented below are intended to be general in nature as a starting point to explore potential development types. Open ended questions are provided so that you may give specific input regarding these and other development options.

Please review the following descriptions of development types before answering the questions below.

Development Type: Accessory Dwelling Units

Examples: Second units on existing residential property including attached, detached, and converted interior space; also known as guest house, granny-flat, or accessory apartment

Potential Housing: Accessory dwelling units may be developed on many residential parcels throughout the City. The State will allow the City to accommodate a small portion of RHNA (less than 25 units) with this type of housing.

Development Type: Reuse/Repurpose of Office Sites

Examples: General and medical office sites in commercial or business park districts.

Potential Housing: Office uses could be replaced with new residential development or new residential development could occur in conjunction with new or replacement office buildings (mixed-use).

Development Type: Reuse/Repurpose of General Commercial Shopping Center Sites

Examples: Larger commercial centers with stores and businesses which serve a citywide or regional trade area.

Potential Housing: Larger general commercial centers could be replaced with new residential development or new residential development could occur in conjunction with new or replacement commercial uses (mixed-use).

Development Type: Reuse/Repurpose of Neighborhood Commercial Shopping Center Sites

Examples: Smaller commercial centers with stores and businesses that serve the needs of nearby neighborhoods.

Potential Housing: Smaller neighborhood commercial shopping centers could be replaced with new residential development or new residential development could occur in conjunction with new or replacement commercial uses (mixed-use).

Development Type: Workforce Housing in Business Park

Examples: Office, Industrial, or Manufacturing sites in the business park area (surrounding Avenida Empresa and Avenida De Las Banderas).

Potential Housing: Housing within the business park as homes for employees of local companies.

Development Type: Housing on Church Property

Examples: Various.

Potential Housing: Develop housing on church sites in addition to retaining existing church use(s).

Development Type: Housing on Surplus School Property
Examples: Various.

Potential Housing: Develop residential uses on surplus school property, if ever identified by the School District.

Development Type: Vacant or Underutilized Properties
Examples: Open space or agricultural properties.

Potential Housing: To be determined based on site-specific evaluations. Larger sites could accommodate a mix of housing types.

RSM Housing Element Update Development Type Survey

Provide Your Feedback

*** 1. Please identify the top development types that you believe are most suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita. You must identify at least three choices.**

- [ ] Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- [ ] Repurposing of office sites to residential uses
- [ ] Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)
- [ ] Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses
- [ ] Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
- [ ] Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses
- [ ] Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
- [ ] Workforce housing in the business park
- [ ] Housing on church sites
- [ ] Repurposing of surplus school property (if ever identified by the School District) for residential uses
- [ ] Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites

*** 2. Please identify the general development types that you believe are least suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita. You can identify up to three choices.**

- [ ] Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- [ ] Repurposing of office sites to residential uses
- [ ] Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)
- [ ] Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses
- [ ] Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
- [ ] Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses
- [ ] Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)
- [ ] Workforce housing in the business park
- [ ] Housing on church sites
- [ ] Repurposing of surplus school property (if ever identified by the School District) for residential uses
- [ ] Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites

*** 3. Please rank the following general development types from most suitable (#1) to least suitable (#11) for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita.**

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Repurposing of office sites to residential uses

Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)

Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses

Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)

Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses

Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)

Workforce housing in the business park

Housing on church sites

Repurposing of surplus school property (if ever identified by the School District) for residential uses

Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites

The State requires that every city and county must help accommodate new housing growth. Since people often live and work in different places, housing needs are assessed at a regional level based on population trends and other factors to determine how much growth each local jurisdiction will need to accommodate. This is called the "Regional Housing Needs Allocation" or "RHNA" for short. The RHNA quantifies the need for housing on a regional level, and then allocates a portion of new growth to each city and county.

As previously described, Rancho Santa Margarita's state-mandated RHNA allocation for the 2021-2029 planning period is 680 units. This means that the City of Rancho Santa Margarita is responsible for identifying areas that can accommodate 680 new housing units. Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA allocation is divided into income categories. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is NOT responsible for building new homes. However, Rancho Santa Margarita must demonstrate to HCD that there is enough land zoned for housing to accommodate the allocated share of new homes. Furthermore, a special focus is placed on planning for affordable housing.

With this in mind, we want to hear any other ideas you have related to how RSM can plan for RHNA and meet State obligations. The questions below are intended to provide you an opportunity to freely share your input.

4. Please use the space below to tell us about any development types we have not included in the survey which you believe may help Rancho Santa Margarita plan for the RHNA.

5. Please use the space below to provide any information you would like to share about the development types listed in this survey.

6. Is there anything else you'd like us to know about planning to meet RHNA?

RSM Housing Element Update Development Type Survey
Demographic Information

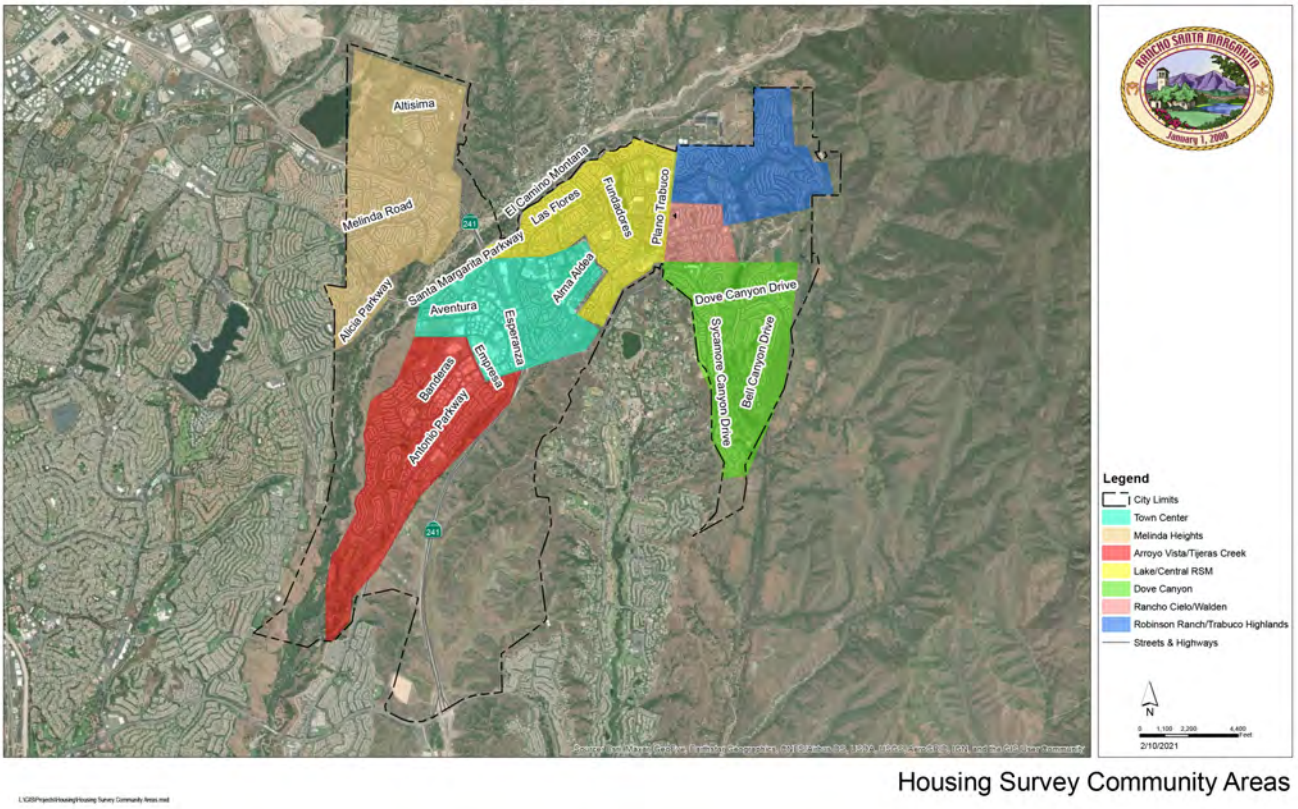
*** 7. Do you live and/or work in Rancho Santa Margarita?**

Note: Whether or not you are a resident, your input will still help the City plan to meet long-term housing needs.

- ○ I live in RSM but my job is located somewhere else (pre-pandemic conditions)
- ○ My job is in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions) but I live somewhere else
- ○ I live and work in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions)
- ○ I do not live or work in RSM

*** 8. Using the map below for reference, in which area of RSM do you live? If you do not live in RSM, please select "None/I don't live in RSM".**

- ☐ Town Center
- ☐ Dove Canyon
- ☐ Melinda Heights
- ☐ Rancho Cielo/Walden
- ☐ Arroyo Vista/Tijeras Creek
- ☐ Robinson Ranch/Trabuco Highland
- ☐ Lake/Central RSM
- ☐ None/I don't live in RSM



Housing Survey Community Areas

9. Do you currently own or rent your residence?

- ◯ I own my residence
- ◯ I rent my residence
- ◯ I live with another household (neither own nor rent)
- ◯ I am currently without permanent shelter

10. Which of the following best describes your household type?

- ○ Single person household
- ○ Couple
- ○ Couple with children under 18
- ○ Single parent with children under 18
- ○ Adult head of household (non-parent) with children under 18
- ○ Other (please specify)
- ○ Adult living with parents
- ○ Multi-generational family household (grandparents, children, and/or grandchildren all under the same roof)
- ○ Single person living with roommates
- ○ Family unit living with roommates

11. What age range most accurately describes you?

- ○ 0-23 years old
- ○ 24-39 years old
- ○ 40-55 years old
- ○ 56-74 years old
- ○ 75+ years old

12. What is your annual household income?

- ○ Less than $30,000
- ○ Between $30,000 and $49,999
- ○ Between $50,000 and $74,999
- ○ Between $75,000 and $99,999
- ○ Between $100,000 and $150,000
- ○ Between $150,000 and $200,000
- ○ Between $200,000 and $300,000
- ○ More than $300,000

13. If you would like to be notified regarding upcoming project updates and public hearings, please register your email address below.

Name

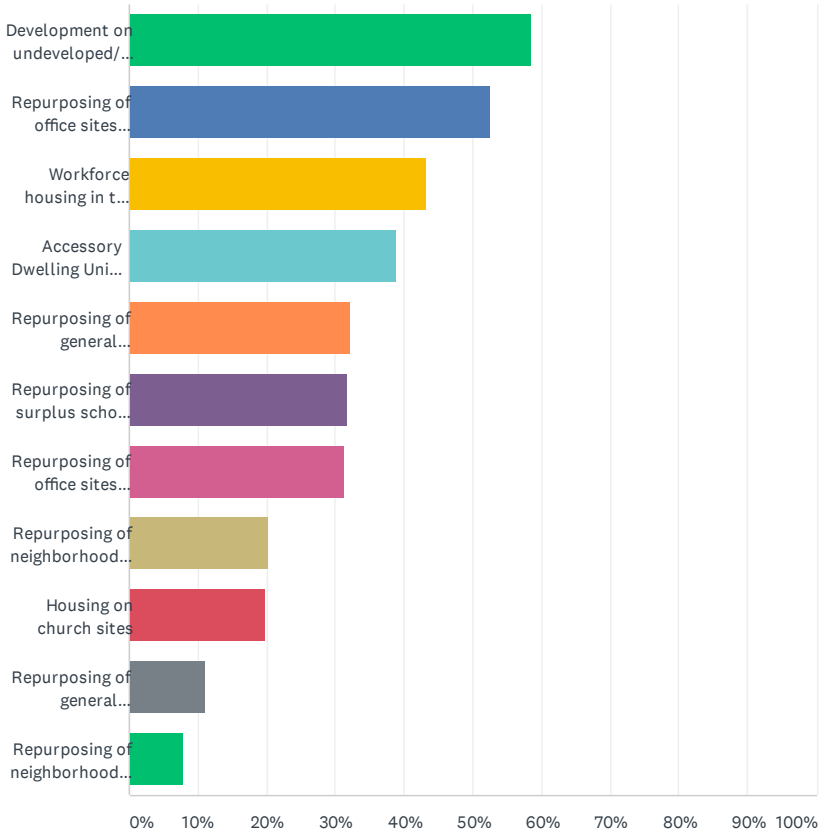
ZIP/Postal Code

Email Address

APPENDIX D

Q1 Please identify the top development types that you believe are most suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita. You must identify at least three choices.

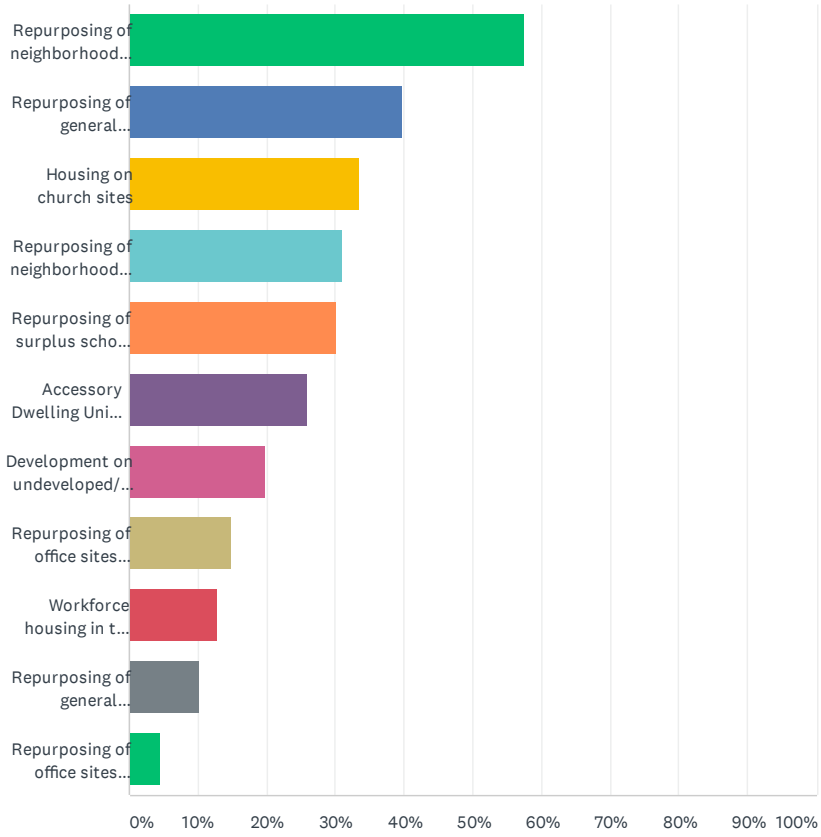
Answered: 236 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites	58.47%	138
Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)	52.54%	124
Workforce housing in the business park	43.22%	102
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	38.98%	92
Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)	32.20%	76
Repurposing of surplus school property (if ever identified by the School District) for residential uses	31.78%	75
Repurposing of office sites to residential uses	31.36%	74
Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)	20.34%	48
Housing on church sites	19.92%	47
Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses	11.02%	26
Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses	8.05%	19
Total Respondents: 236		

Q2 Please identify the general development types that you believe are least suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita. You can identify up to three choices.

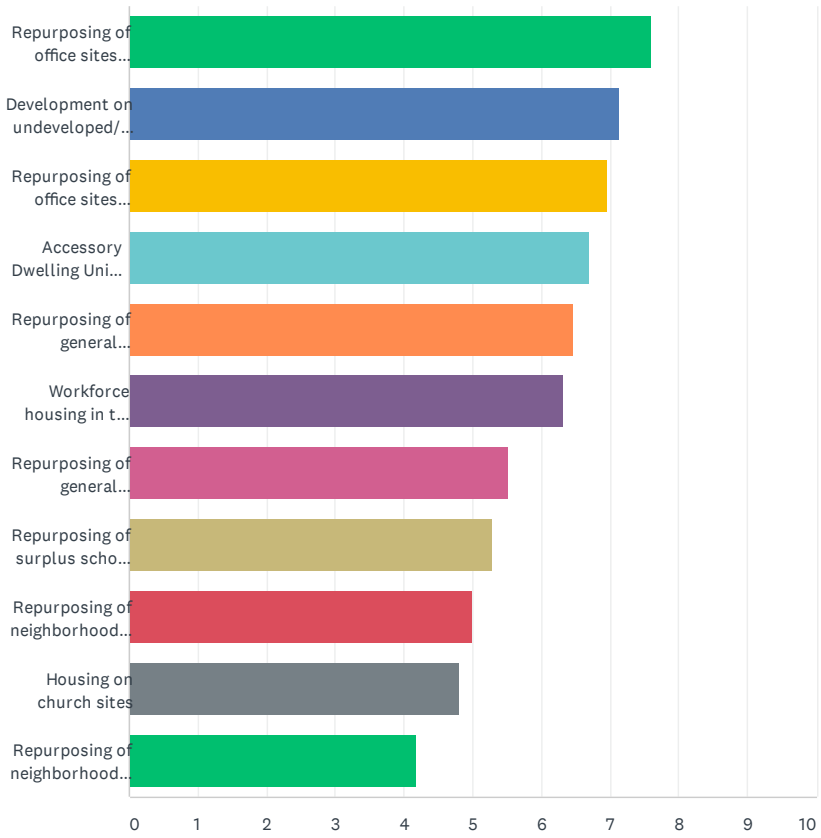
Answered: 236 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses	57.63%	136
Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses	39.83%	94
Housing on church sites	33.47%	79
Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)	30.93%	73
Repurposing of surplus school property (if ever identified by the School District) for residential uses	30.08%	71
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	25.85%	61
Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites	19.92%	47
Repurposing of office sites to residential uses	14.83%	35
Workforce housing in the business park	12.71%	30
Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)	10.17%	24
Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)	4.66%	11
Total Respondents: 236		

Q3 Please rank the following general development types from most suitable (#1) to least suitable (#11) for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Answered: 236 Skipped: 0



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	TO
Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential)	6.78% 16	18.64% 44	16.53% 39	16.53% 39	11.44% 27	11.44% 27	6.36% 15	5.93% 14	2.54% 6	2.54% 6	1.27% 3	
Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites	36.02% 85	8.47% 20	6.36% 15	6.36% 15	4.24% 10	3.81% 9	2.97% 7	2.54% 6	4.66% 11	8.90% 21	15.68% 37	
Repurposing of office sites to residential uses	8.47% 20	12.29% 29	14.41% 34	12.29% 29	9.75% 23	11.44% 27	11.02% 26	7.63% 18	7.20% 17	2.97% 7	2.54% 6	
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	24.15% 57	9.75% 23	6.78% 16	8.05% 19	6.78% 16	5.08% 12	4.66% 11	8.47% 20	5.51% 13	8.05% 19	12.71% 30	
Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)	6.36% 15	7.63% 18	10.59% 25	12.29% 29	12.71% 30	13.98% 33	10.59% 25	11.86% 28	7.63% 18	3.39% 8	2.97% 7	
Workforce housing in the business park	4.66% 11	11.86% 28	13.14% 31	9.32% 22	12.29% 29	7.20% 17	8.05% 19	12.71% 30	9.75% 23	7.63% 18	3.39% 8	
Repurposing of general commercial centers to residential uses	3.39% 8	4.66% 11	6.36% 15	7.63% 18	13.14% 31	13.98% 33	13.14% 31	13.14% 31	13.14% 31	6.36% 15	5.08% 12	
Repurposing of surplus school property (if ever identified by the School District) for residential uses	3.39% 8	13.56% 32	9.32% 22	6.78% 16	6.78% 16	5.08% 12	5.51% 13	7.20% 17	13.14% 31	15.25% 36	13.98% 33	
Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (commercial with residential)	2.97% 7	4.24% 10	6.36% 15	8.90% 21	5.93% 14	11.02% 26	14.41% 34	11.44% 27	8.90% 21	19.07% 45	6.78% 16	
Housing on church sites	2.97% 7	5.08% 12	7.63% 18	7.20% 17	8.47% 20	6.36% 15	8.90% 21	8.90% 21	19.07% 45	11.44% 27	13.98% 33	
Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses	0.85% 2	3.81% 9	2.54% 6	4.66% 11	8.47% 20	10.59% 25	14.41% 34	10.17% 24	8.47% 20	14.41% 34	21.61% 51	

Q4 Please use the space below to tell us about any development types we have not included in the survey which you believe may help Rancho Santa Margarita plan for the RHNA.

Answered: 117 Skipped: 119

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	None	3/27/2021 8:39 AM
2	My opinion is ADU's will be one of the worst things that can happen in trying to preserve the quality of living. We bought into at RSM	3/26/2021 1:24 PM
3	Please upzone single-family neighborhoods so that homeowners can build duplexes or fourplexes if they wish.	3/25/2021 6:58 PM
4	None.	3/25/2021 7:02 AM
5	None	3/24/2021 10:06 PM
6	None	3/24/2021 5:04 PM
7	Tiny homes or supporting RV mobile homes (like a camper van) as that is the only thing affordable anymore in California for a single person.	3/24/2021 4:57 PM
8	Redevelop low density housing to higher density housing.	3/24/2021 4:01 PM
9	NA	3/24/2021 3:44 PM
10	None	3/24/2021 3:18 PM
11	No comment	3/24/2021 10:40 AM
12	Senior housing	3/24/2021 6:57 AM
13	First insist on a needs assessment. Do we actually need this additional housing?	3/23/2021 4:58 PM
14	Some areas are more suitable for affordable housing than others. The reason people live in this area (and pay taxes) is for the quality of life. Please keep that in mind.	3/23/2021 12:22 PM
15	none	3/23/2021 11:17 AM
16	None	3/23/2021 10:35 AM
17	None	3/23/2021 8:59 AM
18	none	3/23/2021 8:36 AM
19	Na	3/22/2021 9:12 PM
20	I think all options are included	3/22/2021 7:04 PM
21	Can we place low-income requirements on existing apartment complexes, so the units are interspersed instead of consolidated in certain areas?	3/22/2021 6:04 PM
22	Industrial areas	3/22/2021 12:05 PM
23	expand RHNA ratio in current apartment facilities and build smaller affordable homes in the area for first time buyers	3/22/2021 10:26 AM
24	Na	3/19/2021 10:45 PM
25	Allocation of Tiny-Home lots or mobile ADUs	3/19/2021 3:58 PM
26	Making room for affordable home ownership opportunities	3/19/2021 10:52 AM
27	I am concerned about the traffic and overcrowding with basically one road in and out of RSM. The traffic over the bridge is terrible and the congestion in the shopping area around Trader Joes is dangerous.	3/19/2021 10:30 AM
28	The Free Market Always Corrects Itself. When government injects itself, the free market gets screwed up. The solution is have William Lyon build a 700 unit high density low income housing project on his 87 acre estate in Corp. What if the State required 10,000 new low income high density units? Are always going to be cowards and comply? Hell No!!!	3/19/2021 8:27 AM
29	Let’s become tunnel people. The lizards of Vegas have proved its feasible.	3/18/2021 9:19 AM
30	None	3/17/2021 10:44 PM
31	turning a single family home into a duplex or multiplex	3/17/2021 6:40 PM
32	aquisition of land along antonio parkway between rsm and las flores	3/17/2021 6:14 PM
33	NA	3/17/2021 5:25 PM
34	_	3/17/2021 3:52 PM

35	Apartments (2-3-4 bedrooms) in undeveloped land or school properties.	3/17/2021 2:55 PM
36	Low-income housing	3/17/2021 1:09 PM
37	Subdivide suitable parcels, that are clustered together, to non conforming parcel. Thereby allowing increased density where there are existing goods and services.	3/17/2021 12:24 PM
38	na	3/17/2021 11:50 AM
39	Na	3/17/2021 11:20 AM
40	Is there any way to model or remodel commercial units so that it could accommodate a condoor housing unit on the second floor with a commercial business unit on the ground floor? Ladera Ranch has a number of properties like this.	3/17/2021 11:16 AM
41	Rezoning and allowing housing development on unsightly rv sale lots and car dealerships for housing.	3/17/2021 11:06 AM
42	Housing for seniors	3/17/2021 11:01 AM
43	New development could be concentrated for Seniors to open available homes for resale. Adding more million dollar homes does not open up resale homes.	3/17/2021 9:39 AM
44	N/A	3/17/2021 9:37 AM
45	None	3/17/2021 5:43 AM
46	EMPTY LAND	3/16/2021 11:36 PM
47	converting existing one family home into duplexes or triplexes	3/16/2021 11:00 PM
48	Na	3/16/2021 10:24 PM
49	Expand RSM deeper into the undeveloped area around the Upper Oso Reservoir in Melinda Heights.	3/16/2021 9:41 PM
50	Develope the vacant land along Antonio. Develope the land at the end of Plano Trabuco that is currently a Cypress Tree nursery.	3/16/2021 8:31 PM
51	N/a	3/16/2021 7:30 PM
52	NA	3/16/2021 6:20 PM
53	680 units can be reached by changing one commercial complex into a mixed use which could contain 680 apartments. This does not need to be actually followed through as stated above but changing the development type of something like a car dealership which would probably never change into the possibility of mixed use would allow the city to reach this goal without following through with the change by the property owner since a dealership would probably be more beneficial to the property owner.	3/16/2021 6:10 PM
54	Disobey the state order.	3/16/2021 6:06 PM
55	Unknown	3/16/2021 5:20 PM
56	Assisted living	3/16/2021 5:18 PM
57	Not at this time	3/16/2021 5:06 PM
58	I feel you covered them all. I hope you build in zoned land within the city that currently has no business on them.	3/16/2021 4:53 PM
59	Modify zoning code to allow higher density to specific developments, allow more mixed-use in commercial and industrial areas. Provide incentives to NIMBY so they are more accepting.	3/16/2021 4:53 PM
60	None	3/16/2021 4:49 PM
61	none	3/16/2021 4:44 PM
62	I do NOT support high-density housing. Please ensure that whatever housing units are constructed blend in aesthetically with existing structures and neighborhoods.	3/16/2021 4:42 PM
63	None	3/16/2021 4:39 PM
64	NA	3/16/2021 4:32 PM
65	Our insane governor will be recalled. When replaced by a Republican hopefully have him get involved and stop this adhoc group of idiots from ruining this city. Stall. Delay. Build the high income homes first on the SCAG list. But if you must build do not build those prison looking high rise buildings like the one on Plano Trabuco. Build single family homes only. High rise apts do not fit into this area. They stick out like sore thumbs. Build where there is free land space and do not knock down a church,shopping,or any thing else. If I was king I would rally all the mayors in the region and fight these people. I think in a democracy we should let the free market decide. We should be allowed to vote if we want and need housing and if so what form and how many it should be. A survey is nice but it is not as meaningful as a ballot. Oh if you guys in city hall want and do this I suggest you 1st tear down City Hall and put you slum low income housing there. If we wanted to live in a poverty ridden area would we have moved here? How is that working in Santa Ana. Poor and dense. Most covid in the county. Did any one in SCAG read a news paper? This growth model does not serve anyone well. We are in a fire zone Hello. More people harder to escape. Earthquakes too. Mudslides. Drought and a limited amount of water resources. Electric outages are frequent. Tell ya what go buy some cheap land out in Palmdale and build it there. Plenty of space and that socio- economic group	3/16/2021 4:18 PM

	will fit well with what lives there currently. Does SCAG tell Malibu and Brentwood to build very low income there? I doubt it. Has Scag ever come to this city and looked at it? I am still trying to figure out who elected them and the names of these socialists. Per the website our city is not even a member of this corrupt group. Why are they even messing with us? Let them bother the idiots that signed up. I wonder how many homes Laguna Beach has to take? Judge Carter who lives there told all the OC cities he was going to not allow them to have no camping laws unless they built homeless shelters. Yet he did not impose this upon his own city. I have a notion this judge would not let SCAG bully him or his city. This old guy is hella smart. He forced this upon all these cities and smugly smiled as his was not touched. Then last I read this guy was now in LA doing the same thing there and he has zero jurisdiction there. Maybe you guys should ring him up and ask him how to escape SCAG. I bet you he knows how. Moral of this story you give and inch and SCAG will take a mile.	
66	None	3/16/2021 4:12 PM
67	The skate park	3/16/2021 4:08 PM
68	No high density, no rezoning. Think of your existing residents first. Retirement housing (55+) is much preferred to low income.	3/16/2021 4:04 PM
69	All included to my knowledge	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
70	Take all of the government property near the city hall and turn it into housing, including the city hall building itself. Rezone the auto sales lots into residential. Do not take neighborhood retail centers and make them low income residential. Do not allow homeowners to add second dwelling units on their property. the questions you are answering do not allow single family homeowners to truly tell you we do not want this these types of homes built in our community.	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
71	Safety	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
72	None	3/16/2021 3:56 PM
73	There seems to be plenty of unused or under utilized office plazas that could be converted to meet the state mandate. These are often centrally located and ideal for residential living. If you can add offices or storefronts to the ground floor of these developments, then everyone wins.	3/16/2021 3:54 PM
74	Use open, undeveloped land.	3/16/2021 3:53 PM
75	RSM has no room for new housing, there is plenty of housing already.	3/16/2021 3:07 PM
76	Single family dwelling above retail establishments that allows shop owners to live above their shop	3/15/2021 7:08 PM
77	None	3/15/2021 6:13 PM
78	Does Coto de Caza count? I don't think we need that many mansions over McMansions. Can re-zone that area.	3/15/2021 5:46 PM
79	Creating 2 family houses not granny flat ect. More like you would find in nyc were they are 3 floors two for the owner and one to rent. Since space is at a premium here people could add onto existence homes	3/15/2021 5:46 PM
80	none	3/15/2021 5:41 PM
81	NA	3/13/2021 3:00 PM
82	N/A	3/9/2021 2:54 PM
83	Since so many of our seniors are on such a fixed budget and we have even had seniors living in their cars in RSM, is it possible for some of that 680 to be dedicated to seniors to satisfy?	3/6/2021 12:59 PM
84	Upzone the whole city to allow up to fourplexes on every lot and with increased FAR.	3/5/2021 1:04 PM
85	redevelop low density residential to higher density.	3/3/2021 9:46 PM
86	Concentrate multi use repurposing on properties at rsms existing core areas which already have spare population support capacity as well as minimizing surge in Rinna car trips.	3/3/2021 2:20 PM
87	I'm not sure of any other types but do know parking is already a huge problem in residential areas, including in my track with detached houses. PLEASE keep this in mind when planning	3/2/2021 8:03 PM
88	None	3/2/2021 7:09 PM
89	None	3/2/2021 6:42 PM
90	annex unincorporated land for development	3/2/2021 3:20 PM
91	none	3/2/2021 2:11 PM
92	no more apartment buildings.	3/1/2021 11:29 PM
93	Maybe these are the granny homes, but those tiny homes they sell on Amazon for $9,000. For grandma, nanny, college aged students, extra income for a family kind of like mini Air B & B, multiple families or generations living on one property, but in separate structures.	3/1/2021 9:26 PM
94	Adding 680 units sounds very concerning. If the goal is to create housing at submarket prices, then perhaps maybe just build another apartment complex.	3/1/2021 7:25 PM
95	Allow for small multi family development on property zoned for single family residence	3/1/2021 6:41 PM
96	no ideas	3/1/2021 5:38 PM

97	Hopefully there is vacant land that can be used for residential homes.	3/1/2021 5:29 PM
98	Permanent Supportive Housing must be incorporated	2/28/2021 2:32 PM
99	NONE	2/28/2021 9:43 AM
100	I think rsm is perfectly fine the way it is...	2/28/2021 8:28 AM
101	None - It's very important that we maintain our open space and parks to avoid over crowding.	2/27/2021 10:06 AM
102	Senior housing	2/26/2021 9:40 AM
103	More speciality clinics (dermatology, laser removal, plastic surgery, dentistry, orthodontics, physical/occupational therapy, etc) in business/commercial plazas.	2/26/2021 12:33 AM
104	More restaurants and commercial centers	2/25/2021 8:08 PM
105	Respond that the total number requested is too high and push back. Quit drinking the cool-aid.	2/25/2021 3:48 PM
106	Add on to existing apartment complexes.	2/25/2021 3:46 PM
107	2-on-a-lot or 3-on-a-lot redevelopments	2/25/2021 3:41 PM
108	Small single family retirement homes that are priced for retirement age (65+)	2/25/2021 3:33 PM
109	Build in areas away from fire zones (all gated communities) with limited evacuation routes	2/25/2021 2:49 PM
110	Although Chiquita Ridge is located in a High Severity Fire Zone, this is the most logical location. It is approx. 92 acres and although rough terrain, if possible, you could build at 10units/acre with 20% low-income bond deal and meet all the RHNA obligations.	2/24/2021 8:47 PM
111	The City should explore re-negotiating with the County regarding allowable residential uses at Chiquita Ridge. They should also strongly consider development of the Nursury properties within their sphere of influence.	2/24/2021 1:36 PM
112	n/a	2/24/2021 9:51 AM
113	The underutilized spaces did not mention parks, recreation areas. It is a matter of trade-offs and maybe these should have been included.	2/24/2021 7:07 AM
114	All types seem to have been included.	2/23/2021 2:21 PM
115	None	2/23/2021 1:23 PM
116	n/a	2/23/2021 9:49 AM
117	unknown	2/23/2021 9:38 AM

Q5 Please use the space below to provide any information you would like to share about the development types listed in this survey.

Answered: 114 Skipped: 122

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	See number 4 above.	3/26/2021 1:24 PM
2	ADUs are wonderful, but in practice they tend to be neither truly affordable or accessible to persons with disabilities, so please focus more on denser housing options.	3/25/2021 6:58 PM
3	I would hate to see what little free land we have left out here get turned into more housing. We also have great resources in the local business and offices and it would be unfortunate for us to turn those into houses.	3/25/2021 7:02 AM
4	Leaving open agricultural land helps keep our area from higher temperatures created by excessive concrete structures. In addition, please keep in mind the danger to current residents in the event of fire when it is so congested we are unable to evacuate	3/24/2021 5:04 PM
5	Disappointing as it I'm sure I wouldn't qualify for the housing anyways but yet am unable to afford the skyrocketing housing (asset) prices.	3/24/2021 4:57 PM
6	I think ADUs are designed to help the privileged home owners. It comes off as too specific where it would only help a few people.	3/24/2021 4:01 PM
7	NA	3/24/2021 3:44 PM
8	None	3/24/2021 3:18 PM
9	No comment	3/24/2021 10:40 AM
10	In my opinion building homes on church or school property is not ideal	3/24/2021 6:57 AM
11	Mostly not acceptable	3/23/2021 4:58 PM
12	none	3/23/2021 11:17 AM
13	Do not believe that current retail/commercial areas should be repurposed for housing. This increases population growth and lessens available retail/commercial to accommodate this increase.	3/23/2021 10:35 AM
14	The city is already crowded. I'm opposed to adding more high density residential areas.	3/23/2021 8:59 AM
15	none	3/23/2021 8:36 AM
16	Na	3/22/2021 9:12 PM
17	NA	3/22/2021 7:04 PM
18	I do not want to see thriving business centers re-zoned, but if they are failing I think they should be reviewed. AUDs should require accommodations for parking. I'd like to see existing open space preserved to the extent possible, but also don't prefer densification. Should we look to annex additional land to accommodate new developments?	3/22/2021 6:04 PM
19	upscale townhouse / condos with boutique shops on the lower level and underground parking would fit well into the established culture	3/22/2021 10:26 AM
20	Dangerous to plan housing in Dove Canyon Center. One way out of Dove Canyon to evacuate during wildfires.	3/20/2021 7:23 PM
21	n/a	3/19/2021 10:52 AM
22	na	3/19/2021 10:30 AM
23	RSM AND THE PEOPLE OF RSM WILL NOT COMPLY!!! That’s the solution. Tell Newsom to build it next to his house. Tell William Lyon to build it on his vacant 83 acres next to his estate in Coto de Caza	3/19/2021 8:27 AM
24	Lot sizes are small enough as is. I don’t believe there are any existing single home homes that have the space to add additional granny flats, extra apartments, extra dwellings without significantly reducing and impairing quality of life. Traffic concerns must be addressed in any new construction. One way ingress/egress cannot be allowed with the significant emergency situations we’ve seen in the past few years snd will continue to experience in the future. Evacuation plans must be developed along with any construction. I don’t know if there is any ‘open’ land available w/I city limits. Are there any vacant lots — at one time there was a defunct car dealership location. Is that still available? What about the area at the end of Antonio?	3/18/2021 3:35 PM
25	No more apartments or low income.	3/18/2021 9:19 AM
26	Stay away from school properties at all costs. Our schools are already overcrowded and have not been properly expanded to support the states growing population. Whatever property the districts have should be prioritized for schools. Given that RSM has very little unused space, I think mixed use is highly desirable. I also think accessory dwellings should be approved, so	3/18/2021 7:06 AM

	long as the house can support it (many homes will not have a sufficient amount of space), including considerations for parking and effect on the overall neighborhood.	
27	Please dont destroy nature area or get involved with schools	3/17/2021 10:44 PM
28	please do not allow med density residential to be built in Dove Canyon Plaza	3/17/2021 6:40 PM
29	conversion of existing commercial property adversely affects existing housing; road systems were not designed to accomadate that kind of saturation	3/17/2021 6:14 PM
30	NA	3/17/2021 5:25 PM
31	-	3/17/2021 3:52 PM
32	Any RSM proposed plan to submit to the state for compliance must be accompanied with traffic and safety impact statements	3/17/2021 2:55 PM
33	no to ADU's	3/17/2021 2:13 PM
34	With work from home establishing itself as a viable alternative to in-person office jobs, more office spaces can be repurposed for low-income housing	3/17/2021 1:09 PM
35	As I talked to the city before I would love to work with the city on some pre-approved ADU plans to provide on the website to help the community to choose from and make it easier for them to understand the process.	3/17/2021 11:50 AM
36	Na	3/17/2021 11:20 AM
37	A	3/17/2021 11:06 AM
38	The age wave did not happen with Baby Boomers which would have opened up more housing. Now with prop 19 there is the opportunity to help seniors downsize into a an active lifestyle community. The only nice active residential community that is selling well is in Rancho Mission Viejo.. RSM needs a community like tbis	3/17/2021 9:39 AM
39	N/A	3/17/2021 9:37 AM
40	One must also consider evacuation measures since we live in a high risk fire zone	3/17/2021 5:43 AM
41	MAKING CHANGES TO ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENTS	3/16/2021 11:36 PM
42	the existing condominiums in Mission courts I or II could be designated as Low to Moderate Income Housing.	3/16/2021 11:00 PM
43	Na	3/16/2021 10:24 PM
44	I adamantly oppose removing or repurposing any of the existing shipping plazas that were designed to support our neighborhoods. Especially any that would negatively impact the safety of our neighborhoods or home values.	3/16/2021 9:41 PM
45	I feel that an existing neighborhood should not be affected by removing the local shopping, restaurants, and daycare in order to place more homes. You are taking away our concurrence and adding more congestion.	3/16/2021 9:11 PM
46	Be mindful of where you put low income Housing and how it will negatively iimpact surrounding property values.	3/16/2021 8:31 PM
47	Allocation for 680 granny units would be beneficial to many people. Prefer that option over all others	3/16/2021 7:44 PM
48	N/a	3/16/2021 7:30 PM
49	I don't believe that this city requires additional residential development	3/16/2021 6:42 PM
50	Don’t touch existing vacant land or open space but utilize existing built areas.	3/16/2021 6:20 PM
51	See above	3/16/2021 6:10 PM
52	None.	3/16/2021 6:06 PM
53	None	3/16/2021 5:20 PM
54	consider overcrowding, fire safe impact	3/16/2021 5:18 PM
55	We are against redeveloping Dove Canyon Plaza for residential.	3/16/2021 5:06 PM
56	I have none.	3/16/2021 4:53 PM
57	There has been a lot of discussion about how SCAG came to their conclusions regarding RHNA analysis. First and foremost, I would scrutinize and challenge their findings. Certain areas would be detrimentally affected (reduced home values, more traffic, etc). RSM Is a bedroom community with some industrial and commercial businesses, but we are a small city, yet we are being asked to provide 680 units. That seems disproportionate.	3/16/2021 4:53 PM
58	None	3/16/2021 4:49 PM
59	Limit to single family structures	3/16/2021 4:44 PM
60	Make them aesthetically pleasing to our community.	3/16/2021 4:42 PM
61	NA	3/16/2021 4:32 PM

62	High rises are out build single family homes only. Use vacant land only. No destruction of any thing to be replaced by housing. If any SCAG member lives in this city tear down his/her house. They call the shots let them live with the consequences.	3/16/2021 4:18 PM
63	N/A	3/16/2021 4:12 PM
64	Rezoning is unfair to residents who paid $1,000,000 or more for single family residences in an area believed to be fully developed. We pay the highest residential property taxes and deserve to be heard.	3/16/2021 4:04 PM
65	I am opposed to mix use sites and business workforce sites. Goes against the mission statement of the city in my opinion.	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
66	You are only allowing selections that you want to get approval for. why is one of the options listed something like we want you to fight the sated from ruining our community.	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
67	Safety and increased housing and getting out safely in times of emergencies.	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
68	With the drought situation the last thing we need is more homes to consume precious water	3/16/2021 3:56 PM
69	Eliminating “neighborhood commercial centers” will degrade the soul of RSM as those are the places the community gathers to share ideas and bond with one another, not to mention the places that provide valuable services. Those must continue to be supported rather than torn down to make way for high density housing. Higher congestion of people with fewer services is a recipe for disaster.	3/16/2021 3:54 PM
70	RSM has no room for new housing, there is plenty of housing already.	3/16/2021 3:07 PM
71	With the recent trends of certain big box stores being less popular, "mixed use" in commercial zones may be a reasonable solution.	3/16/2021 10:51 AM
72	I do not think we should continue developing. I love how small this city is.	3/16/2021 10:20 AM
73	The repurposing of surplus school sites seems counterintuitive since additional housing would imply the need for additional school sites.	3/15/2021 7:08 PM
74	None	3/15/2021 6:13 PM
75	Repurposing commercial properties can have an adverse effect - by getting rid of potential sites that can provide employment to those who would need housing.	3/15/2021 5:46 PM
76	Having mixed use spaces for living and retail/restaurants creates a small town living that many newer southern cities have done.	3/15/2021 5:46 PM
77	None	3/15/2021 5:41 PM
78	Do NOT redevelop Dove Canyon Plaza due to traffic issues. Dove Canyon's gated community has one way in/out. In an emergency ingress for emergency vehicles and egress for homeowners would be a major problem	3/13/2021 3:00 PM
79	N/A	3/9/2021 2:54 PM
80	I think it betrayed the staff/city's bias in priorities to list ADUs first and underdeveloped/undeveloped sites last.	3/5/2021 1:04 PM
81	housing with commercial is a proven winner. Housing in factories is third world or otherwise unacceptable you should not ask.	3/3/2021 9:46 PM
82	Mixed use seems like a good compromise	3/2/2021 8:03 PM
83	None	3/2/2021 7:09 PM
84	To minimize impact on property values and to the extent allowed under law, areas identified for new housing should be zoned for like, or near like, properties in the surrounding communities.	3/2/2021 6:42 PM
85	no low-income housing near schools	3/2/2021 3:20 PM
86	none	3/2/2021 2:11 PM
87	only build single family, condos, duplexes that add value to RSM-not multi-family apartment buildings.	3/1/2021 11:29 PM
88	I hope we don't end up like Irvine with all of those towering apartments/condos with businesses, but if we do maybe we could limit to 3 stories. I don't want RSM to turn into little Los Angeles like Irvine has.	3/1/2021 9:26 PM
89	ADUs for non-extended family members may create a chaotic environment within the single family neighborhoods. It sounds like the state is forcing the cities to provide what the market will not otherwise support. Additionally, the denser the population, the less desirable the City, the harder to maintain peace. RSM is a quite bedroom community and low-income housing would require a huge increase in city expenses and services.	3/1/2021 7:25 PM
90	on street parking is a problem in many areas, especially those near condos and apartments. Allowing ADU's would exacerbate this problem	3/1/2021 5:38 PM
91	Is there vacant land available?	3/1/2021 5:29 PM
92	N/A	2/28/2021 2:32 PM
93	The only neighborhood commercial center I know that is being considered for residential is the Dove Canyon Center. This is an unacceptable plan which will create a traffic nightmare and	2/28/2021 11:07 AM

	reduce property values in Dove Canyon. The high school already makes traffic and parking horrible, more residential units will make it 10 times worse.	
94	We need to ensure that we add an incremental proportion of infrastructure to the city to ensure we do not lose our character. This includes parks, commercial, public transit, and public services.	2/28/2021 10:52 AM
95	Not happy about more homes or apts. it will create more traffic etc..	2/28/2021 8:28 AM
96	Do not close any of the few grocery shopping centers or school grounds	2/27/2021 8:32 PM
97	Development of mix use in business areas with retail on the bottom floor and condo's above as long as it is not in a neighborhood setting. This should be a business area.	2/27/2021 10:06 AM
98	It would be nice to have artist housing along with gallery space within the building and other mixed use space like coffee shops, juice bar, wine bar, restaurant, cheese shop, furniture store, etc	2/26/2021 9:40 AM
99	No high density housing as it will be traffic and (low income families/crime) to this beautiful city	2/26/2021 12:33 AM
100	Please consider the fire risk and evacuation, more housing proposes a risk.	2/25/2021 8:08 PM
101	At some point, enough is enough. Some of the current apartment location are jammed with tenants. Street parking is turning into a mess.	2/25/2021 3:48 PM
102	Use space that will not affect the safety of existing residents. Including not creating more traffic, and will not create risks in case of the need to evacuate due to fires.	2/25/2021 3:46 PM
103	Development small neighborhood centers into high density residential areas poses a significant danger in the event of an emergency like a wildfire. By their nature, neighborhood centers are not on main arteries and with a one way in/one way out traffic flow, one emergency can cause extreme danger and loss of life.	2/25/2021 3:41 PM
104	I do not believe it is fair to residents to change zoning. Do not rezone areas.	2/25/2021 3:33 PM
105	Residential in failing business areas	2/25/2021 2:49 PM
106	We were one of the first residents of RSM. There is already enough congestion in RSM. Do not make things worse by cramming condos into tiny areas that do not have enough parking accommodations. This was already done with Dalia Court. What a terrible decision. Do NOT do the same thing to the shopping center near Dove Canyon. There is already enough congestion on this street with all the residents and the school children using Dove Canyon Drive each day. Keep in mind, there is only one entrance/exit to Dove Canyon. Can you imaging what would happen in an emergency situation if you cram more housing into that area?	2/25/2021 2:35 PM
107	Re-purposing RSM's commercial centers is not the right move as it is the only major income for the City. Housing does not provide the funding the City needs in these locations. Most lots in RSM are small so adding ADU's won't work either and if the housing tract already has parking issues there is no need to compound it.	2/24/2021 8:47 PM
108	Adding ADUs to existing residential properties should NOT be an option as this will cause more traffic and further stress existing infrastructure and will additionally be in direct conflict with HOA CC&Rs.	2/24/2021 1:36 PM
109	n/a	2/24/2021 9:51 AM
110	Trade offs were not discussed. Taking commercial property compromises city revenue; location of any of the above spaces such as with high risk fire zones, flood channels, lack of public transportation which could lead to more vehicles and congestion, lack of road infrastructure when there is an evacuation requirement due to incidents like wildfires.	2/24/2021 7:07 AM
111	Whether any particular site is suitable will have to be analyzed on a case by case basis. Sites should be integrated into the community and accessible to transportation, shopping & jobs.	2/23/2021 2:21 PM
112	Undeveloped areas should, logically, be high on the list. Mixed use (office/residential, commercial/residential) should also be considered as a priority.	2/23/2021 1:23 PM
113	n/a	2/23/2021 9:49 AM
114	unknown	2/23/2021 9:38 AM

Q6 Is there anything else you'd like us to know about planning to meet RHNA?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 127

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Our area is already clogged with traffic. And you will need a car to reach many basic services. And businesses.	3/27/2021 8:39 AM
2	Can you share the results of this survey.	3/26/2021 1:24 PM
3	No.	3/25/2021 7:02 AM
4	Would like to hear more about water supplies to serve more homes. We barely have adequate water pressure and our water has become significantly more expensive in the last few years...more than triple in fact	3/24/2021 5:04 PM
5	I am disheartened as I dont think it will matter. 680 units doesnt seem like enough to share the burden of the asinine housing costs.	3/24/2021 4:57 PM
6	NA	3/24/2021 3:44 PM
7	None	3/24/2021 3:18 PM
8	No	3/24/2021 10:40 AM
9	Hoping there will be no homeless shelter type housing.	3/24/2021 6:57 AM
10	No.	3/23/2021 11:17 AM
11	RSM was planned many years ago however I believe it was efficiently designed and those living in RSM do not want a crowded feel. That is what made it charming. I hope that vacant land can be used to accommodate the HCD housing mandate.	3/23/2021 10:35 AM
12	none	3/23/2021 8:36 AM
13	Na	3/22/2021 9:12 PM
14	How is it that a master planned community such as RSM is required to add 680 units??? That seems ridiculous.	3/22/2021 7:04 PM
15	What is happening with the Chiquita Ridge project? The Dove Canyon Shopping Center should be reviewed for redevelopment; the nimbyism demonstrated by Dove Canyon residents is exactly what has resulted in the state taking such an aggressive approach with cities. As we look to accommodate additional housing, we need to seriously plan for evacuation routes in times of emergency and possibly look for another ingress/egress point for the city (another bridge?) as well as account for other impacts to infrastructure and services (water, schools, public safety, etc.).	3/22/2021 6:04 PM
16	Dangerous to plan housing in Dove Canyon Center. One way out of Dove Canyon to evacuate during wildfires.	3/20/2021 7:23 PM
17	Please consider traffic patterns and major intersections, especially bottlenecks, when exploring potential sites.	3/19/2021 3:58 PM
18	Affordable housing for a range of income levels is critical for a heathy and vibrant community	3/19/2021 10:52 AM
19	As I said above the congestion on our roads and in parking lots around RSM is already too impacted... with more house has to be a plan to accommodate all the people on the roads... I didn't see anything here addressing that.	3/19/2021 10:30 AM
20	Do not comply with the demands of Newsom	3/19/2021 8:27 AM
21	Always remember that traffic patterns and evacuation plans have to be taken into account. The Do e canyon plaza proposal is not in the best interests of the community due to traffic issues, utility problems, and existing zoning.	3/18/2021 3:35 PM
22	options should minimize extra traffic while preserving stores and services for the community.	3/18/2021 10:41 AM
23	We are watching. Developers are aggressive, don't be weak. Dove Canyon plaza is just a small example of us citizens putting up with their fuckery.	3/18/2021 9:19 AM
24	Anyway around it	3/17/2021 10:44 PM
25	please do not allow med density residential to be built in Dove Canyon Plaza	3/17/2021 6:40 PM
26	why has no effort been made to acquire land along trabuco in the area between rsm blvd and the area where trabuco decends into the canyon?	3/17/2021 6:14 PM
27	NA	3/17/2021 5:25 PM
28	-	3/17/2021 3:52 PM
29	Maybe the state should pay residents to move to another state so they can accommodate the assumed influx of these potential renters.	3/17/2021 2:55 PM

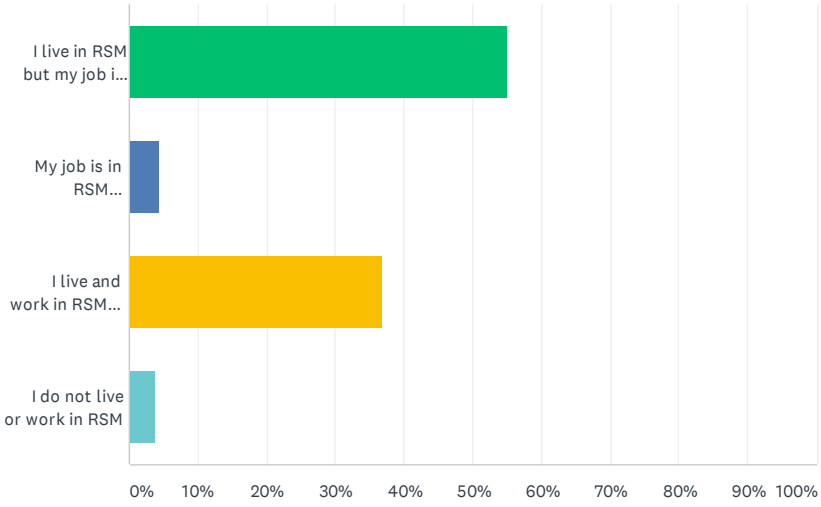
30	Do not turn Dove Canyon Center into a residential zone....too much traffic and congestion.	3/17/2021 1:51 PM
31	More low income housing. Rent for a one bedroom apartment costing nearly the same as a mortgage is unsustainable and recipe for collapse.	3/17/2021 1:09 PM
32	I would love to get more involved with the ADU committee or if there is not any, I would love to help to help to start it in our City. Niloofar Badihi	3/17/2021 11:50 AM
33	Na	3/17/2021 11:20 AM
34	Enforce the use of fire resistant material with any new building	3/17/2021 11:06 AM
35	Consider impact on local neighbors and how to integrate those new housing units into a surrounding neighborhood, including safety, existing traffic and need for water and other infrastructure needs.	3/17/2021 11:01 AM
36	No	3/17/2021 9:39 AM
37	Don't take property that would ruin the look of RSM.	3/17/2021 9:37 AM
38	As a planned community with some undeveloped land please consider using undeveloped first before rezoning which in many cases would not conform to the cities original master plan.	3/17/2021 9:22 AM
39	No	3/17/2021 5:43 AM
40	Existing business sites should be re-configured to Mixed Use: business/residential housing.	3/16/2021 11:00 PM
41	No	3/16/2021 10:24 PM
42	I don’t believe anyone who doesn’t live in RSM should have any say as to what we as a community must or must not do with regard to the make up of our community.	3/16/2021 9:41 PM
43	I feel that an existing neighborhood should not be affected by removing the local shopping, restaurants, and daycare in order to place more homes. You are taking away our concurrence and adding more congestion.	3/16/2021 9:11 PM
44	DONT REZONE DOVE CANYON PLAZA!!!	3/16/2021 8:31 PM
45	N/a	3/16/2021 7:30 PM
46	Low income and multifamily housing does not benefit this market area	3/16/2021 6:42 PM
47	Small homes less than 2,500 sf.	3/16/2021 6:20 PM
48	Please do not change residential area commercial space into residential. This does not help the communities they are in and only adds more people into a space that isn't suited for such. This also bring more crime into an area as well.	3/16/2021 6:10 PM
49	No	3/16/2021 6:06 PM
50	If new high density buildings are planned, I would like to see them incorporate a range of income levels. I don’t want to see a huge complex with only lower income housing. I would like to see a mix of income levels in one complex.	3/16/2021 5:22 PM
51	No	3/16/2021 5:20 PM
52	Why we are just now hearing about SCAG and RHNA legislation	3/16/2021 5:18 PM
53	Not at this time	3/16/2021 5:06 PM
54	No.	3/16/2021 4:53 PM
55	No	3/16/2021 4:53 PM
56	None	3/16/2021 4:49 PM
57	none	3/16/2021 4:44 PM
58	no	3/16/2021 4:42 PM
59	Planning to meet RHNA requirements should not be made at the expense of the safety and quality of life currently enjoyed by RSM City residents. So placing living units near work evironments, which would not increase traffic and noise and cause safety problems in high risk fire areas, will be key.	3/16/2021 4:35 PM
60	NA	3/16/2021 4:32 PM
61	Who are these people and where do they live? Investigate that and find out how many very low income homes they are putting in their back yards. HELLO. How many shopping centers and Churches are they ripping up??? HELLO Surely someone on the council must have a curious mind. If I cook food and I have you come over to eat then I sit there and do not eat my own cooking it would speak volumes. If they live some place and they are not doing this too where they are or doing in a very limited way then you can tell them to pound sand in court. You would win.	3/16/2021 4:18 PM
62	No	3/16/2021 4:12 PM
63	It’s unfair to force communities to build housing that isn’t wanted by the residents. I highly doubt more affluent coastal communities (Laguna, Newport, etc) are making space for high density low income housing.	3/16/2021 4:04 PM
64	Traffic please do not make RSM another Irvine where you sit light to light in peak hours.	3/16/2021 3:59 PM

65	Fight it, stop them from telling us we need to bring low income earners into our community that will lower our standard of life and quality of our community.	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
66	Please remember safety over $.	3/16/2021 3:59 PM
67	No	3/16/2021 3:56 PM
68	RSM can only accommodate 680 more sites by converting existing office sites. Traffic will negatively impacted	3/16/2021 3:43 PM
69	RSM has no room for new housing, there is plenty of housing already.	3/16/2021 3:07 PM
70	Please do not over develop this city.	3/16/2021 10:20 AM
71	Consider where the natural resources would come from and the additional demand on placed on infrastructure such as roads, sewer systems internet. Also would there be a need to add additional SAMLARC parks or other common areas to support the additional people in the town Consider annexing the Las Flores neighborhoods to negotiate fewer homes in future requirements	3/15/2021 7:08 PM
72	No	3/15/2021 6:13 PM
73	Are you planning on improving infrastructure to meet the planned increase in housing and residents?	3/15/2021 5:46 PM
74	None	3/15/2021 5:41 PM
75	Write your Congress representative. Use undeveloped land onlyfor the RHNA plan	3/13/2021 3:00 PM
76	It would be great if you would treat this obligation as though you GOT to do it instead of you HAD to do it.	3/5/2021 1:04 PM
77	Factories are not homes.	3/3/2021 9:46 PM
78	No	3/2/2021 7:09 PM
79	No	3/2/2021 6:42 PM
80	good luck	3/2/2021 3:20 PM
81	no	3/2/2021 2:11 PM
82	Recalling Governor Newsom would help. The democrat leadership in this state wants more multi-family, low income housing to expand their base. It's not fair to cities for Sacramento to dictate that they have to add more housing.	3/1/2021 11:29 PM
83	We have a very small town with very little land left to build on. It doesn't seem fair that we are expected to build so many homes when there's so much vacant land in other communities, and it's obviously going to end up being apartments and worse, mixed use apartments.	3/1/2021 9:26 PM
84	I feel like there is a large amount of condo and apartment living here in RSM. Ideally, we would have a greater mix of single family homes in neighborhoods than adding more attached homes.	3/1/2021 8:05 PM
85	Is it possible to change the State laws? That might be the best tack.	3/1/2021 7:25 PM
86	Find a way to incentivize development AND property holders to be receptive to inclusion of affordable housing. Consider innovative ways to combat NIMBY-ism create tangible, monetary benefits to property owners as affordable housing is developed. By providing a direct benefit to residents of the city, people are more likely to support the effort vs oppose it.	3/1/2021 6:41 PM
87	no	3/1/2021 5:38 PM
88	No	3/1/2021 5:29 PM
89	Residents already have limited commercial options in RSM and limited job opportunities. Commercial space should not be reduced to provide housing as it is these commercial spaces that make for a vibrant community where people want to live and work.	3/1/2021 4:58 PM
90	We need Permanent Supportive Housing to provide for the successful integration of unhoused children, individuals and families	2/28/2021 2:32 PM
91	This mandated RHNA will destroy our city, can this be fought in court?	2/28/2021 9:43 AM
92	Please do not allow this to happen	2/28/2021 8:28 AM
93	All areas around toll roads are open. Remove toll roads!	2/27/2021 8:32 PM
94	In consideration of all the land available in California, rather than forcing city's to become over populated, there should be consideration to develop area's in the inland with supporting infrastructure.	2/27/2021 10:06 AM
95	We need to keep as much wild open space for our wildlife as possible. Combining mixed use space in a thoughtful and engaging way is the wave of the future	2/26/2021 9:40 AM
96	If must, develop closer to neighboring city and not near the city center	2/26/2021 12:33 AM
97	I believe there is undeveloped land at the north end of Antonio street and east of Antonio street and North of Las Flores. Those areas should be fine for more medium density homes.	2/25/2021 6:36 PM
98	I wish we didn’t have to add more housing units to our lovely area	2/25/2021 5:30 PM
99	All the best. Let's keep our city beautiful!	2/25/2021 3:48 PM

100	If Dove Canyon plaza is developed it should be developed as single-family homes, not multi-dwelling units. I have lived in RSM for the last 18 years because of the access to open space, and the lack of traffic, and most of all the low crime rate. I do not want this to change.	2/25/2021 3:46 PM
101	There are ample opportunities in RSM to get creative with mixed use housing without putting residents in danger in an emergency or compromising the open space that is vital to the heart of the city.	2/25/2021 3:41 PM
102	Try to get out of it. RSM is already overcrowded with limited evacuation routes. Trapped to the East with Cleveland National Forest	2/25/2021 2:49 PM
103	We need to prove to RHNA that they need to pay RSM a visit in person instead of sitting behind a desk and see that the only buildable land left is in High Fire Severity Zones. If SB-55 passes then where do they want us to build?	2/24/2021 8:47 PM
104	n/a	2/24/2021 9:51 AM
105	What are RHNA priorities within the context of providing more homes: I understand housing, but resident well being or the difficulties in getting fire insurance or just high fire insurance seem to be ignored. Developers or city will need to plan for road infrastructure to safety accomodate residents evacuating from our communities.	2/24/2021 7:07 AM
106	There is an interesting development in Encinitas that is farm-focused that might work well in RSM. RSM needs to have wonderful places to live for all income levels. Young people & families bring vitality to a city. Underperforming shopping centers and underutilized office space that may never be filled post-COVID as many folks continue to work from home may be good sites for development. I look forward to RSM becoming a leader in providing housing for many of the people who work in this city but can't afford to live here. We need supportive housing for those who need it as well. Let's be innovative & make RSM a dynamic, inclusive place to live.	2/23/2021 2:21 PM
107	Nothing I can think of.	2/23/2021 1:23 PM
108	This is heavy handed government garbage policy designed to make a beautiful city into a dump like Santa Ana. Resist the strong arm tactics. My for sale sign is primed and ready if Rancho becomes another Moreno Valley hell hole because of some pipe dream of social equity being force-fed to our city.	2/23/2021 9:49 AM
109	unknown	2/23/2021 9:38 AM

Q7 Do you live and/or work in Rancho Santa Margarita?Note: Whether or not you are a resident, your input will still help the City plan to meet long-term housing needs.

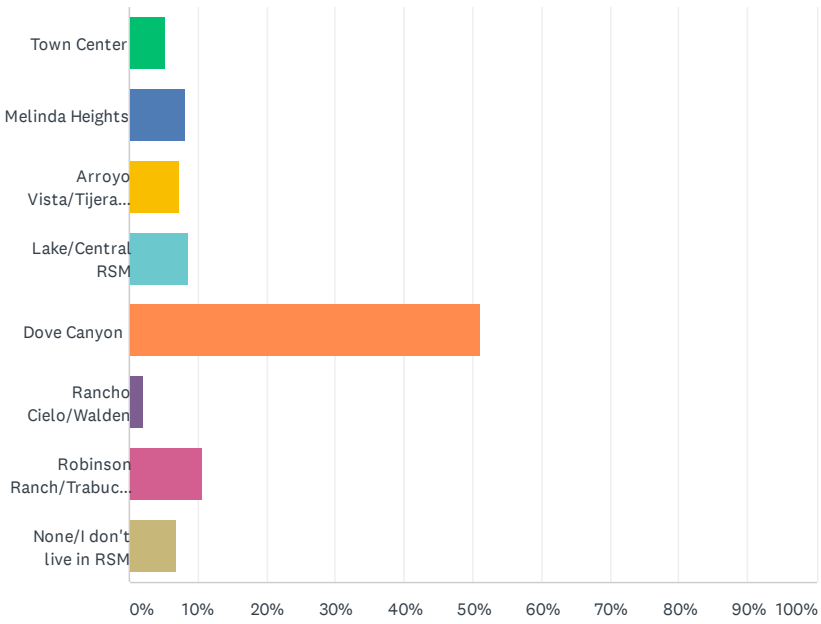
Answered: 233 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in RSM but my job is located somewhere else (pre-pandemic conditions)	54.94%	128
My job is in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions) but I live somewhere else	4.29%	10
I live and work in RSM (pre-pandemic conditions)	36.91%	86
I do not live or work in RSM	3.86%	9
TOTAL		233

Q8 Using the map below for reference, in which area of RSM do you live? If you do not live in RSM, please select "None/I don't live in RSM".

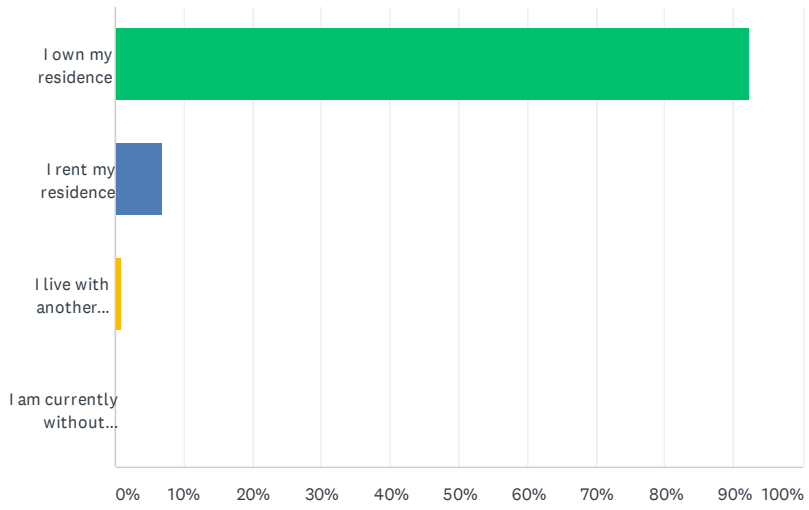
Answered: 233 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Town Center	5.15%	12
Melinda Heights	8.15%	19
Arroyo Vista/Tijeras Creek	7.30%	17
Lake/Central RSM	8.58%	20
Dove Canyon	51.07%	119
Rancho Cielo/Walden	2.15%	5
Robinson Ranch/Trabuco Highland	10.73%	25
None/I don't live in RSM	6.87%	16
Total Respondents: 233		

Q9 Do you currently own or rent your residence?

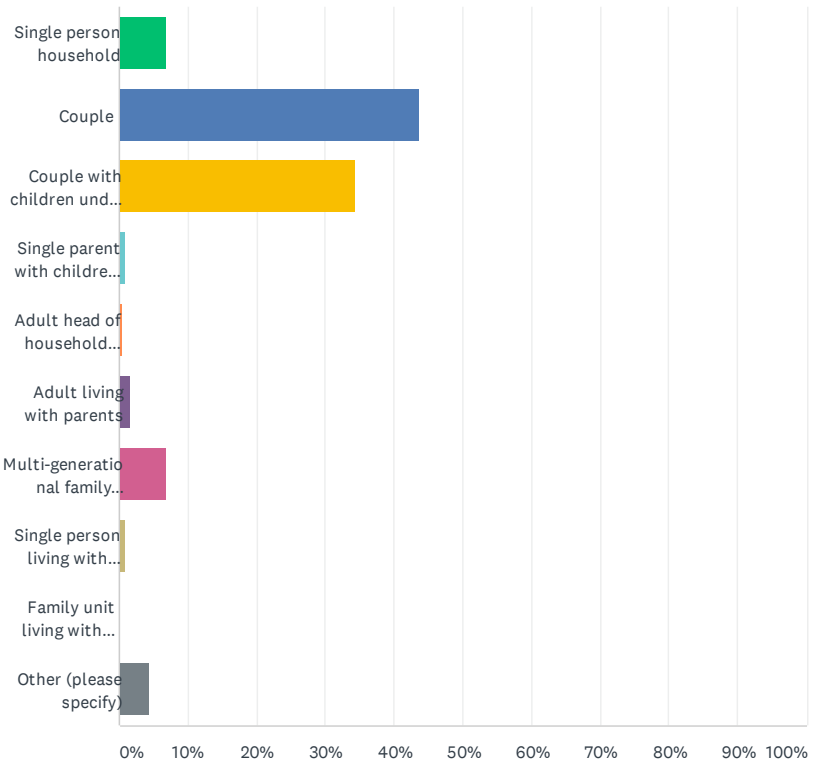
Answered: 232 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I own my residence	92.24%	214
I rent my residence	6.90%	16
I live with another household (neither own nor rent)	0.86%	2
I am currently without permanent shelter	0.00%	0
TOTAL		232

Q10 Which of the following best describes your household type?

Answered: 233 Skipped: 3



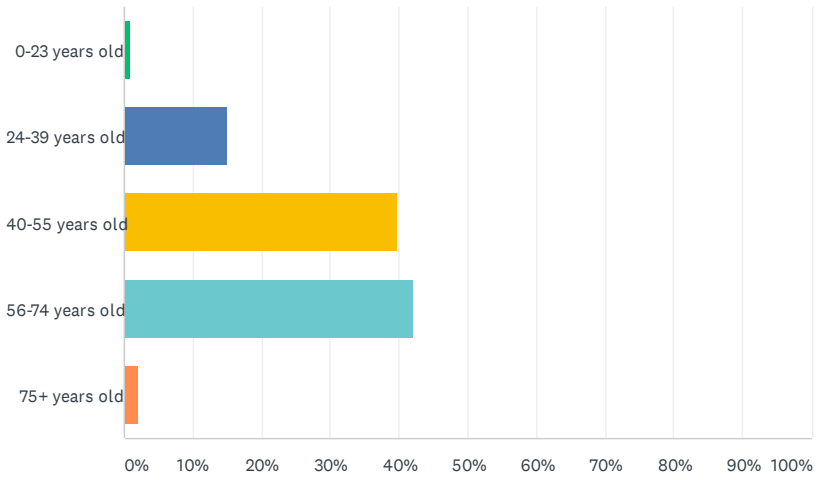
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single person household	6.87%	16
Couple	43.78%	102
Couple with children under 18	34.33%	80
Single parent with children under 18	0.86%	2
Adult head of household (non-parent) with children under 18	0.43%	1
Adult living with parents	1.72%	4
Multi-generational family household (grandparents, children, and/or grandchildren all under the same roof)	6.87%	16
Single person living with roommates	0.86%	2
Family unit living with roommates	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	4.29%	10
TOTAL		233

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Couple with children over 18	3/18/2021 3:38 PM
2	Family with adult children	3/18/2021 10:52 AM
3	Couple with 18 year old twins. About to go to college	3/17/2021 1:07 PM
4	Parents with 2 children under age 25	3/17/2021 5:46 AM
5	Couple with children over 18	3/16/2021 8:35 PM
6	Single parent with children over 18	3/16/2021 7:46 PM
7	Retired Widow with a Adult son- Husband died a yr ago	3/16/2021 4:25 PM
8	Couple with adult children living at home	3/15/2021 7:14 PM
9	Couple w/ in-law	3/7/2021 4:02 PM

10	single parent with child over 18	3/6/2021 1:01 PM

Q11 What age range most accurately describes you?

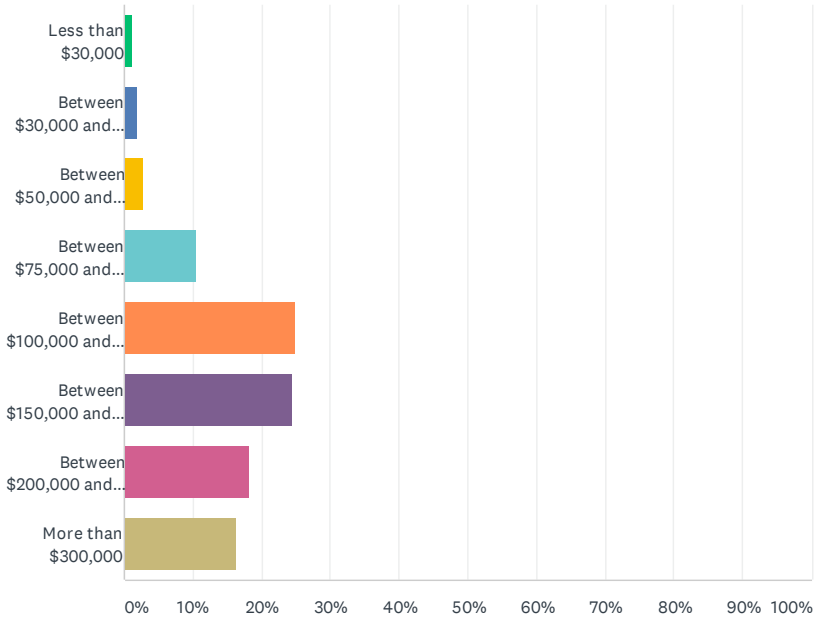
Answered: 231 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-23 years old	0.87%	2
24-39 years old	15.15%	35
40-55 years old	39.83%	92
56-74 years old	41.99%	97
75+ years old	2.16%	5
TOTAL		231

Q12 What is your annual household income?

Answered: 221 Skipped: 15



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than $30,000	1.36%	3
Between $30,000 and $49,999	1.81%	4
Between $50,000 and $74,999	2.71%	6
Between $75,000 and $99,999	10.41%	23
Between $100,000 and $150,000	24.89%	55
Between $150,000 and $200,000	24.43%	54
Between $200,000 and $300,000	18.10%	40
More than $300,000	16.29%	36
TOTAL		221

Note: Pages 24-30 contain the contact information for persons who signed-up for notifications. This information has been removed from this summary.

Appendix E:

"Other Respondent" Responses to Surveys #1 and #2

Survey #1

Survey 1, Question 4: Do you currently own or rent your residence?

- Of other responses, most (64%) own their own residence, with 36% of respondents renting.

Survey 1, Question 6: Select the type of housing that best describes your current home.

- Of other responses, the majority (86%) live in a single-family home, with the next highest category being multi-family homes (7%).

Survey 1, Question 24: Which of the following best describes your household type?

- Of other responses, the most common types of households include couples (50%), followed by adult living with parents (25%). The remaining other responses was evenly split between single-person households and couples with children under 18.

Survey 1, Question 27: What age range most accurately describes you?

- Of other responses, respondents were primarily 56-74 years old (56%). The remaining age groups were evenly split with 11% each.

Survey 1, Question 5: If you wish to own a home in Rancho Santa Margarita but do not currently own one, what issues are preventing you from owning a home at this time? Select all that apply.

- Of other responses, the majority (54%) expressed the opinion that they do not wish to own or rent in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Survey 1, Question 13: Based on your monthly income before taxes, how much of your monthly income do you spend on housing?

- Of other responses:
    - Less than 30% of income spent on housing (56%)
    - Between 30%-50% of income spent on housing (33%)
    - More than 50% of income spent on housing (11%)

Survey 1, Question 11: How would you rate the physical condition of the residence you live in?

- Of other responses, approximately 31% answered that their residence showed signs of minor deferred maintenance such as peeling paint or chipped stucco.

Survey 1, Question 8: Which of the following housing upgrades or expansions have you considered making on your home?

- Of other responses:
    - Kitchen or bathroom remodels (38%)
    - Painting (31%)
    - Solar (31%)
    - Roofing (23%)
    - HVAC (23%)
    - Room addition (15%)
    - Accessory dwelling Unit (15%)
    - None (15%)
    - Other (15%)

Survey 1, Question 7: How satisfied are you with your current housing situation?

- Of other responses:
    - I am very satisfied (43%)
    - I am somewhat satisfied (43%)
    - I am somewhat dissatisfied 14%)

Survey 1, Question 9: Do you think that the range of housing options currently available in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita meets the needs of the community?

- Of other responses:
    - Yes (62%)
    - No (38%)

Survey 1, Question 10: What types of additional housing are most needed in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? (Select all that apply).

- Of other responses:
    - Single-family (detached) (38%)
    - Senior Housing (38%)
    - Other (38%)
    - Duplex/Attached Housing (31%)
    - Condominiums (multifamily ownership homes) (31%)
    - Apartments (multifamily rental homes) (31%)
    - Accessory Dwelling Unit (Granny Flat or Guest House) (31%)

Survey 1, Question 26: If you are currently employed, approximately how long is your one-way commute to work?

- Of other responses:
    - I am not currently employed (38%)
    - Less than 5 miles (25%)
    - I am employed, but work from home (25%)
    - 10-25 miles (13%)

Survey 1, Question 25: Has the Coronavirus impacted your housing situation?

- Of other responses:
    - Yes (13%)
    - No (88%)

Survey 1, Question 14: How important are the following factors in your housing choice?

- Of other responses:
    - Housing I can afford (90%)
    - The amount of money I have/had for deposit (90%)
    - Housing was available in the neighborhood I chose at the time I needed it (89%)
    - My credit history and/or credit score (80%)
    - Housing large enough for my household (78%)

Survey 1, Question 15: How important are the following housing priorities to you and your household?

- Of other responses:
    - Support programs to help neighborhoods that have suffered foreclosures (90%)
    - Provide more housing for all income levels (89%)
    - Promote affordable housing for working families (89%)
    - Support fair/equitable housing opportunities (89%)
    - Encourage more senior housing (80%)
    - Ensure that children who grow up in Rancho Santa Margarita can afford to live in Rancho Santa Margarita as adults (80%)
    - Establish programs to help at-risk homeowners keep their homes, including mortgage loan programs (80%)
    - Create mixed-use projects to bring different land uses closer together (78%)
    - Provide ADA-accessible housing (70%)

- Rehabilitate existing housing (67%)
- Integrate affordable housing throughout the community to create mixed-income neighborhoods (67%)
- Build more multi-family housing such as apartments and condos (55%)
- Build more single-family housing (60%)
- Provide housing for the homeless (56%)

Survey 1, Question 16: Please respond to each statement

- Of other responses:
  - There are grocery stores close to my neighborhood (80%)
  - There are banks and credit unions near where I live (80%)
  - There is a pharmacy close to my house (80%)
  - There are plenty of other public spaces near my home (80%)
  - There is a public library close to my house (80%)
  - The streets and sidewalks near my home are well kept (80%)
  - The streets and sidewalks in my neighborhood have adequate lighting (70%)
  - There are plenty of parks, playgrounds, or green space near me (70%)
  - The condition of the homes in my neighborhood are acceptable (60%)
  - I am satisfied with the schools in my area (50%)

Survey 1, Question 17: The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. Of those, which do you think is the biggest problem in housing discrimination in RSM?

- Of other responses:
  - Race/Ethnicity (44%)
  - Other (please specify) (33%)
  - Color (physical appearance) (11%)
  - National Origin (11%)
  - Religion (0%)
  - Sex (0%)
  - Familial status (0%)
  - Disability (0%)

Survey 1, Question 18: Have you ever experienced or witnessed housing discrimination in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita?

- Of other responses:
    - Yes (0% or no responses)
    - No (60% or 6 responses)
    - I don't know (40% or 4 responses)
- Of other responses for the prior question, no discriminatory factors were identified.

Survey 1, Question 20: Do you know of anyone in Rancho Santa Margarita who has faced the following: (select all that apply)

- Of other responses:
    - 100% of respondents indicated they didn't know of anyone who had encountered these unfair practices

Survey 2

Survey 2, Question 9: Do you currently own or rent your residence?

- Of other responses, the majority (89%) own their own residence, with 11% of respondents renting.

Survey 2, Question 10: Which of the following best describes your household type?

- Of other responses, the most common types of households include couples and couples with children younger than 18 (44% each), followed by unlisted household type (11%), such as couples with adult children living with them

Survey 2, Question 11: What age range most accurately describes you?

- Of other responses, respondents were primarily 40-55 years old (38%), followed by 56-74 years old (25%). The remaining age groups were evenly split with 13% each.

Survey 2, Question 12: What is your annual household income?

- Of other responses, most households made between $100,000 and $150,000 (50%), followed by households making between $150,000 and $200,000 (38%), and households making between $75,000 and $99,999 (13%).

Survey 2, Question 1: Please identify the top development types that you believe are most suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita

- Of other responses:
    - Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (78%)
    - Repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses (67%)

- Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (56%)
- Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (44%)
- Workforce housing in the business park (44%)

Survey 2, Question 2: Please identify the top development types that you believe are least suitable for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita

- Of other responses:
  - Accessory Dwelling Units (56%)
  - Repurposing of office sites to residential uses (33%)
  - Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses (33%)
  - Workforce housing in the business park (33%)

Survey 2, Question 3: Please rank the following general development types from most suitable (#1) to least suitable (#11) for future study to accommodate the State-mandated RHNA of 680 units in Rancho Santa Margarita.

- Of other responses, the most suitable development types were identified as repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses, accessory dwelling units, repurposing of general commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses, repurposing of office sites to residential uses, and development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites. Results were neither favorable nor unfavorable for repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to accommodate a mix of uses. The least suitable development types were identified as housing on church sites, repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers to residential uses, workforce housing in the business park, and repurposing of surplus school property for residential uses.

7. Focus Group Summary

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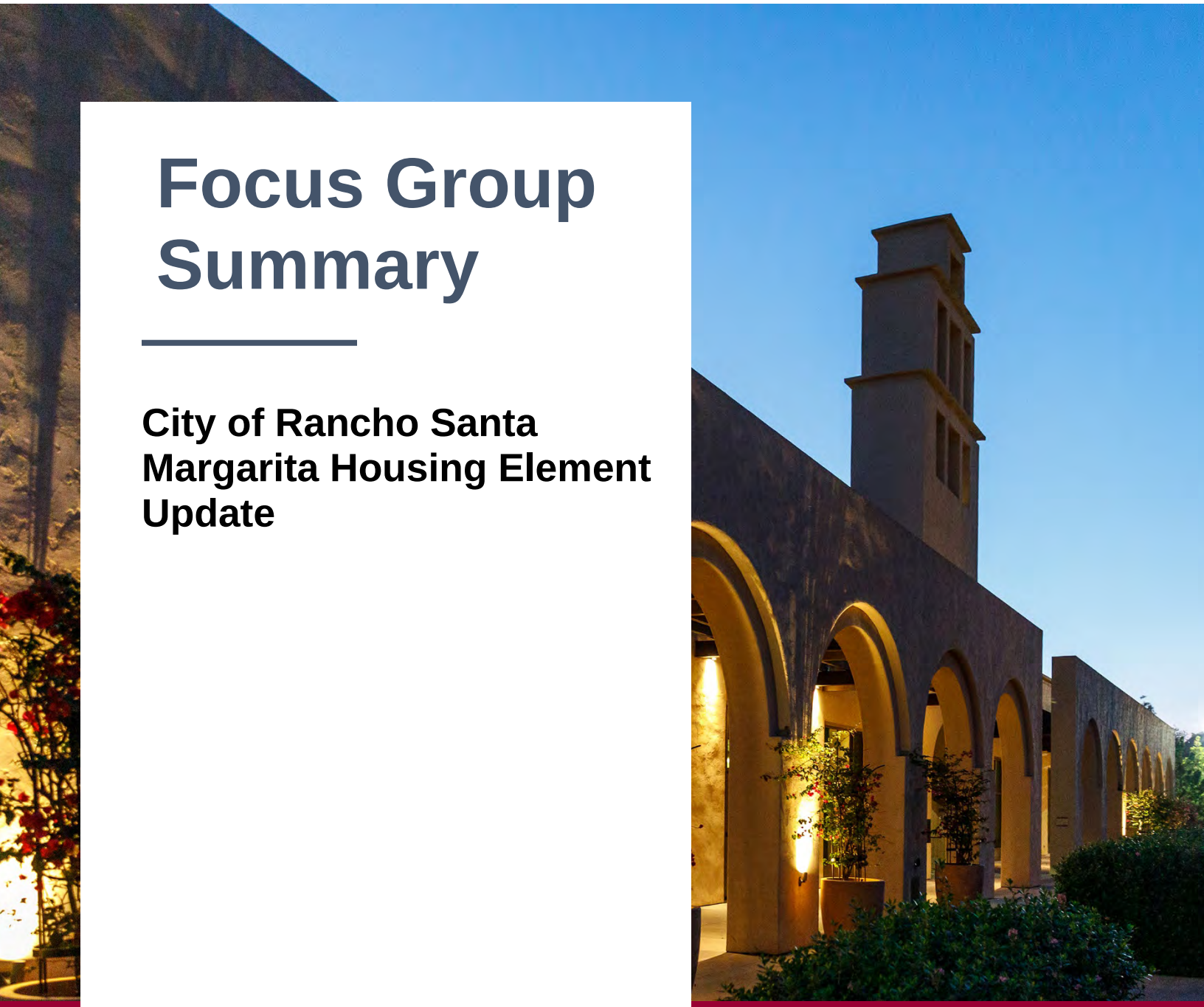

Focus Group Summary

City of Rancho Santa Margarita Housing Element Update

May 2021

In partnership with De Novo Planning Group

Introduction

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) is updating its Housing Element as part of the 2021-2029 Housing Element Cycle (Cycle 6). The Housing Element is a section of the City's General Plan that looks at housing needs and conditions within Rancho Santa Margarita. It is a State-mandated policy document that identifies goals, policies, and programs that the City uses to direct and guide actions related to housing.

Each city and county in California is required to have a Housing Element and update it at least every eight years. Updating the Housing Element gives the City a clear picture of housing-related issues such as: housing supply and demand, the types of housing available within the City, housing affordability, and homelessness. Once the Housing Element is updated, it must be approved by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Updating the Housing Element will ensure that the City meets State requirements, and makes Rancho Santa Margarita eligible for State grants and other funding resources. It will also give elected and appointed officials clear guidance on housing issues facing Rancho Santa Margarita.

The State requires that every city and county must help accommodate new housing growth. Since people often live and work in different places, housing needs are assessed at a regional level based on population trends and other factors to determine how much growth each local jurisdiction will need to accommodate. This is called the "Regional Housing Needs Allocation" or "RHNA" for short. The RHNA quantifies the need for housing on a regional level, and then allocates a portion of new growth to each city and county. Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA allocation for the 2021-2029 planning period is 680 units. This means that the City of Rancho Santa Margarita is responsible for identifying areas that can accommodate 680 new housing units. Rancho Santa Margarita's RHNA allocation is divided into income categories, as detailed on the project website. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is NOT responsible for building new homes. However, Rancho Santa Margarita must demonstrate to HCD that there is enough land zoned for housing to accommodate the allocated share of new homes.

As part of the community outreach program for the Housing Element Update, the City facilitated an online survey to gain insight into the most acceptable development types to accommodate the City's RHNA. Through the "Development Types Survey", which is summarized under separate cover, the public identified the following development types as most acceptable to accommodate the RHNA:

1. Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites
2. Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses
3. Workforce housing in the business park
4. Accessory Dwelling Units

To gain additional direction on the most acceptable development types (or combination of development types), the City hosted five focus group meetings with various stakeholders. Focus group participants were provided an overview of all potential sites within the four categories listed above (as identified in the public survey), and the potential development capacity for each. Participants were asked to weigh-in on the opportunities and challenges associated with these development types, and provide direction on the most acceptable strategy to accommodate the City's RHNA while referencing *possible* scenarios, as illustrated in the table below. The scenarios were presented to the focus groups to help spark discussion, and are not intended to represent final recommendations or preferred strategies. Additional information, including maps of the potential development sites, are included in Appendix A.

HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

- **What scenarios or components of the scenarios are most acceptable?**
- **What components are least acceptable?**
- **Are there any other development types we should consider?**

Development Type	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E
Sphere of Influence	-	-	-	612 (SFD)	-
Chiquita Ridge	540 (MF)	-	86 (SFD)	-	-
Rose Canyon	-	-	-	28	100
Repurposing of Office Sites	30	640	464	-	440
Workforce Housing in the BP	60	-	90	-	90
Accessory Dwelling Units	40	40	40	40	40
Total	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**

The five focus group meetings included discussions with the following:

1. Community Association of Rancho (CAR) Members
2. Community Association of Rancho (CAR) Alternates
3. Applied Medical Representatives
4. Housing Advocates
5. At-Large Community Members

This Report, including its Appendices, summarizes the results of these focus groups.

Key Findings

- The repurposing of office sites was found to generally to be a very acceptable option among all the groups; reasons for this included the land, infrastructure and access are already in place, and the sites provide good proximity to services.. Most groups felt that this option is likely to be most acceptable to existing residents.
- With respect to the addition of Workforce Housing in the Business Park, focus group members were generally comfortable with the idea of allowing housing in the Business Park or other nonresidential areas (with owners' cooperation) which would include regulations for a maximum number of units or square feet of residential in this category.
- Four of the five groups were generally supportive of development at Chiquita Ridge. However, one group preferred to maintain it as open space.
- All groups were generally accepting of development at the Rose Canyon site, given that it is surrounded by residential uses, but agreed that further study is needed.
- The groups expressed mixed feelings about development in the Sphere of Influence citing access and wildfire issues as primary concerns regarding future development there.
- Three groups expressed specific concerns regarding development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ); however, some felt that development could occur in the VHFHSZ if planned properly.
- Within the Sphere of Influence area, many participants raised concerns about safe and secure access and the number of site development/planning issues that would need to be addressed through the project review process.
- The groups provided mixed input regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), with two groups finding ADUs as the least acceptable development option.
- Practical vehicular access to properties and impacts on traffic in all development scenarios was a main concern.
- Most focus group members preferred a combination of the development scenarios and thought that distributing units across several or all development types would result in the best chance to see actual production of housing units appropriate for different income levels.
- Housing Advocate group participants stressed a need for a diversity of housing for mixed incomes and providing affordable ownership units in addition to rental units.

Development Type/Site Review Summary

Development Type/Site	Acceptability
Accessory Dwelling Units	Mixed response, two groups found these to be the least acceptable development type, three were groups were neutral to mildly accepting
Chiquita Ridge	Four of the five groups supported further study of development on the City-owned Chiquita Ridge Property
Repurposing of Office Sites	Acceptable to all groups
Rose Canyon	All five groups found Rose Canyon to be an acceptable site, subject to further study
Sphere of Influence	Mixed reactions, while not completely unacceptable for future study, all groups expressed a variety of concerns related to future development in this area
Workforce Housing in Business Park	Acceptable to all groups with limitation on total amount

Common Questions

The following is a list of questions and answers which were discussed in each of the five focus groups.

Q: Is the City responsible for developing the number of homes identified in the RHNA?

A: The City is required to identify specific sites in the Housing Element and to zone them to accommodate the City's RHNA. The City must identify sites that can achieve objectives of the RHNA and cannot select sites that are completely infeasible. The City is not responsible for implementing or financing the development of housing. Once the zoning is in place, private developers may choose to develop housing on the selected sites. The City also cannot force any property owner to develop residential uses.

Q: What was methodology for determining number/percentage of units? Does it accurately reflect the needs of the City?

A: SCAG was allocated 1.3M housing units to accommodate in the region, and RSM was allocated 680 units. The State sets the income levels based upon Area Median Income (AMI). Orange County's AMI was $103,000 for 2020. The units and associated income categories are shown below:

Income Category	Number of Units	Percent of Total
Very-low Income (<50%AMI)	209	30.6%
Low-Income (50-80% AMI)	120	17.6%
Moderate Income (80-120% AMI)	125	18.3%
Above Moderate-Income (>120% AMI)	226	33.4%
Total	**680**	100%

The City does not agree with the allocation and did appeal it, but this appeal, along with essentially every other appeal, was denied by SCAG. Additional appeals are not available, therefore the City is required to move forward to plan for the RHNA in order to comply with State law. For a list of potential penalties the City would face for not complying with Housing Element law, visit the project website.

Q: How were most/least acceptable development types determined?

A: The most/least acceptable potential development types were determined through a community survey that received 280 responses. Respondents were asked to indicate which development types they preferred and those they were not in favor of; open-ended questions also allowed for additional potential development types to be identified.

Q: Does the order of the development scenarios have any significance? Can they be combined, or must they be selected as is?

A: The development scenarios were provided as conversation starters to illustrate possible ways in which the development types could be combined to achieve the RHNA. The scenarios were intended to spur discussion, and the order does not have any meaning. It is likely that a hybrid scenario will be needed to achieve the RHNA of 680 units.

Appendices

A: Focus Group Meeting Presentation
B: CAR Member Focus Group Meeting Notes
C. CAR Alternates Focus Group Meeting Notes
D. Applied Medical Representative Focus Group Meeting Notes
E. Housing Advocate Focus Group Meeting Notes
F. Community Members At-Large Focus Group Meeting Notes

HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE AND DEVELOPMENT TYPE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

APRIL 2021

CHERYL KUTA, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR

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BACKGROUND

State Requirements for Cities

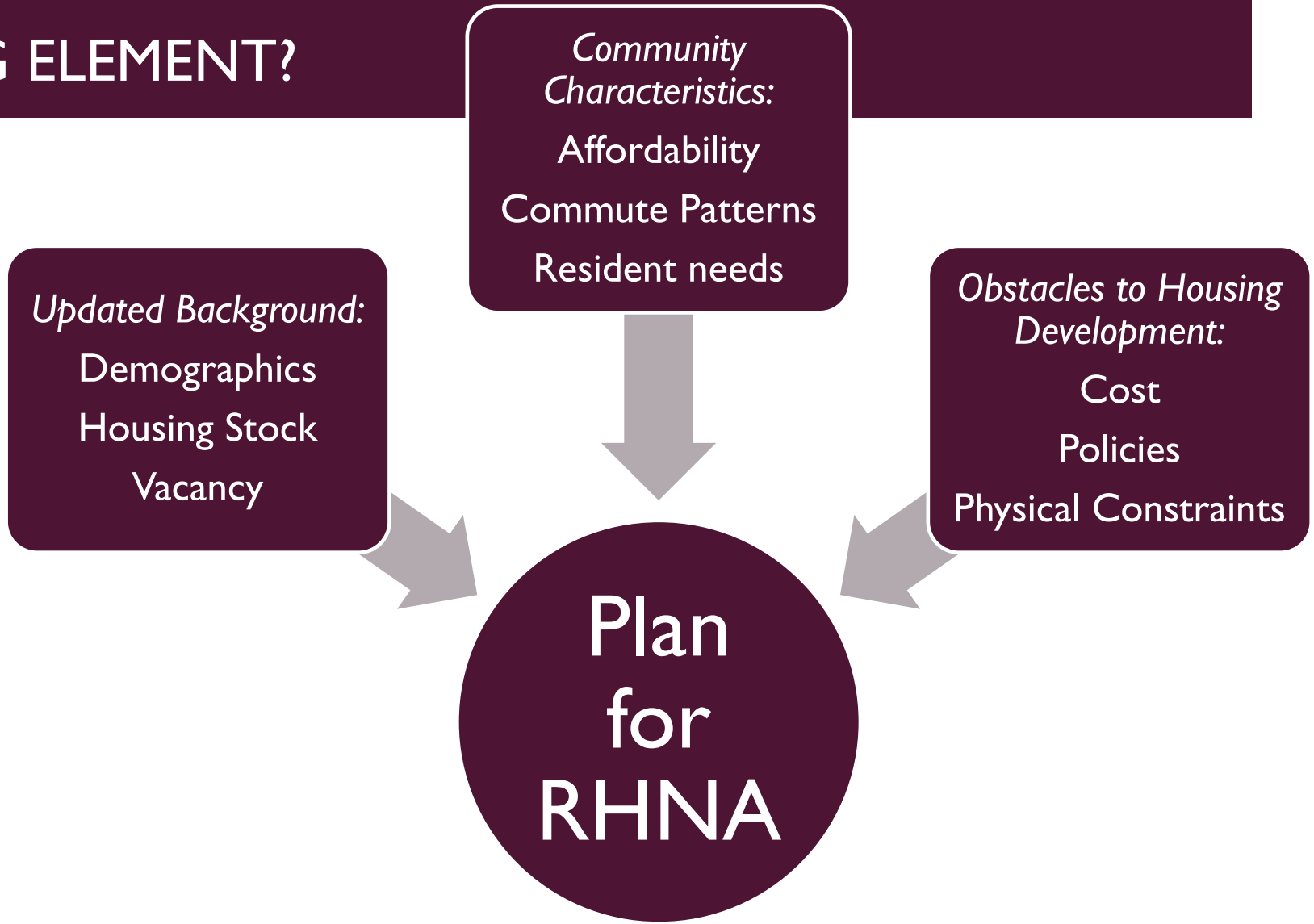
- General Plan with mandatory elements
- Housing Element must be updated **every eight years**
- CA Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
  - Sets regional housing need number
  - Reviews and certifies Housing Elements

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

- Council of Governments for six-county region: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura
- 197 jurisdictions in SCAG Region including 191 cities
- Distributes regional housing need from State
  - Methodology
  - Appeals
- SCAG Housing Element updates due for "6th Cycle" October 2021
- Adopts Regional Transportation Plan
- Orange County Council of Governments is a **subregional** entity (34 cities, County, Special Districts)

WHAT'S IN A HOUSING ELEMENT?

- Provides goals, policies and programs to guide the City's actions toward housing production… What does that mean??



REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (RHNA)

- 1,341,827 housing units to SCAG Region
  - Six counties: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura
  - 197 jurisdictions
- 183,430 housing units to Orange County
  - 34 Cities and County Unincorporated Areas
- Table shows sample of Orange County Cities' RHNA
- 3 cities with lower RHNA than RSM: Dana Point, Laguna Beach, Villa Park

Jurisdiction	RHNA
Rancho Santa Margarita	680
Aliso Viejo	1,193
Laguna Hills	1,980
Lake Forest	3,228
Mission Viejo	2,211
San Clemente	978
Irvine (highest in OC)	23,554
Villa Park (lowest in OC)	296

CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA 6TH CYCLE RHNA

- 6th Cycle Housing Element: October 2021 to October 2029 (8 years)
- Breakdown impacts the types and densities of units that need to be planned
- Compare to March 2020 General Plan – 580 dwelling units over 20 years
- The City needs to identify specific sites to accommodate its RHNA at all income categories

RSM RHNA Breakdown

Income Category	Number of Units	Percent of Total
Very-low Income (<50% AMI)	209	30.6%
Low Income (50-80% AMI)	120	17.6%
Moderate Income (80-120% AMI)	125	18.3%
Above Moderate Income (>120% AMI)	226	33.4%
Total	**680**	

RHNA SITE CRITERIA

Existing Site Condition (occupied sites require special analysis)

Realistic Capacity Potential (not all sites will develop at maximum density)

Acceptable RHNA Site

Site Size and Ownership (sites should be between 0.50 and 10 acres)

Demonstrated History of Successful Development (can be local or regional history)

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Development Type	Examples	Potential Housing
Accessory Dwelling Units	Second units on existing residential property including attached, detached, and converted interior space; also known as guest house, granny-flat, or accessory apartment.	Accessory dwelling units may be developed on many residential parcels throughout the City.
Reuse/Repurpose of Office Sites	General and medical office sites in commercial or business park districts.	Office uses could be replaced with new residential development or new residential development could occur in conjunction with new or replacement office buildings (mixed-use).
Reuse/Repurpose of General Commercial Shopping Center Sites	Larger commercial centers with stores and businesses which serve a citywide or regional trade area.	Larger general commercial centers could be replaced with new residential development or new residential development could occur in conjunction with new or replacement commercial uses (mixed-use).

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Development Type	Examples	Potential Housing
Reuse/Repurpose of Neighborhood Commercial Shopping Center Sites	Smaller commercial centers with stores and businesses that serve the needs of nearby neighborhoods.	Smaller neighborhood commercial shopping centers could be replaced with new residential development or new residential development could occur in conjunction with new or replacement commercial uses (mixed-use).
Workforce Housing in Business Park	Office, Industrial, or Manufacturing sites in the business park area (surrounding Avenida Empresa and Avenida De Las Banderas).	Housing within the business park as homes for employees of local companies.
Housing on Church Property	Various.	Develop housing on church sites in addition to retaining existing church use(s).

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Development Type	Examples	Potential Housing
Housing on Surplus School Property	Various.	Develop residential uses on surplus school property, if ever identified by the School District.
Vacant or Underutilized Properties	Open space or agricultural properties.	To be determined based on site-specific evaluations. Larger sites could accommodate a mix of housing types.

PUBLIC INPUT – DEVELOPMENT TYPE SURVEY

Most Acceptable Development Types

- Development on undeveloped/ underdeveloped sites
- Repurposing of office sites into mixed-use residential/office developments
- Workforce housing in the business park
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Least Acceptable Development Types

- Repurposing of neighborhood commercial centers
- Repurposing of general commercial centers
- Housing on church sites
- Repurposing of surplus school property

DEVELOPMENT ON UNDEVELOPED/UNDERDEVELOPED SITES: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AREA

Opportunities

- Potential to identify capacity in Sphere of Influence
- Low-density development (already allowed under current County zoning/Specific Plan) can count towards above-moderate income units

Challenges

- Housing Element would need to include a program to annex property within 3 years
- Access and VHFHSZ issues
- Coordination with County of Orange



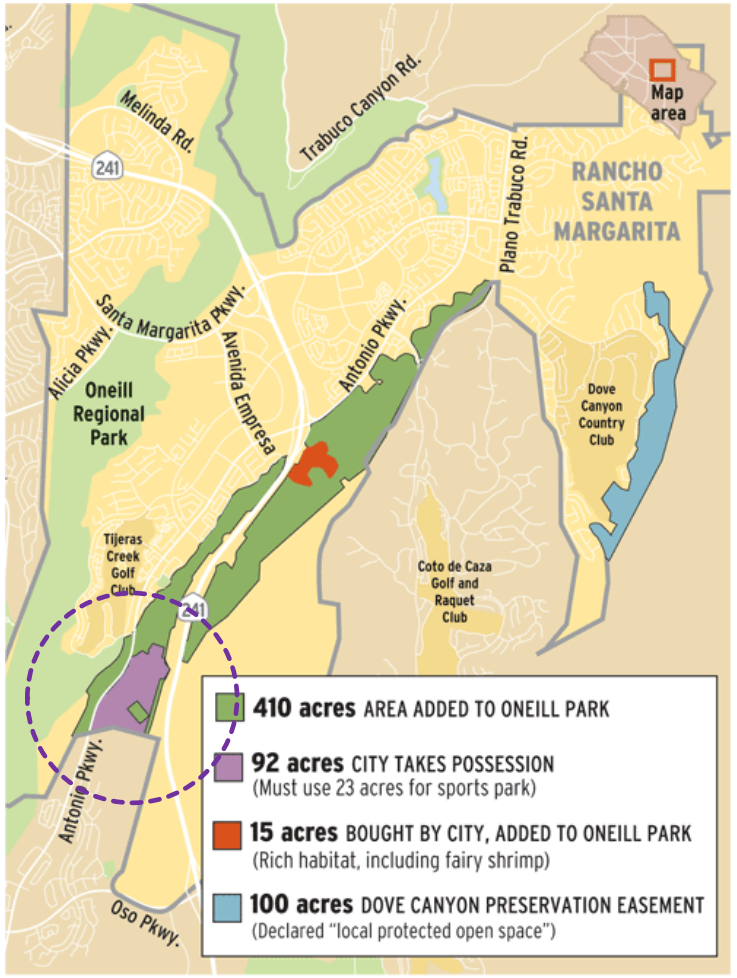
DEVELOPMENT ON UNDEVELOPED/UNDERDEVELOPED SITES: CHIQUITA RIDGE

Opportunities

- Owned by the City (very acceptable to HCD)
- Approximately 92 acres total; 32 acres available for development and 23 acres would be required to be developed as a sports park
- Prior scenario analysis to demonstrate capacity

Challenges

- Surplus Land Act
- Rezone would require an Environmental Impact Report (significant time and financial resources)
- In VHFHSZ
- Expensive to develop



The Register

DEVELOPMENT ON UNDEVELOPED/UNDERDEVELOPED SITES: ROSE CANYON

Opportunities

- Up to 3.5 acres subject to confirmation of ownership
- Surrounded by residential

Challenges

- Right-of-way abandonment process
- In VHFHSZ
- Further study is required to determine feasible capacity



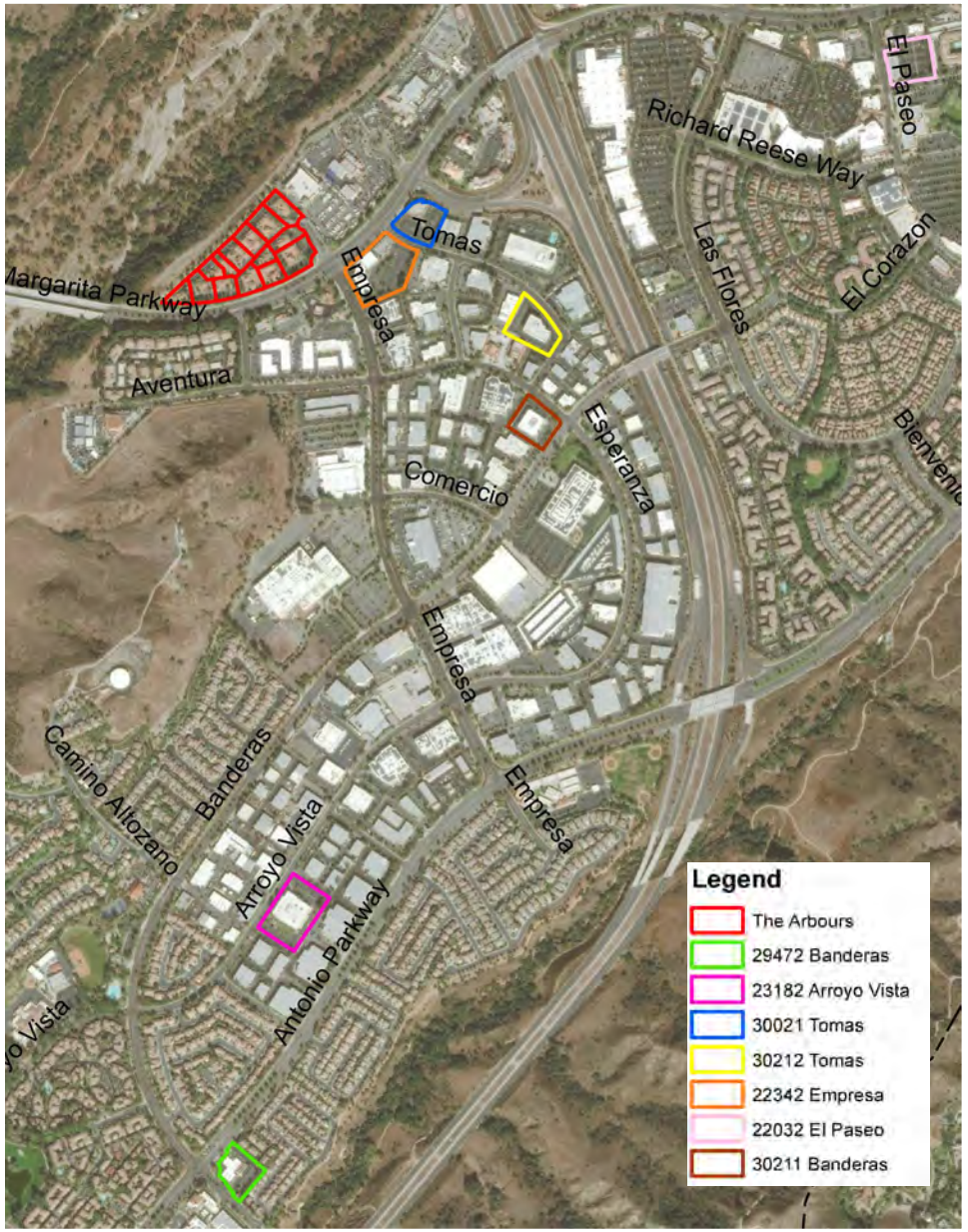
REPURPOSING OF OFFICE SITES

Opportunities

- Office footprints could be reduced due to new "work from home" trends
- Can accommodate residential only development or residential and offices uses in mixed-use formats
- History of similar redevelopment in the region
- Most are outside of VHFHSZ

Challenges

- Coordination with property owners of individual office sites is required



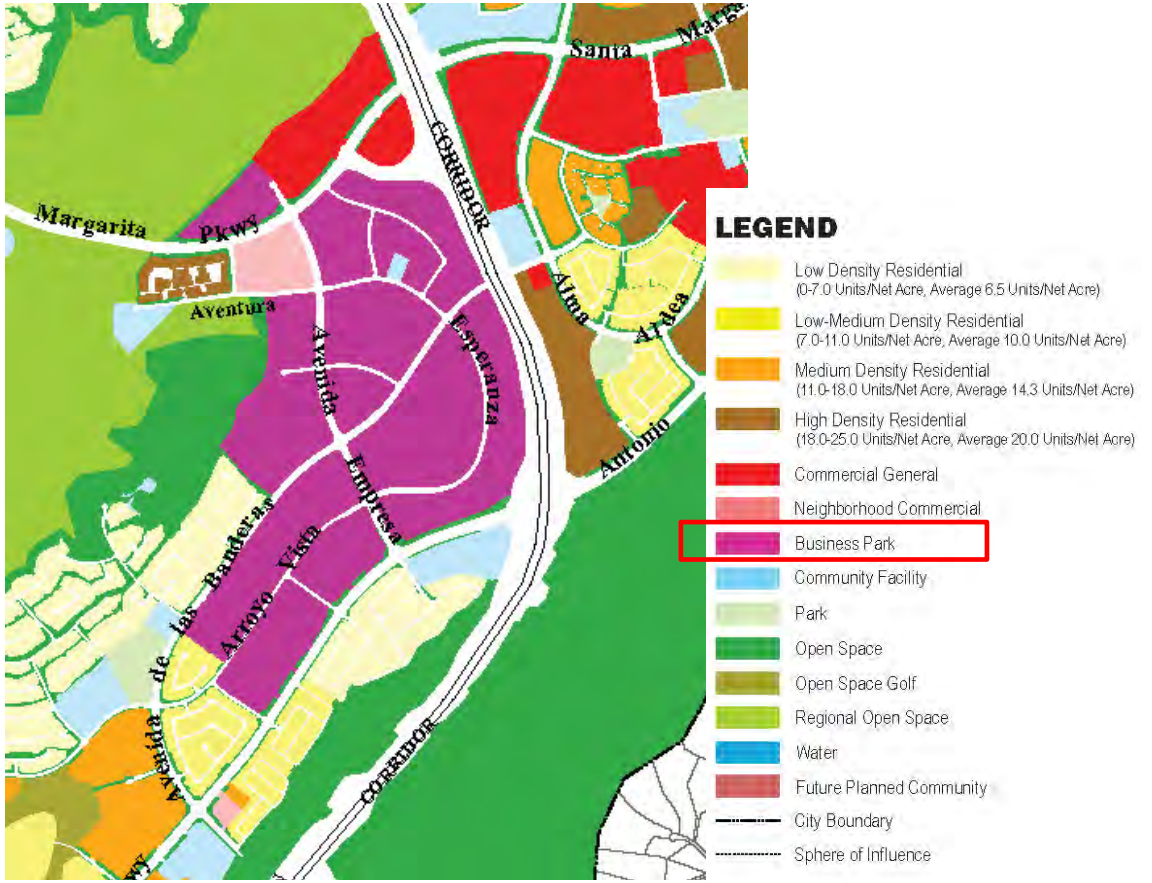
WORKFORCE HOUSING IN THE BUSINESS PARK

Opportunities

- Desire from the business community to allow residential development in the business park
- Opportunity to support employers and their employees
- Not in VHFHSZ

Challenges

- Potential to integrate residential development into a business park environment (limited access to goods and services)
- Need to identify specific sites



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Opportunities

- City is already required to allow ADUs in accordance with State law
- State considers ADUs a source of affordable housing
- HCD will allow ADUs to satisfy a portion of RHNA (safe harbor methodology, no additional research required)

Challenges

- State law dictates where ADUs are allowed and associated affordability levels
- HOA acceptance and regulations

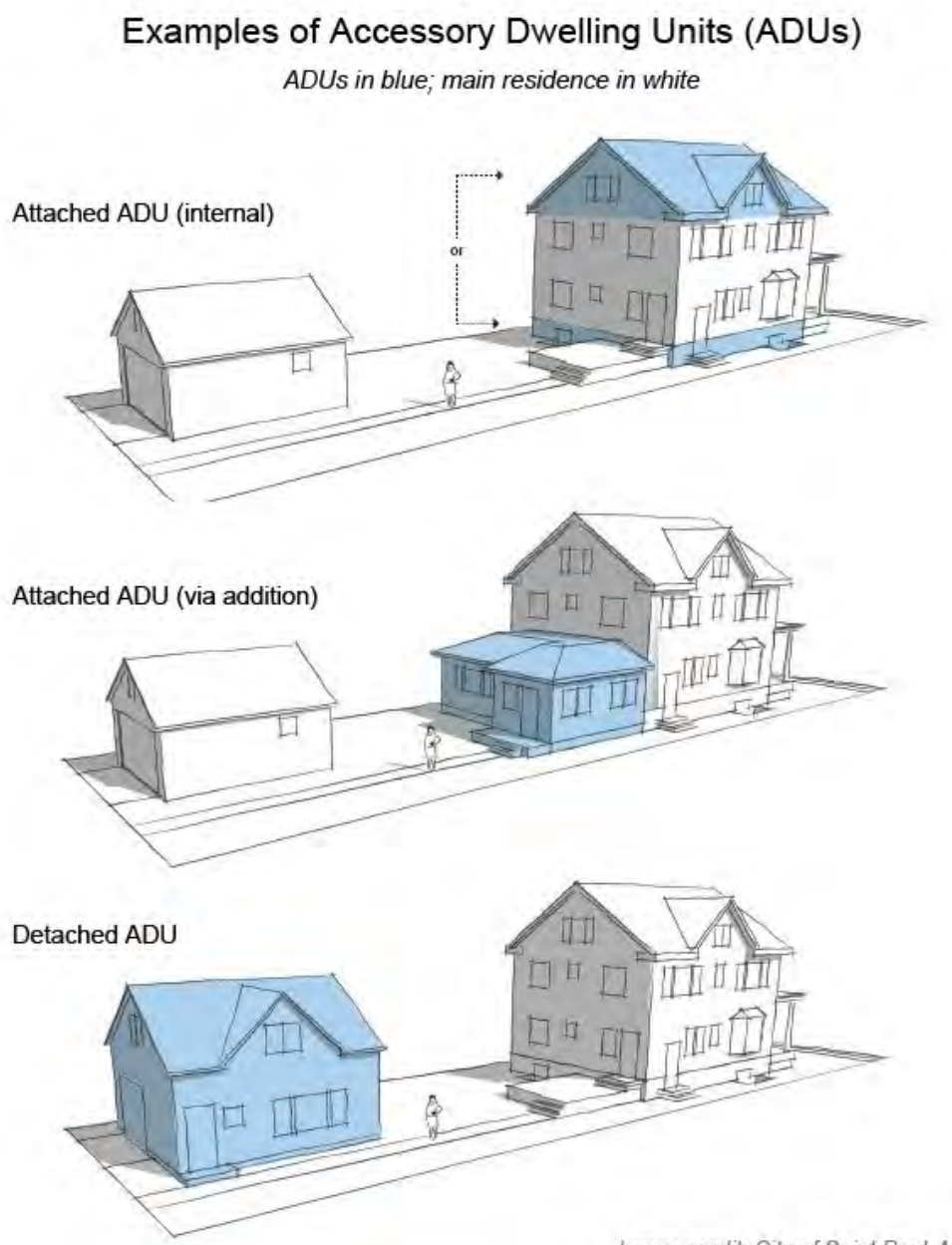


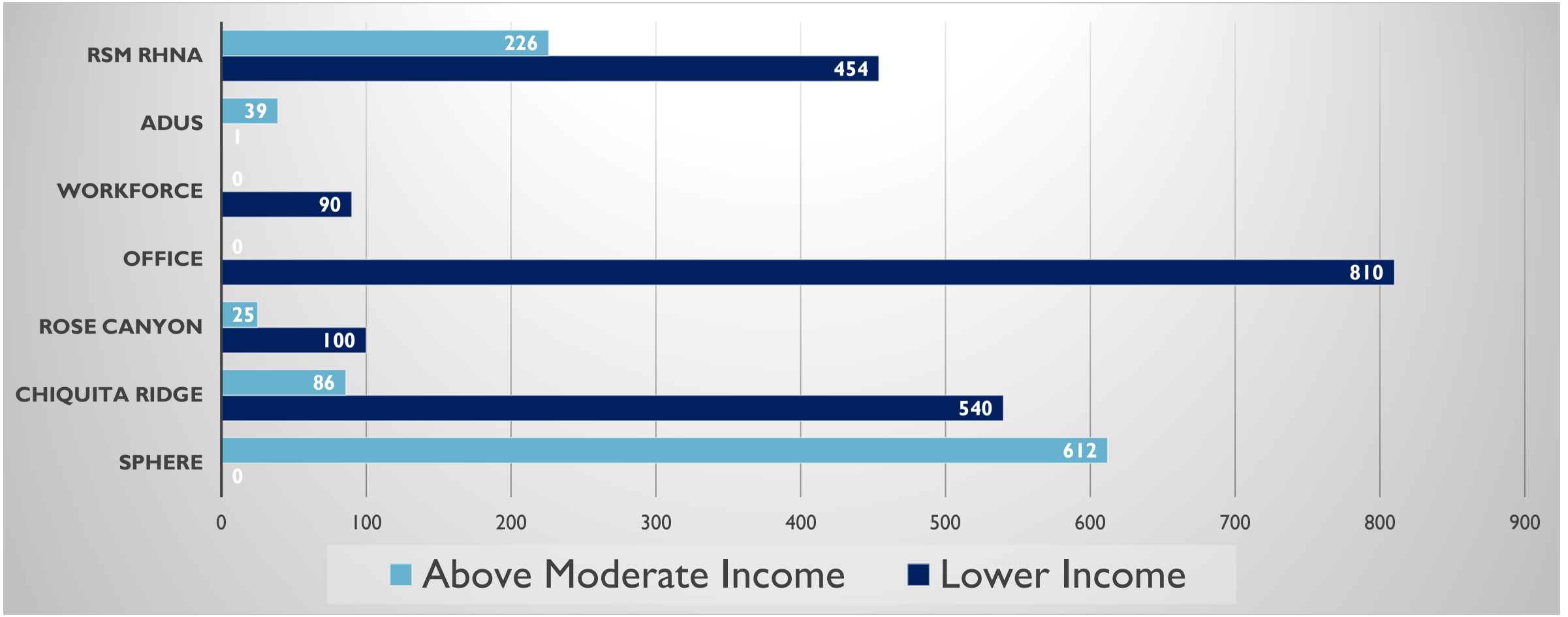
Image credit: City of Saint Paul, MN

APPROXIMATE DEVELOPMENT TYPE CAPACITY

Development Type	Max Lower Household Income Potential (at 30 du/ac, except for ADUs)	Max Above Moderate Household Income Potential	Total Potential
Sphere of Influence	-	612	612
Chiquita Ridge	540 (18 acres, could be in mixed-use format)	86 (18 acres, single-family detached format)	86 – 540 units (depends on density mix)
Rose Canyon	100 (assuming full 3.5 acres, could be less)	25 (5,500 sqft lots)	25 – 100
Repurposing of Office Sites	810 (27 acres) - Sites ranging from 0.50-10 acres	*	810
Workforce Housing in the Business Park	90 (assuming 3 acres of potential development, could be more)	*	90
Accessory Dwelling Units	39	1	40

** Units affordable to lower household incomes could also be used to satisfy the City's above moderate household income requirements*
NOTE: Additional analysis will be required to confirm final capacity in compliance with State requirements

APPROXIMATE DEVELOPMENT TYPE CAPACITY



HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

- For discussion purposes only, different scenarios to accommodate the City's RHNA are identified on the following slide
- The City must demonstrate it can accommodate 454 units in areas zoned for at least 30 du/ac (or through ADUs); the remaining 226 units can be above-moderate income, such as single-family detached units
- Additional research and analysis is required to ensure that the City's proposed strategy to accommodate its RHNA will be approved by the State

Reminder: RSM RHNA Breakdown

Income Category	Number of Units
Lower Income (>120% AMI)	454
Above Moderate Income (>120% AMI)	226
Total	**680**

HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

- **What scenarios or components of the scenarios are most acceptable?**
- **What components are least acceptable?**
- **Are there any other development types we should consider?**

Development Type	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E
Sphere of Influence	-	-	-	612 (SFD)	-
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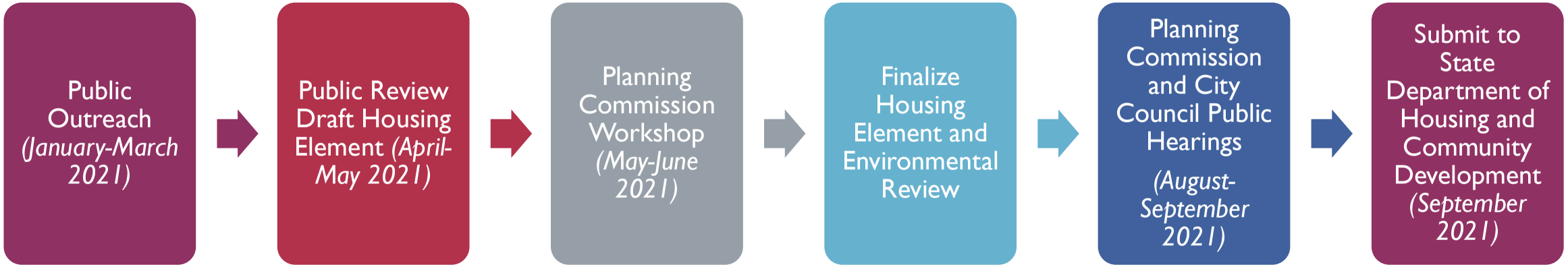
Rose Canyon	-	-	-	28	100
Repurposing of Office Sites	30	640	464	-	440
Workforce Housing in the BP	60	-	90	-	90
Accessory Dwelling Units	40	40	40	40	40
Total	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**

HOUSING ELEMENT SCHEDULE



NEXT UP

- Summarize survey results and post to website
- Planning Commission Workshop
- Prepare Public Review Draft Housing Element

HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE AND DEVELOPMENT TYPE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

APRIL 2021

CHERYL KUTA, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR

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Appendix B: CAR Focus Group Meeting Notes 4/13/21

HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

- What scenarios or components of the scenarios are most acceptable?
- What components are least acceptable?
- Are there any other development types we should consider?

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Voting by Development Type (Order of Acceptability)

1. Chiquita Ridge
- Discussion:
  - Has highest probably because City owns the land, and infrastructure and access are already in place
- Number of participants finding the option acceptable: **6** (number one choice out of group)

2. (Tie) Repurposing of Office Sites
- Discussion:
  - Access and infrastructure already in place
- Number of participants finding the option acceptable: **5**

2. (Tie) Workforce Housing in the BP
- Discussion:
  - Yes, this is a good possibility
- Number of participants finding the option acceptable: **5**

4. (Tie) Sphere of Influence
- Discussion:
  - Number of issues to address from entitlement standpoint
  - Long time frame
  - Trabuco Canyon can't be widened
- Number of participants finding the option acceptable: **3**

4. (Tie) Rose Canyon
- Discussion:
  - Not ideal, too much opposition

    - Rose Canyon cannot be arterial road
- Number of participants finding the option acceptable: **3**

6. ADUs

- Discussion:
    - Some members completely oppose ADUs
- Number of participants finding the option acceptable: **0**

General Discussion

ADUs

- What are the ADU standards?
    - State requires that City allow ADUs
    - Can be attached, detached, or reconfigured space
    - ADU requirements are here regardless of RHNA...ADUs are one way to meet RHNA requirement
        - City can require/allow ADUs above State requirements, but not less
        - City can count 40 ADUs toward RHNA
    - ADUs must have separate entrance and cooking facilities
- Concerns about building 3rd story affecting views
    - Zoning does not allow anything higher than 30 ft in residential zone
    - Stock photo - not advocating for 3rd stories
- Concerns about ADUs getting abused

Repurposing of Office Sites

- How would repurposing of office sites physically happen?
    - 2 paths forward:
        - 1st - property owner could choose to repurpose to full residential use
        - 2nd - residential developers could acquire and redevelop property
- What are the pre-covid occupancy rates vs. post?
- Has this had success in Ladera Ranch? SLC? La Verne?
- Is this a doable thing in our community?

Sphere of Influence

- Does this take into account the nursery property?
    - Looked at City's full SOI, including nursery property
- Would require some renegotiation with property owners
- Who are all the property owners within the SOI?
- Includes TCWD property

Chiquita Ridge

- Can the County help the City in terms of modifying agreements to help the City meet RHNA requirements?
    - Unknown

Eminent domain and access for northern sphere

- How would access to the community work? Shadow Rock?
- Who's going to build the bridge?
- Would eminent domain be used to build housing?

  - No eminent domain is proposed
  - City is not required to build housing, they are required to zone to accommodate housing
  - Access would be addressed at time of development proposal
  - At this time, the capacity for discussion purposes is consistent with the current zoning for the property
  - The sphere property may be in the County's HE sites inventory

How were most/least acceptable development types determined?

- Through community survey, 280 responses
- Statistic difference between top 4 and bottom 4
- Hard to believe repurpose of surplus school property is in bottom 4 - did people misunderstand what this is/means?

Practicality of Proposed Solutions

- Need practical access to properties
- Does the State really care about how practical these options are?
- What level of reasonableness goes into selection of sites?
  - If access not reasonable, not ok
  - If hard/difficult, ok
  - City required to discuss circulation and access
    - If doesn't exist currently, what it might look like
  - Don't need details of cost and location at this time, but plan for what would happen at time of development
- What if properties ID'd are not feasible to develop?
  - City needs to ID appropriate zoning to meet RHNA
  - State recognizes the difficulties with implementing development
  - If they do not develop for whatever reason, the City would need to re-address those issues in future HE update
  - Want to pick sites that can achieve objective of RHNA, don't want to pick sites that are completely infeasible

Infrastructure

- Is it up to the developer to estimate and cover the cost of infrastructure?
  - Yes

School Sites

- How would school sites be redeveloped?
  - School District would have to designate sites and go through a disposition process, then developer would have to apply for rezoning
  - Anyone can submit an application to develop/rezone a property, even if not ID'd in the HE inventory

HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

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General Discussion

ADUs

- Least favorite – would directly impact more homeowners than any other options
- Would not impact me personally, but could impact others
    - Concerns with blocking views
    - Would need to look at further
- How can HOAs prohibit ADUs if required by state law?
    - CCRs have limitations that aren't part of state law
    - HOAs currently having this fight with state
    - New legislation to lessen reach of HOAs
    - As a City, we make zoning consistent with state law
- Who gets the 39 units?
    - Not limited to 39, if less or more ok
    - 1 ADU has been built to date
    - In this instance, HCD will not require identification of specific sites

Repurposing of Office Sites

- Preferred option
    - Numbers make it look like this is easiest way
    - Would impact the least amount of homeowners
- Open to this b/c a lot of it seems to be sitting there empty
- Do we have a lot of vacant offices right now is RSM?
    - Building in blue: 46% vacant
- What would impact be on infrastructure? Want to make sure infrastructure could accommodate additional growth.
    - Analysis done at time of development proposal to make sure can accommodate housing units
    - Infrastructure upgrades responsibility of developer

- Would want to make roads adequate to prevent gridlock
    - Signals, wider streets, etc.
- Commercial/retail opportunities?
    - Great opportunity to zone for mixed use which would allow office to stay
- Possibility to convert existing office buildings to apartments?
    - Not sure – it would be up to developers
- Would be opposed to high rise buildings
    - More appropriate in LA or Irvine
- High rise probably not option for RSM
    - City Council is very committed to master plan and character of community
    - Will plan for additional units at most appropriate density possible

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

- Nobody wants to build in these zones
- Dove Canyon just had fire last weekend
- Would prefer not to put any more development in that area, including nursery
- Because street where people would have to evacuate not adequate
- Tiny road in canyon would be nightmare for emergency evacuation
- Don't picture anyone in that area being receptive to development
- Difficulty putting in additional roads
- Don't want to be in a situation where people are stuck like Paradise or Yosemite
- Firewall breaks in community made it comforting to live here
    - People who move here understand the fire risk
    - But also wind can blow and situation can turn on a dime
- Not opposed to having a few developments in Chiquita Ridge or Rose Canyon
    - But also moved here because liked feeling of openness and not having view blocked
    - Mixed feelings on Chiquita Ridge and Rose Canyon, ok with it as long as done properly
    - Want to keep openness of what I bought into

Workforce Housing

- Second choice behind office sites
- Will help take pressure of roads

Access for northern sphere

- Nursey land right next to our property
- Shadow Rock access would highly impact our community

Infrastructure

- Subdivision Map Act and CEQA – requires analysis of infrastructure
- CEQA has section on wildfire risk
- 3 Bills in current legislative session dealing with development in high fire hazard zones

Questions

- Who is paying for this? How much does RSM have to pay? Is the City responsible for doing the development?
    - No (same answers as previous notes)
- Who has final say so in which direction we are going to go with?

- We are developing recommendations based on citizen feedback and professional opinions
- Focus group feedback will be shared with Planning Commission in June
- Ultimate decision rests with CC

Appendix D: Applied Medical Focus Group Meeting Notes 4/15/21

HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

- What scenarios or components of the scenarios are most acceptable?
- What components are least acceptable?
- Are there any other development types we should consider?

Development Type	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E
Sphere of Influence	-	-	-	612 (SFD)	-
Chiquita Ridge	540 (MF)	-	86 (SFD)	-	-
Rose Canyon	-	-	-	28	100
Repurposing of Office Sites	30	640	464	-	440
Workforce Housing in the BP	60	-	90	-	90
Accessory Dwelling Units	40	40	40	40	40
Total	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**

Discussion

Statements

- Group is supportive of anything that would help keep RSM progressive and moving forward
- If all business park gets converted to residential, could change nature of the City
    - Can do overlay on specific parcels with owners' cooperation (ideal)
    - Potential to regulate "up to X # of units" or "XX sq ft of residential"
    - For example, commercial recreation is currently allowed only up to 150K sq ft, once developed, no more CUPs (can do something similar for residential)
    - Larger overlay with safety valve for X # of units to prevent criticism of benefitting specific property owners only
- Might be more acceptability for higher cap if larger overlay zone
- Leave it floating so no owner/developer would disproportionately benefit from zoning
- Consensus that the information presented is very detailed, group not sure if able to rank choices at this time (needs more time to think about the issues/opportunities)
    - Voting does not commit to final choice
    - We will have ongoing discussions
    - Will provide copy of presentation to participants; keep to selves until complete all focus group meetings
- No matter how you slice it, RSM is small community, and shortage of all types of properties (including housing), concern if we convert too many properties to residential, could create shortage of other property types
- RSM is master planned community for 50K, and that's what we have, so any additional development needs to be carefully considered
- In general, the 3 undeveloped sites seem to represent low hanging fruit
- Support for both repurposing office and workforce housing in the business park but
- Interested in what the approach would be – blanket zoning or specific areas – and if there would be a cap on residential development for these development types

Appendix D: Applied Medical Focus Group Meeting Notes 4/15/21

Questions & Answers

- How are SOI and Rose Canyon in Scenario D?
  - Order doesn't have any meaning
- What is the ownership in SOI?
  - All under private ownership, all within unincorporated County
  - One nursey there
  - William Lyon Homes
- How would access work in SOI because currently no road?
  - Access determined at time of development proposal
- Was workforce housing ranked high by the community?
  - Yes
- Why no repurposing of commercial?
  - Not desirable by community through survey
- Is eminent domain proposed?
  - No
  - The goal is zoning at this point
- What happens if none of the units are developed in next 8 years?
  - Then must deal with during next HE update
- How would repurposing of office sites work?
  - Could completely rezone office sites, and they would be legal non-conforming
  - Could do overlay zone – office properties could accommodate residential, but office sites stay and don't become legal non-conforming
  - Can also do overlay zones in business park area
- Do you get credit for potential # of homes, or must be actual # of homes?
  - Potential, based on similar scenarios
  - HE must ID specific sites by APN that have programs in place to accommodate City's RHNA at different densities
  - State says that at 30 DUs/AC, that density threshold is adequate for lower income categories (result in units affordable to low-income), but we know that's not always true in practice
- What is the significance of outlined parcels in the business park slide?
  - Parcels with 100% office use
- What is the schedule for the HE update?
  - Oct 15th of this year
  - Must implement zoning within 3 years of HE being adopted (Oct 2024)
- How are income thresholds defined?
  - State sets thresholds
- What was methodology for determining number/percentage of units?
  - SCAG allocated 1.3M units across the region
- Does it accurately reflect the needs of the City?
  - RSM did appeal 680 unit allocation
  - 60% of OC cities appealed
  - Over 100 cities throughout SoCal appealed
  - SCAG denied all but 2 appeals
- Does anything not seem like a good idea?
  - No strong concerns
  - Nothing on slide is really bad idea, but don't know enough yet to choose favorite(s)

Appendix E: Advocate Focus Group Meeting Notes 4/21/21

HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

- What scenarios or components of the scenarios are most acceptable?
- What components are least acceptable?
- Are there any other development types we should consider?

Development Type	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E
Sphere of Influence	-	-	-	612 (SFD)	-
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Accessory Dwelling Units	40	40	40	40	40
Total	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**

General Discussion

Chiquita Ridge

- What is current zoning?
    - Open space, so would need to be rezoned
- 23 of the 92 acres shown in purple must be dedicated to a sports park as part of settlement agreement with County
    - No indication that County is willing to change this
- 18 acres is estimated pad development size after grading

Rose Canyon

- Are most residents above moderate income here?
    - Yes
- Might be good spot to focus on for low-income residents to help with disparities in availability of services/lack of services

Repurposing of Office Sites

- Some people will be able to work from home, but some will also need to go back to offices, so should keep some office space

ADUs

- Any flexibility on splitting lots to convey to another owner to create another source of revenue?
- Appreciate you don't think ADUs will solve all housing problems
- How were ADUs #s calculated?
    - 5 /year for 8 year planning period

Workforce Housing

- 10% of homeowners work for cities, 10% teachers and police and fire, ministers or pastors

- Could be good option if people could live and work in same area

How important is access to transportation?

- Depends on of quality of transportation route, and whether it helps get people to work
- From financing perspective – affordable housing funding prioritizes areas that have services and transportation, could help with tax credits
- H4H matches people with a product that will make quality of life easier, avoid huge commutes
- If not close to people's jobs and services, then no good
- Cheaper doesn't equal better
    - i.e. cost of living in Riverside doesn't offset cost of commuting from Riverside

Policies/Programs

- Aside from density, are you looking at any other policies or programs that would help provide affordable units?
    - City will explore role that policies and programs play
    - Not at this stage yet
- Important for policies/program to go hand-in-hand, otherwise you lose the opportunity
    - Other cities have not been able to do after the fact because property owners want to retain land value

Home Ownership

- Majority of conversation re: affordable housing is on rental units
    - This is a massive key part of equation, important to have stable rental option
    - But also need to provide affordable ownership units
- Moderate income for a family of 4 is just over $100K in OC
    - If they can't afford market rate rent, they are never going to be able to afford moving from an affordable rental to a market rate home
    - Cannot go from $2,600 to $5,000/mo payment
- Must provide missing link in continuum from rental to ownership
- There is a gap in home ownership between whites and other races
- City should be careful to not segregate affordable rental units from market rate homes
- Equity in home ownership helps with generational wealth

Preferred Scenarios

- SOI could be good, but maybe a Scenario F could have some units in all locations
- Agree with mix of scenarios (with some units in all locations)
- Distributing across all locations would be best chance for affordable housing
- A, C and E are better ones
- Need diversity of housing, needs to be for mixed-income levels in all locations
- A and B could be good opportunities,

Misc conversation at end of meeting

- Repurposing areas could increase property values
    - Happening in Santa Ana
- What is considered affordable in OC?
- Be careful of moderate-income units counting as low-income
- Make sure to include affordable housing provision to increase affordable housing at all income levels

Appendix E: Advocate Focus Group Meeting Notes 4/21/21

- In lieu fees not effective
    - In lieu fee should be an amount that will allow to leverage funding an enable affordable housing
- Inclusionary Zoning
    - % to different income levels
    - Gives developer heads up so can consider when cost estimating
    - Knowing specifics will make development easier
- Find innovate ways and incentives other than inclusionary policies
    - H4H can help develop and fill units
    - H4H tried to partner with developer… offered to make 10 units affordable and put families in homes, and take burden away from developer but stopped by NIMBYs
    - In a commercial use site, developer took housing money and in lieu fees to partner with H4H to create mixed use
- Similar framework to ADU incentives
    - Keep at affordable level, get discounted fees or other incentives

- A lot of cities are concerned about providing affordable units, but they all end up being for moderate income, then they have to go back and rezone for very low and low income, would save manpower in future by having zoning in place in place ahead of time
- Be pragmatic about how development moves forward
- Zonings or overlays are opportunities to capture affordability
- Be careful how to describe affordable housing because saying that $90-100K is low income is staggering to a lot of people
- Explain we are trying to house individuals who already work in our communities and having trouble paying rent
- “Softer density” – ADUs and duplexes and splitting lots, triplex that looks same and matches aesthetic of 1-2 single family housing
- Land use and city zoning are a subsidy, are a way to increase development
    - Important for city to look with this framework, instead of just trying to meet numbers
    - Make sure we don’t lose when allowing for new opportunities, subsidizing market rate development
    - Make sure to capture affordability
- Typical H4H home costs $450K, partly paid for by owner, part donations
    - If can build 2-4 homes instead of 1, helps with costs
    - Allowed to maximize land available

Appendix F: Community At Large Focus Group Meeting Notes 4/29/21

HOW TO GET TO 680 UNITS?

- What scenarios or components of the scenarios are most acceptable?
- What components are least acceptable?
- Are there any other development types we should consider?

Development Type	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E
Sphere of Influence	-	-	-	612 (SFD)	-
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Accessory Dwelling Units	40	40	40	40	40
Total	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**

General Discussion

SOI and Chiquita Ridge

- Would these two communities stand alone, or would they be part of larger RSM (SAMLARC)? i.e., Robinson Ranch doesn't fall into RSM or get perks of living here. Would they be allowed to use the lake, parks, etc.?
    - None if those properties are currently within SAMLARC
    - Process to develop their own HOAs
    - Any park within Chiquita Ridge would be public
- Northern area and SOI not a good idea
- Has any traffic study been done? Would need massive change throughout the canyon.
    - Does not get into specifics of how infrastructure would be developed – that would happen at the time of subdivision application
- Nice flat land, but probably too much work to not make that a traffic nightmare

Repurposing of Office Sites

- A lot of housing being developed in LA County is taking biz parks and converting into housing units – is that a possibility in RSM?
- Strong believer of switching from biz park to housing units – has that been considered?
    - Yes, 2 options supported by community: Repurposing of some office properties and subset of allowing for workforce housing
- RSM Pkwy – is RV dealership part of that or could it be?
    - Not at this point in time
- Conversion of commercial centers was popular b/c wanting to maintain balance
- Conversion of office spaces would be more acceptable by citizens
- Going into open space not good idea
- Great part of living in RSM is open space
- Going into open space b/c of environmental reasons won't be looked upon well by residents

- Moved here because of the views
- To develop undeveloped land you lose the wilderness effect
- I agree 100%, we should look into commercial properties where owners are willing to convert their properties into residential
- Business not returning in blue square on office sites slide, will mostly be vacant
- Envisioning as future homeowner, where I would prefer to buy…
    - Tomas along RSM Pkwy, 30212, where dentist office is
    - Walking proximity to everything is extremely ideal
    - Ideal repurposing sites
- What kind of research is being done about existing businesses and what would be taken away, and how that would affect the community?
- If we eliminate those, then everyone has to drive out of community to get needs met
    - Next steps will be to reach out to specific property owner and see if they would be interested
    - Development happens in free market, no one be forced, can redevelop if so desire
- Is there some limit that city puts on numbers of dentists, etc.
    - Idea with re-use is that maybe there is too much and can consolidate, and housing could be added to what's there
- If property owner says no, then might not be possible even if we like it?
    - Yes, but started with community input first b/c have to start somewhere
    - We want mutually agreeable decisions

Rose Canyon

- Is already in middle of developed area
- Better idea b/c a lot of people's concerns are traffic, best location as far as flow of traffic
- Agree with last commenter, commercial property already used/spoken for
- Work home trends will continue
- Doesn't make a lot of sense
- Quality of life, residents live close to golf course b/c walking paths, trails
- The more you nip away at that, the more you reduce quality of life
- Why was Rose Canyon never developed?
    - Road ROW where road was supposed to continue up to switch backs
    - Transition road that never happened

High Risk Fire Areas

- Still not over Sept/Oct, has completely changed where considered moving
- Don't want to live in these areas
- Maybe eliminate Chiquita Ridge and Rose Canyon

Questions

- In the past, the biz center near Dove Canyon has been talked about as potential for changing to residential? Why not considered?
    - Rated as least acceptable by community
    - Application on file (incomplete for 1.5 years)
- Are we zoning for someone like Toll Brothers to come in and develop homes?
    - One possibility
    - Allocations for low and very low and moderate income housing
    - Need to zone for a host of development types
- Does the every 8 years have an end point? When do we run out of space?

    - 1.3M housing units given to region by the State; Gov Newsom and legislature have made housing a priority
    - A lot of Southern California cities unhappy with RHNA allocation process
    - Call to change process currently in progress
- On existing housing, will owners be able to get tax credits to build addition that they can rent out?
    - Not aware of any that exist right now
- Are there really 40 properties in RSM that have adequate lot size for ADU?
    - RSM has limited experience (only 1 ADU)
    - There are lots that are appropriate
    - Unlikely to think 40 will be developed over next 8 years
    - Allowed to count as credit, like a free BINGO space
- Does RSM have limit on how high we can build? Is it a consideration to go higher to get more units out of the same land?
    - Yes, fine balancing act. Council very supportive of maintaining master plan, so no high rise
    - Option to go a little higher, but need to find happy medium

Overall Consensus

- Focus on sites in developed areas first
- Then if need to look at any other areas, SOI and Chiquita Ridge would be least preferable
- Rose Canyon might be ok to explore
- Will probably be combination of scenarios

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8. Public Comments on Public Review Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element

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From:	Judy
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	Fw: Landowners Resist Biden's Plan to Control American Properties | Union Daily Post
Date:	Thursday, September 30, 2021 7:55:42 PM

I think you will find this interesting. Governors with a spine fight Biden on land use. Maybe it can inspire you. If they can fight a president it seems u can fight SCAG. Just sayin... I will read your stuff tomorrow as it is late now. Thanks for sending it.
Judy

----- Forwarded Message -----
From: Merrily Berman <lilly84498@aol.com>
To: Trude Kay <trudekay@gmail.com>; Judy Elmayan <pifa@att.net>; Joanne G. Balduzzi <corkyboy2003@yahoo.com>; David James Rivosecchi <writingbuf@yandex.com>; Eileen Manna <imagolfgal@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021, 11:42:28 AM PDT
Subject: Landowners Resist Biden's Plan to Control American Properties | Union Daily Post

Good to know this is being fought!

https://uniondailypost.com/landowners-resist-bidens-plan-to-control-american-properties/

From:	Judy
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	Newsom declared statewide emergency voluntarily reduce consumption by 15%
Date:	Tuesday, October 26, 2021 3:05:05 PM

More housing=More People- How can we cut water use and build all these apartments? HELLO Wendy and City officials. This is a state wide mandate not just San Diego. They just happened to cover it. 10/26

Governor Gavin Newsom declared a statewide emergency last week, reiterating the desire for urban water users from San Diego to Sacramento to voluntarily reduce consumption by 15 percent. That would put water use back to more or less like 2016, after then-Gov. Jerry Brown issued the state's first mandatory drought restrictions.

However, the San Diego County Water Authority has repeatedly assured residents that the region has enough water for another year, maybe two. And following Newsom's announcement, officials at the wholesale company asked San Diego to reduce water by just 10 percent, while again downplaying the urgency of the situation

Occasionally, you may receive promotional content from the San Diego Union-Tribune en Español.

One reason for this disconnect is that Southern California, unlike the rest of the state, imports much of its water from the Colorado River. In fact, the region's access to drought-vulnerable Californian water – that is, water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River delta, which is supplied through the State Water Project – has already been cut by Newsom.

Let's try to make sense of what is supposed to be done now, and what may be on the horizon:

Are there any current restrictions on urban water use in the region?

Although the state does not yet have mandatory regulations, water districts have a wide variety of restrictions, some of which carry over from the last drought and are enforced with fines.

For exact details, San Diegans should consult their local water distributor, often operated by the city government or the entity that issues their water bill. However, the most common restrictions include those that prevent watering the lawn to the point that runoff reaches the street, watering the property within two days of the rain, and hosing down sidewalks and driveways, unless as necessary to address a public health hazard.

Salvador Alvarado, O'Connell Landscape Maintenance Field Director, walks past a drought-tolerant garden at the Emerald Heights Community Clubhouse / Fitness Center. This space used to be grass that required a lot of watering to maintain.

(Charlie Neuman / For The San Diego Union-Tribune)

The largest city in the region has year-round restrictions since 2016. In addition to the aforementioned bans, San Diego also restricts drinking water service in restaurants, hotels, and coffee shops unless requested by a customer. Ornamental fountains are required to use recirculated water. Residential and commercial landscapes, including golf courses, parks, and schools, can only be watered before 10 AM or after 6 PM.

See Also: California. Teacher is suspended for imitating native dance

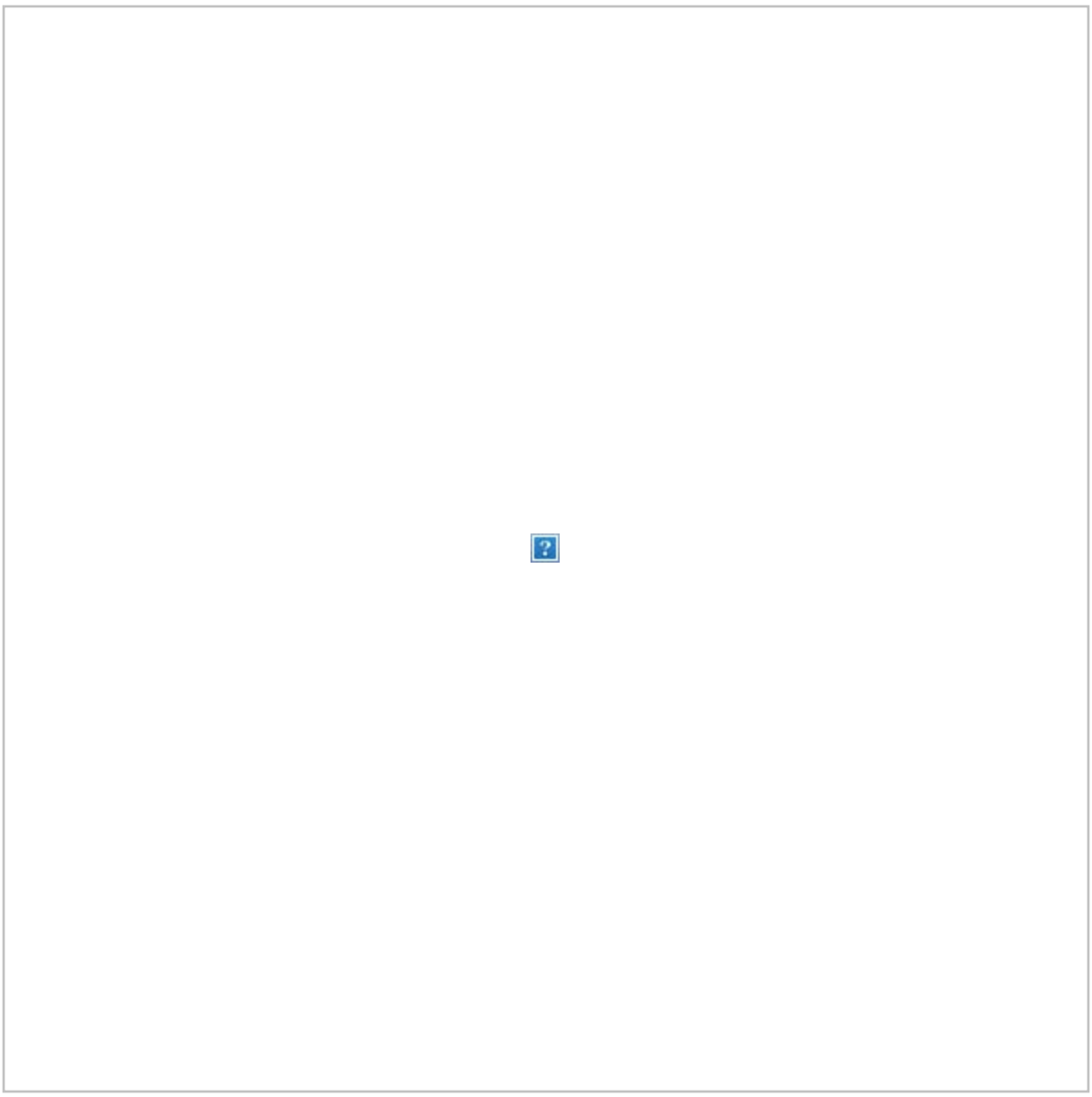
Water districts and cities often do not have the resources to conduct neighborhood inspections, which can lead to uneven enforcement of regulations. Compliance officers are more likely to respond to complaints, such as those issued through the City of San Diego's Get It Done app.

Fines can range from $ 100 for the first offense to $ 1,000 for repeat offenders, according to city officials. The city declined to say how many such subpoenas it has written in recent years.

Is there a water shortage in the San Diego region?

Officials from the Water Authority say the region has enough water to last at least until next year.

They say that is due to expensive investments in drought-proof supplies, such as the City of San Diego's Pure Water recycling project, the seawater desalination plant in Carlsbad, and the elevation of the San Vicente dam.



Detailed view of the bright red flowers of Callistemon "Little John," also known as Dwarf Bottlebrush, among the extensive drought-tolerant landscaping in the Clubhouse / Fitness Center in the Emerald Height development.

(Charlie Neuman / For The San Diego Union-Tribune)

However, all this has come at a high price. As people were forced to conserve during the last drought, revenues declined and officials increased water rates to cover a wide range of fixed costs and debt payments. Southern California is widely known for having some of the highest water rates in the state and the country.

Water Authority officials have repeatedly pleaded with Sacramento officials not to require mandatory

water conservation in the San Diego region.

See Also: Tesla moves headquarters from California to Texas

“There is the problem of forcing that conservation,” Sandra Kerl, the Authority’s director general, recently told the Union-Tribune. “The people who have made the investment are going to end up paying more for the water.”

Newsom’s recent emergency declaration gives the California State Water Resources Control Board the power to adopt mandatory water restrictions. The water board could vote on the issue as early as November.

Are there programs to help residents with water efficiency?

There are a variety of rebate programs, audits, and educational classes for residential and commercial customers looking to reduce their water use.

A lot of information can be found at socalwatersmart.com. For example, the website provides instructions on how to apply for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California’s lawn replacement program, which offers rebates of $ 2 per square foot with a limit of $ 10,000. Residents have 180 days after completing a lawn replacement project to request a refund.

Many homeowners continue to take advantage of the program, said Jack Rush, vice president of operations for O’Connell Landscape Maintenance, based in Southern California with six locations in San Diego County.

He said he is warning people installing a lawn that water use restrictions could be coming.

“If it doesn’t rain a lot, we may go into a severe drought this year, and then we will be forced to mow,” he said. “Then it will look ugly.”

Residents can dramatically reduce their water use by substituting sprinklers for drip irrigation, Rush said. A common mistake homeowners make in Southern California is overwatering in early fall, when it can still be hot, but less water evaporates as the days get shorter.

See Also: Storm leaves damage in northern California, heads south

“People think that because it’s 90 degrees outside, they still need to water that same amount,” he said. “It is not like this. If these people had a clearer idea, they could save a lot more money. “

The Water Authority regularly offers classes and workshops to help people transform their water-thirsty lawns into drought-tolerant gardens.

Detailed view of the colorful Mexican sage, left, and the succulent Cotyledon Silver Peak

Detail view of colorful Mexican sage, left, and succulent Cotyledon Silver Peak in the drought-tolerant front garden of owner Richard Jaross. The plants are watered with drip irrigation.

(Charlie Neuman / For The San Diego Union-Tribune)

Richard Jaross, 77, of Oceanside, said he completed a series of four classes that guided him through the process of reviewing his outdoor area. Today, her home is full of plants, such as Mexican sage and silver-billed cotyledon.

This East Coast transplant says he did it for both aesthetics and conservation.

“While traveling through California, I was admiring some of the landscapes that I had seen in various places,” he said. “My feeling was: why not let my front yard look like that? Why should it be a simple lawn?

Is there an alternative to mandatory retention?

The Water Authority is pushing for so-called stress tests, an approach that was used at the end of the last drought. It allows water providers to waive mandatory shutdowns if they can demonstrate that they have enough water in their reserves to serve their customers for a specified period of time. It’s unclear how

long that would be, but Kerl of the Water Authority said it would likely be at least five years.

“It seems that the state is willing to study a stress test,” he said. “However, in saying this, I want to underline that we continue to focus on the efficiency of water use. We encourage our community to do all it can
FROM SAN DIEGO TRIBINE 10/26

From: Daniel Dokhanian
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft
Date: Thursday, September 30, 2021 11:07:00 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Hi Wendy, thank you for sending this over. Are you free for a few minutes to chat? I'd like to discuss the sites that are candidates for rezone. Thank you.

--

Daniel Dokhanian
The Mulholland Drive Company
1875 Century Park East, Suite 750
Los Angeles, CA 90067
dd@mulhollanddrive.com
(310) 513-3113

On Thu, Sep 30, 2021 at 2:17 PM Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update interest list.
>
> The City's dedicated webpage for the 6th Cycle Housing Element has been updated to provide the Public Review Draft of the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update. The Public Review Draft in its entirety can be accessed here:
>
> http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021
>
> The Public Review Draft will be available for review/comment for 30 days from September 30, 2021 through to Friday, October 29th, 2021. In addition to the entire document being available on the webpage, a hard copy of the Public Review Housing Element is available to view at the front counter. Please contact me at wstarks@cityofrsm.org or at 949-635-1807 to arrange to see the document if you are unable to access it online.
>
> Comments can be forwarded to me at my email, direct line, or mail to the contact information in my signature block below.
>
> Wendy Starks, AICP

Principal Planner

949-635-1807

City of Rancho Santa Margarita

22112 El Paseo

Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Wendy Starks

From: Cheryl Kuta
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 3:09 PM
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: FW: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft
Attachments: The Mulholland Drive Company_Workforce Housing Overview.pdf

For the comments file.

From: Daniel Dokhanian <dd@mulhollanddrive.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 3:07 PM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft

Cheryl, good speaking just now. See attached for details on our workforce housing model. Looking forward to your thoughts and whether it could be a fit for Applied Medical.

Thanks

Daniel

--

THE
MULHOLLAND DRIVE
COMPANY
Daniel Dokhanian
The Mulholland Drive Company
1875 Century Park East, Suite 750
Los Angeles, CA 90067
dd@mulhollanddrive.com
(310) 513-3113

On Mon, Oct 11, 2021 at 9:51 AM Daniel Dokhanian <dd@mulhollanddrive.com> wrote:

Oh my apologies. Yes, tomorrow is fine. Just updated the invite.

--

THE
MULHOLLAND DRIVE
COMPANY
Daniel Dokhanian
The Mulholland Drive Company
1875 Century Park East, Suite 750
Los Angeles, CA 90067
dd@mulhollanddrive.com
(310) 513-3113

On Mon, Oct 11, 2021 at 9:50 AM Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

Hi Daniel,

The times I gave you are for tomorrow (Tuesday). I'm in meetings all afternoon today. Does tomorrow work?

Thanks,

--Cheryl

From: Daniel Dokhanian <dd@mulhollanddrive.com>
Sent: Monday, October 11, 2021 9:49 AM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft

Thanks, Cheryl. I'll call you at 3 today. Looking forward to it.

--

THE
MULHOLLAND DRIVE
COMPANY

Daniel Dokhanian
The Mulholland Drive Company
1875 Century Park East, Suite 750
Los Angeles, CA 90067
dd@mulhollanddrive.com

(310) 513-3113

On Mon, Oct 11, 2021 at 8:38 AM Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

Hi Daniel,

Thanks for your patience. I'm available for a call tomorrow between 11-1:30 or 3-4:30. Would you like to set up a time, or just call me during those hours?

Best regards,

Cheryl Kuta, AICP

Development Services Director

City of Rancho Santa Margarita

(949) 635-1800 x6707

From: Daniel Dokhanian <dd@mulhollanddrive.com>
Sent: Monday, October 11, 2021 8:00 AM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft

Hi Cheryl,

Left you a voicemail last week. I'm a real estate developer and just reviewed the recently released draft of the housing element. I was hoping to learn more about some of the sites that are candidates for rezone to see how I might be able to develop housing in the city. I understand that the actual rezones are a few years out, but I like to get ahead of the curve and be proactive about development. Are you free for a few minutes to chat?

Thank you very much,

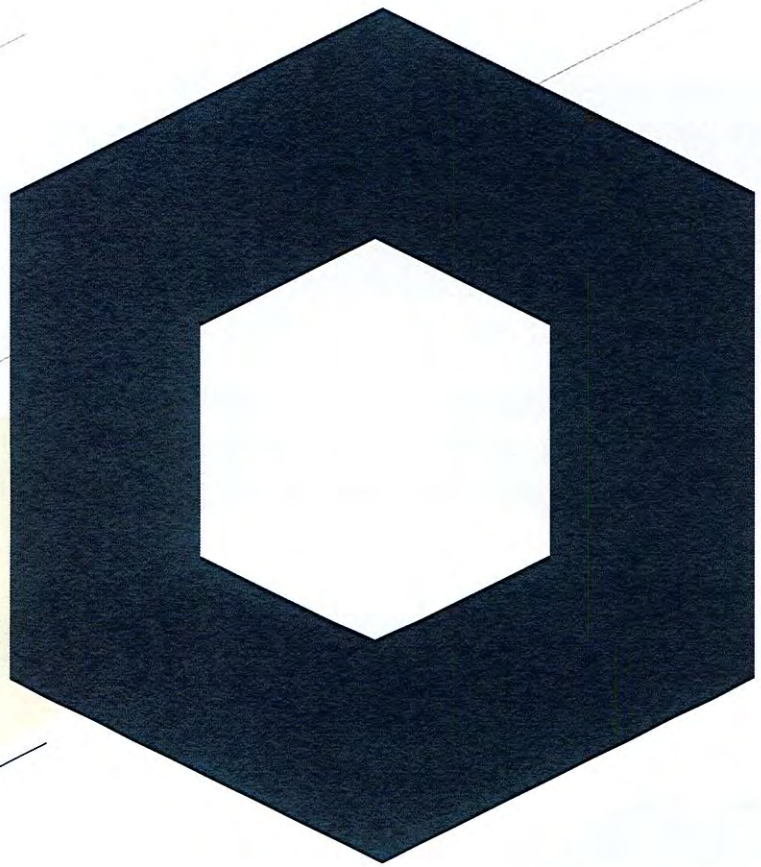
Daniel

--

THE
MULHOLLAND DRIVE
COMPANY

Daniel Dokhanian
The Mulholland Drive Company
1875 Century Park East, Suite 750
Los Angeles, CA 90067
dd@mulhollanddrive.com

(310) 513-3113



THE MULHOLLAND DRIVE COMPANY

Workforce Housing Partnership

About Us

The Mulholland Drive Company is a real estate development firm based in Los Angeles focusing on workforce housing development throughout the United States.

The company owns a portfolio of commercial and residential properties throughout the country and develops housing in certain markets that are experiencing severe shortages of affordable housing.

The firm has committed to invest **over $400 million by 2022** across the US into creating quality, workforce housing.



Workforce Housing Partnership

The Mulholland Drive Company partners with major regional companies to develop housing directly for their employees.

Problem	**Local housing is unavailable or too expensive to a company's workforce**	- High wages needed to attract talent - Long commutes and poor housing = low employee quality of life - Understaffed workforce	- High payroll costs - High employee turnover = high training/operational costs -Hindered company growth
Challenge	**Housing development is not the company's core business**	- Lack of expertise, staff, and contractor network to build housing	- Better uses of company capital and time
Solution	**Partner with The Mulholland Drive Company to develop housing**	- Expertise, staff, and network of contractors to develop quality, affordable workforce housing	-Brand new housing within reasonable commuting distance to the company - All capital and management responsibilities handled by Mulholland Drive

Workforce Housing Partnership

Benefits to Stakeholders

Benefits to Workforce

Brand new + high quality housing.

Affordable to the workforce and **based on their income**.

Large projects = **economies of scale** + access to cheaper financing. Savings passed down to residents.

Preferential, **below-market** rental rates.

Capped rent increases over time.

Financing + lease-to-own options.

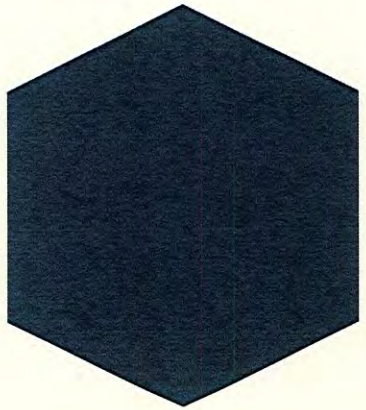
Benefits to Company

100% Turnkey Product:
The Mulholland Drive Company provides all the funding and management for the acquisition, entitlement, construction, and ongoing operations of the project. **The employer has no financial or management responsibilities**.

Open-Book Policy:
employer has complete access to the development's books and records with a predetermined return on investment figure; **any/all unbudgeted savings in construction costs passed down to the employees/renters**.

Benefits to City

100% Private Sector Based: no tax credits, government subsidies, or cumbersome regulatory restrictions.



THE MULHOLLAND DRIVE COMPANY

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Los Angeles, CA 90067
www.mulhollanddrive.com
info@mulhollanddrive.com
(310) 461-8719

From: Dennis Shoji
To: Wendy Starks; Cheryl Kuta
Subject: RHNA Report
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 4:14:55 PM

I thought the OC RHNA report was a late night reading, but I just did a quick review of the RSM report. Phew!! Very nice job by you all and staff. I did have a few comments which I will pass on to you:

1. On Table H-3, the 4th entry is mis-typed----1999.

2. A lot of exhibits and data----is plumbing facility really a good measure as noted on page 30.

3. Under infrastructure, one of the issues we have in the communities on the eastern side of RSM is the lack of evacuation routes; this is not spelled out; we tend to use typical infrastructure as water, sewage, etal, but we forget roads and routes of evacuation as being infrastructure. Also, it seems you might want a statement that as suggested routes for

evacuation will be greatly impacted by RHNA plans by other entities like OC unincorporated. Luckily I did not see any Coto RHNA development at this stage so this is good but there was a OC unincorporated development in Silverado Canyon so use of Plano Trabuco Road for evacuation may be in the plans.

4. In your prior report, your statement was very strong that we do not want to build any of these RHNA residential units in high risk fire zone. This is implied but I was hoping this would be more strongly stated. This would address why Chiquita Ridge is kept in the back burner at this stage as well as the nursery land and Rose Canyon parcels.

5. You may want to state that if RSM were to take some of the sphere of influence sites/parcels, a proportionate share of the RHNA residential units would be transferred to RSM. Similarly, if some other entity too the Chiquita Ridge parcel, a proportionate share of the RHNA units would transfer to the other

entity.

Dennis Shoji
949/533-1332

From: Cheryl Kuta
To: Dennis Shoji
Cc: Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: Thanks for the Meeting
Date: Friday, October 8, 2021 10:50:28 AM

Hi Dennis,

Thank you for coming in. I agree, face-to-face meetings are helpful. Please reach out with any other questions from you or your group. Have a great weekend!

--Cheryl

Cheryl Kuta, AICP
Development Services Director
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
(949) 635-1816

From: Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 7, 2021 3:53 PM
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Subject: Thanks for the Meeting

There is nothing like having a face-to-face meeting on this RHNA issues. We have a much better understanding of your constraints in doing the RHNA. Just a comment: I built manufacturing and headquarters facilities around the globe and the concept you are using in terms of mixed use zoning fits into what I saw in Singapore.

I met with the Governor of Utah once as we were building a facility in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Governor wanted to us to be a hub in the city which had a transportation corridor presence, a residential presence, and an industry presence. I had mentioned to the Governor, that what he envisioned look so much like the Singapore model. He informed me that prior to being Governor of Utah, he was the US Ambassador to Singapore. So, Singapore is a fantastic model for what could be in "downtown" RSM. Just for your reference.

Dennis Shoji

From:	Wendy Starks
To:	"Dennis Shoji"
Subject:	RE: Housing Element Update Informal Q & A Session
Date:	Wednesday, October 20, 2021 8:32:23 AM
Attachments:	image001.png

Good morning Dennis,

Unfortunately we are unable to reserve or add people to the zoom session. We had to disclose that the City is limited to 100 attendees, but we do not think that we will reach our max capacity. You should not have any issues joining the session by clicking on the link next Tuesday.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 19, 2021 5:01 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update Informal Q & A Session

Wendy, can I be added to the zoom session. Thanks for doing this.

Dennis

On Tue, Oct 19, 2021, 4:34 PM Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> You are receiving this email because you have requested to be added to **the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update interest list.** The City appreciates your continuing interest and feedback about the Housing Element Update.
>
> The City is hosting an online Question and Answer Session on **Tuesday, October 26th, 2021 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. via zoom.** Please note that the City can only accommodate **100** participants on zoom. However, the public review period will continue to run until October 29 and comments can be submitted to Wendy Starks at the email address listed below.
>
> The Zoom link for the workshop can be accessed here:

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84451722654

Please forward your questions to Wendy Starks at wstarks@cityofrsm.org.

City staff will be presenting the Public Review Draft Housing Element to City Council on Wednesday, October 27th during the regularly scheduled City Council meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Wendy Starks

From:	Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent:	Thursday, October 21, 2021 9:39 AM
To:	Wendy Starks; Cheryl Kuta; Russ Khouri; Beth Heard
Cc:	Kevin Shaw
Subject:	Summary of Meeting with RSM City Staff on RHNA on 10/7/2021
Attachments:	Meeting Summary with RSM Staff 10 7 2021.pdf

Wendy, Cheryl, thank you very much for making time with members of the RSM Voice Group. We realize that there is much on your plate regarding RHNA so having your explanations regarding our questions and concerns were very appreciated. We attempted to summarize the discussion points but if you see something we may have misunderstood, just let us know.

I saw that you have a Q&A sessions with the public next week via Zoom; it will be certainly interesting to see the level of involvement. It is so difficult to formulate questions when the report is so large (100's of pages) but I am glad you are taking the time to make yourselves available to any questions.

Dennis Shoji
53 Golf Ridge Drive
949/533-1332

Discussion Points with City of Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Regarding Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) Program

October 7, 2021

Attendees: City of RSM: Cheryl Kuta, Development Services Director, and Wendy Stark, Principal Planner

RSM Voice Group: Beth Heard, Dennis Shoji, and Russ Khouri

1. **Questions and Concerns:** We are trying to understand what happened between the city survey feedback from the resident discussion groups, the Planning Commission recommendation to staff, and the Staff's final recommendation to the City Council. One option that appears not to reflect what the residents of the city preferred, and the Planning Commission requested, was the decision not to include the development of Chiquita Ridge, if even just a few acres. Can you give us some background?

   Response: It was stated that the mandated agreements that go with the Chiquita Ridge parcel warrant that the City would pay for an EIR which would be a costly and a long drawn out process and the City would be committed to build a 26-acre sports park with any development of Chiquita Ridge. A final negative is that the parcel is located in a very high-risk fire severity zone.

   Similarly, several other parcels not in the City but in the "sphere of influence" such as Rose Canyon and the nursery land near Robinson Ranch were excluded by the City based on proximity to very high-risk fire severity zones.

2. **Questions and Concerns:** Regarding "Option D, while we understand that this recommendation is favored by the City Council, can you help us understand the City's vision and give us your perspective in terms such as building heights, parking criteria per RHNA, allotted parking for commercial businesses co-mingling with designated RHNA residential units, etal? Do you envision architectural harmonization with the Mixed-Use zoning?

   Response: The City can establish within a Mixed-Use zoning proposal, such things as building heights, massing, and architectural design. RHNA specifically forbids the City from denying a project on certain criteria such as color, for example. But as noted, the City needs to develop the guidelines for the Mixed-Use zoning designation.

   The City emphasized that the concept around RHNA implementation is that the City will enable these RHNA residential units to be built and it will be up to the parcel owners, developers, and local market conditions to be the drivers. There will be periodic reviews and reporting of RHNA commitment progress and possibly some adjustments, but the City is not driving or implementing the RHNA residential developments. It appears that the RHNA mandates could roll over into the next planning cycle if commitments are not met. So, what we see in Option D is the City's plan and good faith effort to achieve the mandated RHNA allocation for the State.

3. **Question and Concerns:** At the Planning Commission Meeting of October 6, 2021, while discussing Todos Santos which is in the Plaza El Paseo (22205-22245 El Paseo) Shopping Center,

there are 1,045 "shared" parking spaces, and we assume, there is a recorded reciprocal agreement, for driving over each property and for parking. When a developer comes along, what happens to that agreement where all the parking will now change?

Response: Per Cheryl, the parcel owners will need to work together and amend their reciprocal parking and ingress/egress agreements.

4. **Questions and Concerns:** One of the drawbacks of "Option D" is the difficulty of interfacing with multiple parcel owners and likely developers, as compared to development of the City's undeveloped parcels like Chiquita Ridge. We also noticed that between the August 11, 2021 Updated Housing Element submitted to RSM City Council and the October 6, 2021 Updated Housing Element submitted to the RSM Planning Commission, the RHNA allocation acreage went from about 25 acres to almost 65 acres, the selected sites went from 7 sites to 15 sites, the unit count went from 680 units to 710 units, and the density went from 31 units/acre to about 10 units/acre in some cases. Looking at this, "Option D" really is no longer in play. Why does the draft Updated Housing Element keep changing so dramatically? Isn't the City sending the wrong message to HCD by the City proposing to do more than the RHNA 680-unit commitment? This is especially concerning when the RSM's appeal to SCAG requested a reduction from 680 units to 254 units.

   Response: The City's consultant advised the City to set a percentage on each parcel for how many housing units would be allowed. The consultant came up with the formula of each parcel designated as Mixed-Use being allotted up to 35% of the total parcel acres for residential housing units. The capacity of units per acre per Mixed-Use parcel does not appear to be determined since the sites noted in the RHNA Site Inventory Table vary from 31 to 10 units per acre in the RHNA Site Inventory Table (see Table 4 in the Staff Report). The 7 sites in the initial report are the same 15 sites noted in the subsequent report but just categorized differently. As to the RHNA residential unit commitment, the consultant advised going in with this slight increase in commitment.

   (We did ask about the concern for losing funding from Plaza Empressa if commercial entities depart and housing goes in. The City stated that it would be more beneficial to put housing in vacated commercial parcels in this area while keeping the car dealerships across the street which provides a large majority of the City's revenue.)

5. **Questions and Concern:** Besides the Mixed-Use zoning designation, how do you plan to assure the parcel owners conform to their RHNA commitments? Will the zoning be tied to parcel titles? What is Plan B if parcel owners do not want to participate in the RHNA commitments and Mixed-Use zoning?

   Response. The City will need to establish a Mixed-Use zoning ordinance (which does not exist today in RSM). Once the City places the Mixed-Use zoning within the General Plan in the areas defined by the RHNA commitment, then when a developer desires to build a Mixed-Use project,

the zoning is in place and the City must approve it with conditions, if a developer or parcel owner desires to develop a Mixed-Use project outside of the RHNA t commitment designation, then the City can approve or disapprove the application. If HCD approves the RSM 2021 through 2029 Housing Element, RSM will have 3 years to change the RHNA designated parcels to Mixed-Use zoning.

6. **Questions and Concerns:** As you know, we are most concerned about evacuation routes from the eastern RSM HOA communities like Dove Canyon, Rancho Cielo, Trabuco Highlands, Robinson Ranch, etal. With some of RSM being located with high fire severity areas, the added RHNA housing units yielding approx. 1200 more vehicles, and with only two ways out of our City, do you have any thoughts on how this would be handled?

   Response: The City realizes our major concerns about wildfires and community evacuations and that is one of the reasons the City chose the sites they did. The plan is to keep the RHNA mandated housing units in the core of the City, closer to a freeway location, and keep the selections away from the eastern side of RSM.

   (We did comment that the Unincorporated Orange County preliminary report showed a RHNA allocation in Silverado Canyon but none in Coto de Caza....it is likely that an avenue of evacuation from this Silverado Canyon proposal could impact Plano Trabuco Road and the eastern side of RSM)

7. **Questions and Concerns**: We understand that you are allocating residential units to Work Force Housing, but conceptually, can you give us your perspective of this initiative? Why is there now 344 units assigned to Work Force Housing? The number of Work Force Housing units is up from the August 11, 2021 Updated Housing Element number under "Option D" (compared to 200 units). Would Workforce Housing units need to follow the RHNA guidelines as to income levels and density?

   Response: The City stated that this option applies to Applied Medical. There are no details as yet as the issues are being discussed and plans formulated with Applied Medical.

8. **Questions and Concerns:** Can you give us an update on the lawsuit filed by Orange County Council of Governments against the HCD? Is RSM still a part of this lawsuit?

   Response: The City never entered the lawsuit. The City Council members did sign paperwork in support of it but as a City never joined the lawsuit.

9. **Questions and Concerns:** What is the status of the developer's application for rezoning of the Dove Canyon Plaza?

Response: The City has sent back the rezoning application deposit to the developer and has confirmed that the check was indeed cashed.

Other Comments Noted:

a. We pointed out that the Housing Element report related to RHNA does mention the impact on the existing infrastructure by the additional RHNA residential units (ie. water, sewer, utilities, roads, etc.), but any discussion of evacuation routes and evacuation traffic flows is not reported.

b. We pointed out that the changes between the two Housing Element reports were not clear when in one report, the City used the 35% of acreage-matrix to define the RHNA parcels and in the other report using a 7 parcels to 15 parcels matrix. This could have been better explained and the staff agreed.

Wendy Starks

From: Cheryl Kuta
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 3:48 PM
To: Dennis Shoji; Wendy Starks; Russ Khouri; Beth Heard
Cc: Kevin Shaw
Subject: RE: Summary of Meeting with RSM City Staff on RHNA on 10/7/2021
Attachments: Meeting Summary with RSM Staff 10 7 2021.docx

Hi Dennis,

Thank you for sending over your draft summary. I've made a few edits for clarification. Please let me know if any of this doesn't make sense. I apologize for the formatting, the document did not transfer well from .pdf to Word.

I'll see you at 4:30.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Kuta, AICP
Development Services Director
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
(949) 635-1800 x6707

From: Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 21, 2021 9:39 AM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>; Russ Khouri <russk1@cox.net>; Beth Heard <bethannheard@cox.net>
Cc: Kevin Shaw <kevin@voicegroups.com>
Subject: Summary of Meeting with RSM City Staff on RHNA on 10/7/2021

Wendy, Cheryl, thank you very much for making time with members of the RSM Voice Group. We realize that there is much on your plate regarding RHNA so having your explanations regarding our questions and concerns were very appreciated. We attempted to summarize the discussion points but if you see something we may have misunderstood, just let us know.

I saw that you have a Q&A sessions with the public next week via Zoom; it will be certainly interesting to see the level of involvement. It is so difficult to formulate questions when the report is so large (100's of pages) but I am glad you are taking the time to make yourselves available to any questions.

Dennis Shoji
53 Golf Ridge Drive
949/533-1332

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October 7, 2021

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1. **Questions and Concerns:** We are trying to understand what happened between the city survey feedback from the resident discussion groups, the Planning Commission recommendation to staff, and the Staff's final recommendation to the City Council. One option that appears not to reflect what the residents of the city preferred, and the Planning Commission requested, was the decision not to include the development of Chiquita Ridge, if even just a few acres. Can you give us some background?

   Response: The Settlement Agreement which transferred the property to the City requires that a 26-acre sports park be built prior to or concurrently with any development of the remainder of the site. In addition to this constraint, an EIR would be required to be prepared before the Housing Element could be adopted, because the Housing Element would then be the first step in the future conversion of the property from open space to development. An EIR would be costly and take approximately a year to prepare, making it infeasible to have an adopted Housing Element prior to the State deadlines. ~~It was stated that the mandated agreements that go with the Chiquita Ridge parcel warrant that the City would pay for an EIR which would be a costly and a long drawn out process and the City would be committed to build a 26-acre sports park with any development of Chiquita Ridge.~~ A final negative is that the parcel is located in a very high-risk fire severity zone.

   Similarly, several other parcels ~~not in the City but in the "sphere of influence"~~ such as Rose Canyon and the nursery land near Robinson Ranch were excluded by the City based on ~~proximity~~ location within~~to~~ very high-risk fire severity zones and other constraints.

   Commented [CK1]: Nurseries are in the Sphere of Influence, but Rose Canyon is within the City limits.

2. **Questions and Concerns:** Regarding "Option D, while we understand that this recommendation is favored by the City Council, can you help us understand the City's vision and give us your perspective in terms such as building heights, parking criteria per RHNA, allotted parking for commercial businesses co-mingling with designated RHNA residential units, etal? Do you envision architectural harmonization with the Mixed-Use zoning?

   Response: The City can establish within a Mixed-Use ~~zoning proposal~~zone, development standards~~,~~ such ~~things~~ as building heights, massing, and architectural design. ~~RHNA~~ State law specifically forbids the City from denying a project on certain subjective criteria such as color, for example. But as noted, the City needs to develop the guidelines for the Mixed-Use zoning designation.

   The City emphasized that the concept around RHNA implementation is that the City will enable these RHNA residential units to be built and it will be up to the parcel owners, developers, and local market conditions to be the drivers. There will be periodic reviews and reporting of RHNA commitment progress to the State Department of

Housing and Community Development (HCD) and possibly some adjustments, but the City is not driving or implementing the RHNA residential developments. It appears that the RHNA mandates could roll over into the next planning cycle if commitments are not met. So, what we see in Option D is the City's plan and good faith effort to achieve the mandated RHNA allocation for the State.

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Response: Per Cheryl, the parcel owners will need to work together and amend their reciprocal parking and ingress/egress agreements.

4. **Questions and Concerns:** One of the drawbacks of "Option D" is the difficulty of interfacing with multiple parcel owners and likely developers, as compared to development of the City's undeveloped parcels like Chiquita Ridge. We also noticed that between the August 11, 2021 Updated Housing Element submitted to RSM City Council and the October 6, 2021 ~~Updated~~Public Review Draft Housing Element submitted to the RSM Planning Commission, the RHNA allocation acreage went from about 25 acres to almost 65 acres, the selected sites went from 7 sites to 15 sites, the unit count went from 680 units to 710 units, and the density went from 31units/acre to about 10 units/acre in some cases. Looking at this, "Option D" really is no longer in play. Why does the draft Updated Housing Element keep changing so dramatically? Isn't the City sending the wrong message to HCD by the City proposing to do more than the RHNA 680-unit commitment? This is especially concerning when the RSM's appeal to SCAG requested a reduction from 680 units to 254 units.

Commented [CK2]: There was no Housing Element submitted to the City Council on August 11. The August 11 was a Workshop item for staff to receive direction from the City Council on the preferred Housing Element Sites Inventory Scenario.

Response: ~~The City's consultant advised the City to set a percentage on each parcel for how many housing units would be allowed.~~ The consultant utilized a ~~came up with the~~ formula ~~of each parcel designated as Mixed-Use being allotted up to~~ assuming 35% of the total parcel acres for residential housing units on the Mixed Use and Workforce Housing sites. The capacity of units per acre per Mixed-Use parcel does is 35 units per acre ~~not appear to be determined since~~. ~~T~~the capacity of sites noted in the RHNA Site Inventory Table ~~vary from 31to 10 units per acre in the RHNA Site Inventory Table~~ (see Table 4 in the Staff Report) is calculated as follows site acres x 0.35 x 35. The 7 sites in the initial report are the same 15 sites noted in the subsequent report ~~but just categorized differently~~. HCD requires all sites in the inventory be listed by assessor parcel number (APN), and several of the sites contain several parcels (Plaza El Paseo is six parcels). As to the RHNA residential unit ~~commitment~~inventory total, the consultant advised going in with this slight overage in the inventory. ~~increase in commitment~~. HCD recommends a 15% buffer, but the total in this inventory is approximately 4%.

Commented [CK3]: The 35% is not an allowance, it is an assumption which was utilized to determine estimated capacity for each site.

~~(We did ask about the concern for losing funding from Plaza Empressa if commercial entities depart and housing goes in. The City stated that it would be more beneficial to put housing in vacated commercial parcels in this area while keeping the car dealerships across the street which provides a large majority of the City's revenue.)~~We did not discuss Plaza Empresa. Russ

Discussion Points with City of Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Regarding Regional Housing Need

asked if we had considered Arroyo Crossroads (where Shell is), and none of the commercial parcels in this area are "vacated."

5. **Questions and Concern:** Besides the Mixed-Use zoning designation, how do you plan to assure the parcel owners conform to their RHNA commitments? Will the zoning be tied to parcel titles? What is Plan B if parcel owners do not want to participate in the RHNA commitments and Mixed-Use zoning?

   Response. The City will need to establish a Mixed-Use zoning ordinance (which does not exist today in RSM). Once the City places the Mixed-Use zoning ~~within the General Plan~~ in the areas ~~defined by the RHNA commitment~~identified in the Housing Element, then when a developer desires to build a Mixed-Use project, the zoning is in place and the City must approve it with conditions, if a developer or parcel owner desires to develop a Mixed-Use project outside of the RHNA t commitment designation, then the City can approve or disapprove the application. If HCD approves the RSM 2021 through 2029 Housing Element, RSM will have 3 years to change the RHNA designated parcels to Mixed-Use zoning.

6. **Questions and Concerns:** As you know, we are most concerned about evacuation routes from the eastern RSM HOA communities like Dove Canyon, Rancho Cielo, Trabuco Highlands, Robinson Ranch, etal. With some of RSM being located with high fire severity areas, the added
   RHNA housing units yielding approx. 1200 more vehicles, and with only two ways out of our City, do you have any thoughts on how this would be handled?

   Response: The City realizes our major concerns about wildfires and community evacuations and that is one of the reasons the City chose the sites they did. The plan is to keep the RHNA mandated housing units in the core of the City, closer to a freeway location, and in the center of the City with access to goods, services and transportation ~~and keep the selections away from the eastern side of RSM~~.

   (We did comment that the Unincorporated Orange County preliminary report showed a RHNA allocation in Silverado Canyon but none in Coto de Caza....it is likely that an avenue of evacuation from this Silverado Canyon proposal could impact Plano Trabuco Road and the eastern side of RSM)

7. **Questions and Concerns:** We understand that you are allocating residential units to Work Force Housing, but conceptually, can you give us your perspective of this initiative? Why is there now 344 units assigned to Work Force Housing? The number of Work Force Housing units is up from the August 11, 2021Updated Housing Element number under "Option D" (compared to 200 units). Would Workforce Housing units need to follow the RHNA guidelines as to income levels and density?

   Response: The City stated that this option applies to Applied Medical. There are no details as yet as the issues are being discussed and plans formulated with Applied Medical. Early discussions regarding this concept assumed that approximately 200 units could be accommodated in the Business Park. HCD requires that the City identify specific sites in the Housing Element to accommodate the RHNA. Once we identified candidate sites and applied the 35% capacity at 35 units per acre assumptions, the capacity was greater than we expected.

Discussion Points with City of Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Regarding Regional Housing Need

8. **Questions and Concerns:** Can you give us an update on the lawsuit filed by Orange County Council of Governments against the HCD? Is RSM still a part of this lawsuit?

   Response: The City never entered the lawsuit. ~~The City Council members did sign paperwork in support of it but as a City never joined the lawsuit~~I do not know if they City Council signed anything specifically in support of the lawsuit; what I said was that the City is a member of OCCOG, which filed the suit, but the City is not a named participant in the suit.

9. **Questions and Concerns:** What is the status of the developer's application for rezoning of the Dove Canyon Plaza?

   Response: The City has sent back the rezoning application deposit to the developer and has confirmed that the check was indeed cashed.

Other Comments Noted:

a. We pointed out that the Housing Element report related to RHNA does mention the impact on the existing infrastructure by the additional RHNA residential units (ie. water, sewer, utilities, roads, etc.), but any discussion of evacuation routes and evacuation traffic flows is not reported.

b. We pointed out that the changes between the two Housing Element reports were not clear when in one report, the City used the 35% of acreage-matrix to define the RHNA parcels and in the other report using a 7 parcels to 15 parcels matrix. This could have been better explained and the staff agreed.

From: Cheryl Kuta
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: FW: Zoom Call
Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 1:11:10 PM

This went to my spam. Forwarding to you in case your copy did too.

From: Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 5:56 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Zoom Call

Very nicely done. Good questions by many of the participants.

Unfortunately, the issue of Dove Canyon Shopping Center keeps coming up but folks don't realize the evacuation congestion on the eastern side of RSM. I spent time with some of the City Council candidates last year and finally

that group understood the issue of Plano Trabuco Road, Dove Canyon Drive and the traffic congestion during a time of mandatory evacuation in case of a wildfire.

But you and team did a great job. I like your reference to other locations where mixed use have been put in place. I saw this in Singapore and in Utah as I mentioned to you earlier.

Dennis Shoji

From:	Wendy Starks
To:	"Cindy Ashley"
Subject:	RE: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft
Date:	Tuesday, October 5, 2021 11:08:09 AM
Attachments:	Cindy Ashley sites inventory request.xlsx image001.png

See attached. Keep in mind this is the public review draft.

From: Cindy Ashley <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 5, 2021 10:39 AM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft

Are you not able to give me a spreadsheet with all of the cells as shown on pg 214 of the HE draft?

From: Wendy Starks
Sent: Tuesday, October 5, 2021 9:13 AM
To: 'Cindy Ashley' <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft

Here you go Ashley. Please note that this is a public review draft and there are several steps left before this draft is submitted to HCD for review and this may not be the final sites inventory.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Cindy Ashley <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 5, 2021 7:48 AM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft

Hi Wendy,

Can you please send me the site inventory list via Excel/spreadsheet?

Thanks,

Cindy Ashley

From: Wendy Starks
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 2:18 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft

You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update interest list.

The City's dedicated webpage for the 6th Cycle Housing Element has been updated to provide the Public Review Draft of the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update. The Public Review Draft in its entirety can be accessed here:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

The Public Review Draft will be available for review/comment for 30 days from September 30, 2021 through to Friday, October 29th, 2021. In addition to the entire document being available on the webpage, a hard copy of the Public Review Housing Element is available to view at the front counter. Please contact me at wstarks@cityofrsm.org or at 949-635-1807 to arrange to see the document if you are unable to access it online.

Comments can be forwarded to me at my email, direct line, or mail to the contact information in my signature block below.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688



October 5, 2021

Re: October 6, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting Agenda Item #7.1 – Public Review Draft Housing Element

Dear RSM Planning Commission Chair Camuglia, Vice Chair Nelson, and Commissioners Leach, McQuaid & Triepke:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM.

We have reviewed Rancho Santa Margarita's September 2021 Housing Element Draft. We offer the following comments and questions – some of which amplifies our previously submitted comments (included below).

1. **Public Input** - Will the city be offering any opportunity for stakeholders and city staff to review and discuss the proposed Housing Element in an informal setting to allow an opportunity for questions and answers?
2. **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance** – A program that we believe will help the city achieve its low-income housing goal is an inclusionary housing policy. We recommend that the city adopt an inclusionary housing ordinance that will require that at least 15% of any new development of 6 or more units be for very low income people, i.e., those earning less than $50,000 per year. When this is not possible, we urge the city to require an in-lieu fee of at least $10,000 to $15,000 per unit - to build a fund for building affordable housing elsewhere.
3. **Chiquita Ridge** - The Planning Commission recommended that the city pursue development of Chiquita Ridge in early June. As Chair Camuglia correctly pointed out, it has always been the city's plan to develop this land. In fact, it is listed under the Future Land Use Opportunities section of the city's General Plan revised in 2020. The city council had concluded that it is impossible to develop this land due to its location in a Very High Fire Hazard zone. However, *this is not true*. As Richard Montague, former director of Aviation and Fire Management for the US Forest Service wrote, "…if new

home construction in [very high fire hazard severity] zones were to be banned, new home construction would […] effectively cease. The fact is that [we] are in the midst of an historic housing crisis in California. [Elected officials] have been working with the development community to strengthen building regulations and create communities that are far more resistant to wildfires."[1]

As members of the planning commission, I hope you take the opportunity to educate the city council. In rejecting your recommendation, they are rejecting the number #1 development type choice of citizens surveyed, "undeveloped/underdeveloped sites" (example given for this type was open space or agricultural properties). To ignore development of this large amount of acreage based on an erroneous reason in the midst of a housing crisis is highly questionable.

We also would draw the Commission's attention to a new tool[2] that will help communities plan housing while taking into account nature conservation – and hope that you recommend staff and the housing element consultant use it – if they have not already. The SoCal Greenprint takes existing data and synthesizes it to create a more complete picture of the possibilities of incorporating nature in planning for an area. Using this tool, developers and city officials will be able to easily assess what conservation and development opportunities are available to design a sustainable and resilient region—especially knowing the climate-related challenges that lie ahead: high heat days, drought, coastal erosion, and wildfire.

3. **Town Center Car Wash** - Can you elaborate on the inclusion of Site 9, the Town Center Car Wash & gas station? It would appear to be an undesirable site for housing because the gas tanks would need to be removed and there are potential toxicity issues associated with it. Besides, the gas station and car wash are highly utilized by the community.
4. **Site Viability** - How viable are the proposed sites for development? Have the owners been contacted to see if they are interested in the redevelopment of their property?
5. **El Paseo** - A large percentage of the RHNA needs are proposed to be met at the El Paseo shopping center by re-zoning for mixed-use. What is envisioned at this shopping center?
6. **Workforce Housing -** We appreciate the support the city has secured from Applied Medical for Workforce Housing. What specific measures will the city adopt to ensure that 107 units of the proposed 344 Workforce Housing units will be designated for Extremely Low and Very Low-income levels?

[1] https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/opinion/new-developments-in-fire-hazard-areas-are-safer-than-ever/

[2] https://voiceofoc.org/2021/10/schlotterbeck-housing-and-conservation-can-co-exist-and-a-new-tool-makes-it-more-possible/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=cd351065-0e6d-495b-8230-d0c755fd69c1

7. **Program 3 - Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)** - We note the projection of 40 ADUs to help the city meet its RHNA goals.

    a. We recommend that ADU owners be required to report rental rates so the city can track its progress in meeting its low income RHNA goal.

    b. We also ask the city to adopt programs that would incentivize ADU owners to rent their ADU at affordable rates – such as:

        - the ADU Forgivable Loan program in Santa Cruz (see attached),
        - in exchange for committing to offer low rents, significantly reduce permit fees and application fees for construction of ADUs
        - provide a set of pre-approved ADU designs in order to streamline the approval of the ADU's construction.

8. **Program Plans** – We would like to see more specificity in the actions and associated timelines in some of the proposed programs. Without being more specific, it will be hard to judge how well the city achieves its objectives.

    a. **Program 5 – Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Assistance** and **Program 8 OCHA Special Needs Group Rental Assistance Programs**:

        - We ask that the city be more specific and proactive in its educational efforts about these programs. For instance, what is the planned in terms of frequency of outreach through the city newsletters? Are there any other communication channels that the city can use to promote the availability of vouchers?
        - Does the city maintain a list of landlords in RSM who are willing to accept Housing Vouchers? If not, we suggest the city start to do this and to publicize the list.
        - Does the city have any plans to proactively recruit landlords to accept housing vouchers?

    b. **Program 6 – Homeless Services.**

        i. Does/will the city partner with the Sherriff's Department to employ the Behavioral Health Bureau in RSM? The Behavior Health Bureau is a new unit tasked with assisting the homeless population and those with mental health disorders through a robust program that includes proactive engagement, case management, and resource distribution.

        ii. What outcome data do we have for the services that Mercy House has provided to the city in the past? The Housing First model is the evidence-based best practice solution to address the issue of homelessness. Congregate shelter beds are neither safe in a pandemic nor are they appropriate for many of our unhoused neighbors.

    c. Program 10 – Affordable Housing Development

    We were glad to note the plan to "Achieve the development of 48 affordable housing units over eight years."

- Can staff elaborate on how they envision this objective being achieved?
- Is there an affordable housing development already in the works?
- Will the affordable housing be all in one development – or is there a plan to include them in multiple developments?

d. Program 17 - Expand Housing Opportunities

On pg. 181 of the Housing Element almost the entire city is displayed in orange and red, representing the percentage of renters who spend 40-60% (orange) or 60-80% (red) of their income on rent. Given that so many of our residents lack access to affordable housing, we recommend that the Housing Element reflect the urgency of this problem and commit to making the necessary zoning changes in one year rather than three years.

The need for more affordable housing for those earning less than $50,000 per year is acute. We urge the city to take proactive steps, such as those outlined above, to promote the production of more affordable housing in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Now, with funding available from the State of California's HomeKey funds (https://homekey.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2021-09/NOFA_Homekey_0.pdf), and the federal government American Rescue Plan Act funds, it is important for the city to take advantage of these funding sources to make important strides in the provision of affordable housing.

Thank you for considering our public comment – for your public service.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Tasia Surch, RSM Resident

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Cc: L. Anthony Beall, Mayor
Anne D. Figueroa, Mayor Pro Tempore
Carol A. Gamble, Council Member
Jerry Holloway, Council Member
Bradley J. McGirr, Council Member
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Cesar Covarrubias, Executive Director, Kennedy Commission
Paul McDougall, Marisa Prasse, Chelsea Lee, Collin Cross, Mashal Ayobi - California State Housing and Community Development Office



June 1, 2021

Regarding: June 2, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting - RSM Housing Element Update Workshop

Dear RSM Planning Commission Chair Camuglia, Vice Chair Nelson, and Commissioners Leach, McQuaid & Triepke:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM.

Three important requests up front:

1) **Please use a track changes method as your team goes through its DRAFT revisions,** so content changes can be apparent to the reader.
2) Can you **provide us with an electronic file of the site inventory**, i.e., a spreadsheet so we may conduct our own analysis?
3) **We are requesting confirmation from the city that it will allow a public review period of at least 30 days before any version of the revised Housing Element (HE) – either the Draft HE or FINAL HE – is transmitted to HCD.** We request that the city publicly announce the dates for the commencement and end of the review period.

We realize that you are still early in the process of completing the update to the Housing Element. We urge you to be creative and intentional in meeting the need for more affordable housing in RSM – especially for those with extremely-low- incomes (e.g. $28,250 and below) and very- low- incomes ($47,100 and below). We ask this because 9.6%, or 1,635 households out of 17,074 in RSM in 2013 to 2016 fell into the "Extremely Low Income" category.

Extremely Low Income Housing Needs

	Total Households	Households below 30% HAMFI	Share below 30% HAMFI
White, non-Hispanic	11,890	1,095	9.2%
Black, non-Hispanic	285	0	0.0%
Asian and other, non-Hispanic	2,225	100	4.5%
Hispanic	2,674	440	16.5%
TOTAL	**17,074**	**1,635**	**9.6%**
Renter-occupied	4,905	1,065	21.7%
Owner-occupied	12,180	580	4.8%
TOTAL	**17,085**	**1,645**	**9.6%**

HUD CHAS, 2012-2016. HAMFI refers to Housing Urban Development Area Median Family Income.

Housing the extremely-low income population (below 30% of area median income) can be especially challenging. HUD's CHAS dataset provides a wealth of information on such households in Rancho Santa Margarita. The above table provides a breakdown of extremely low income households by race and ethnicity. The race/ethnicity with the highest share of extremely-low income households in Rancho Santa Margarita is Hispanic (16.5% compared to 9.6% of total population). In the SCAG region, the highest share of extremely-low income households is Black, non-Hispanic (27.1% compared to 17.7% of total households).

Source: SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020.

As a reminder, below is the chart showing what the income levels are for Orange County. It's worth noting that Extremely Low Income is $28,250 for a single person and $40,350 for a family of 4.

Number of Persons in Household:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Orange County Area Median Income: $106,700	Extremely Low	28250	32300	36350	40350	43600	46850	50050	53300
	Very Low Income	47100	53800	60550	67250	72650	78050	83400	88800
	Low Income	75300	86050	96800	107550	116200	124800	133400	142000
	Median Income	74700	85350	96050	**106700**	115250	123750	132300	140850
	Moderate Income	89650	102450	115250	128050	138300	148550	158800	169050

Source: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits/docs/income-limits-2021.pdf

Another reminder of the economic make-up of RSM comes from the HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset – which shows, for the period 2013 to 2017, that 40.5% of the households were earning less than 100% of HAMFI (Housing Urban Development Area Median Family Income). From this dataset we see that 16.9% of households qualified as "very low income" – earning less than or equal to 50% of the HAMFI.

Displaying data for Rancho Santa Margarita city, California
Year Selected: 2013-2017 ACS

Income Distribution Overview	Owner	Renter	Total
Household Income <= 30% HAMFI	530	905	1,435
Household Income >30% to <=50% HAMFI	650	840	1,490
Household Income >50% to <=80% HAMFI	1,135	1,125	2,260
Household Income >80% to <=100% HAMFI	1,205	635	1,840
Household Income >100% HAMFI	8,765	1,545	10,310
Total	12,290	5,050	17,340

FEEDBACK ON COMMUNITY INPUT:

On Page 7 of the staff report, it mentions that Housing Advocacy Groups were consulted.

- **Please let us know which groups/individuals, other than Habitat for Humanity, that were respresented as part of the Advocacy Groups.**
- **NOTE: We would welcome a dialog with city staff, and De Novo consulting staff, to be able to give our input on the housing element draft.**

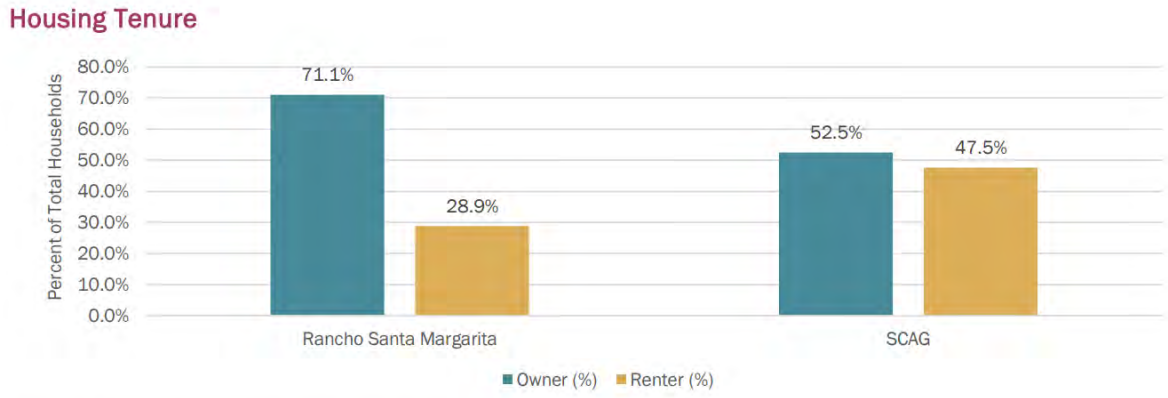
How were At-Large Community Members selected?

With regards to Survey #2 on development types, 52% of the residents live in Dove Canyon and appear to be overrepresented.

We are concerned that the Scenarios presented have been developed based on community input that is not truly representative of the make-up of the community. Of particular concern is the following:

- Only 11% (85) of the housing element survey respondents were renters. According to page 6 of the SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020, 28.9% (4,995) of the households are renters.

LOCAL HOUSING DATA, 2020



American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-year estimates.

Housing security can depend heavily on housing tenure, i.e. whether homes are owned or rented. Rancho Santa Margarita's housing stock consists of 17,290 total units, 12,295 of which are owner-occupied and 4,995 of which are renter-occupied. The share of renters in Rancho Santa Margarita is lower than in the SCAG region overall.

Source: SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020.

- 89% of survey respondents earned more than $100,000. As noted above, 40% of RSM households earn less than the HAMFI – which is close to $100,000.

We are concerned that scenarios are being constructed to meet the RHNA goals that are not taking into account the needs of renters and people with lower incomes.

QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK ON THE PROPOSED SITE SCENARIOS

- We note from the survey results that **"Repurposing Neighborhood Commercial Centers to Residential Use" was considered less acceptable. Can you please explain what it is that people object to with this option?** It seems to not be considered in the scenario options and we seek to understand why this option is considered unacceptable. Both Dove Canyon Plaza and Trabuco Marketplace may be potential sites for mixed-use zoning. As mentioned above, it was noted that 52% of Survey #2 were from Dove Canyon which has had a vocal group in opposition to repurposing the Dove Canyon Plaza, which has many vacant units. We are concerned that their views have been overrepresented in developing potential solutions.

- In reviewing the Scenarios presented in the May 2021 Housing Element document prepared for the workshop, we are struck by the fact that all but one site listed has existing structures on it. Only in Scenario A is the Rose Canyon site included.
  - What affordability levels does the city envision assigning to these sites?
  - What analysis has the staff or consultant done to assess the feasibility of these sites?
  - Why wasn't the city-owned Chiquita Ridge site included in either Scenarios A or B?

  We are concerned about the feasibility of the sites listed that are currently occupied.

  According to the California State Office of Housing & Community Development Housing Element Completeness Checklist – If nonvacant sites accommodate 50% of more of the lower income RHNA, the city will need to "***demonstrate the existing use is not an impediment to additional development and will likely discontinue in the planning period, including adopted findings based on substantial evidence*".**

  In addition, the checklist states:

  > ***Nonvacant Sites Analysis****: For nonvacant sites, demonstrate the potential and likelihood of additional development within the planning period based on extent to which existing uses may constitute an impediment to additional residential development, past experience with converting existing uses to higher density residential development, current market demand for the existing use, any existing leases or other contracts that would perpetuate the existing use or prevent redevelopment of the site for additional residential development, development trends, market conditions, and regulatory or other incentives or standards to encourage additional residential development on these sites.*

- We also request that the city abide by Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing principles in their planning and site selection. Affordable housing should be distributed evenly throughout the city so as to avoid economic and racial segregation. Future affordable housing should be placed in high opportunity areas with good jobs, good schools, services, and public transportation. The city has a responsibility to plan thoughtfully and intentionally in order to create equitable growth. We look forward to reviewing the housing element draft and hope to see specific milestones and metrics with regard to the plan for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.

Here are some ideas for your consideration:

- Creatively use public lands, such as Chiquita Ridge, or if feasible, build over existing city buildings, by partnering with a non-profit affordable housing developer, such as Jamboree or National CORE. The city could donate land in exchange for a commitment from the developer to build affordable housing for people with extremely-low and very-low incomes.

- Increase mixed use zoning throughout the city that allows for substantial numbers of housing units when developing nonresidential land.
    - Due to the limited availability of new residential zoned sites, more mixed-use zoning can increase housing development opportunities, as well as offer convenience and a small community atmosphere for the residents.
    - New housing sites can be incorporated into re-vitalization of sites when older commercial buildings or housing complexes are being renovated or upgraded.

Additional Recommendations

1) **Institute an Inclusionary Housing policy**
Require all housing development projects to have 15% of units as affordable, dedicated for extremely-low (5%), very-low (5%), and low-income (5%) residents. This will be a critical element for meeting RHNA goals over the next 8 years.

2) **Identify land sites in the city that can be repurposed and rezoned to increase opportunity for more housing for very low-income residents**.

    a) **Consider adopting an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance** such as the one used by the city of Santa Ana[3] that streamlines the regulatory process for converting non-residential buildings into affordable housing. This ordinance applied in the building of the Santa Ana Arts Collective.[4]

[3] https://www.santa-ana.org/sites/default/files/pb/planning/Counter%20Forms/Adaptive%20Reuse%20Ord.%206.30.20.pdf
[4] https://voiceofoc.org/2019/06/public-demand-for-affordable-artists-apartments-in-santa-ana-prompts-city-outreach-effort/

b) **Other Fiscal Incentives*:*** Emphasize, promote, and encourage the use of incentives available to those developers that include affordable housing. Typical incentives include waivers or reductions in fees, low interest loans or subsidies, and financial or mortgage assistance for acquisition of property.

c) **Proactively develop relationships with non-profit housing developers***.* Such a partnership could yield millions of dollars in matching funds from state and federal housing funds and specialty mortgages for building affordable housing for extremely-low, very- low, and low- income. These specialty builders can work alone or with market rate builders, enabling a faster, more cost-effective outcome.

i) **Today's non-profit developers have honed their abilities** to build attractive, quality housing cost effectively for low wage workers and their families. *These affordable communities are very different from the low-income housing erected 30-60 years ago!*

ii) **Some examples of these developments** include: Mendocino in Talega (San Clemente), Heritage Village (Mission Viejo), Alice Court (Laguna Beach) by Jamboree, and Oakcrest Terrace (Yorba Linda) by National Core. Generally, tours can be arranged to get an up-close look at results. Developments include new from the ground up as well as rehabilitation of older existing buildings.

(1) Jamboree: https://www.jamboreehousing.com/blogs/affordable-housing-developer-partner

(2) National CORE OC sites: https://nationalcore.org/portfolio/california-communities/orange-county-ca/

3) **Ease governmental constraints for developers who build Inclusionary housing.**

a) **Streamlined Procedural Incentives*:*** Emphasize processes/procedures like the consolidation of applications to one hearing, fast-tracking of design, and review and inspections with priority processing and scheduling for interim inspections.

b) **Reduction in Development Standards*:*** Offer a reduction in setback and square footage requirements and in the ratio of required vehicle parking.

4) Prioritize getting access to affordable housing funding.

a) Increased diligence to identify and access new funding sources, state and federal, to facilitate solutions. Due to the economic crisis, there is more need, and more funds are available now for support of affordable housing.

b) Join the Orange County Housing Trust, to tap grants and loans for housing and support services, to enable successful transition for those without shelter.

Given the importance of the 6th Cycle Housing Element, as noted above, Welcoming Neighbors Home representatives would like the opportunity to dialogue with RSM City staff and their Housing Element consultant on how to achieve a 6th Cycle Housing Element plan that includes improved policies and processes which will result in new affordable homes for people with extremely-low, very-low- and low-incomes.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cindy at 949-689-8830 or cindy.ashley@cox.net.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Tasia Surch, RSM Resident

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Cc: L. Anthony Beall, Mayor
Anne D. Figueroa, Mayor Pro Tempore
Carol A. Gamble, Council Member
Jerry Holloway, Council Member
Bradley J. McGirr, Council Member
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Cesar Covarrubias, Executive Director, Kennedy Commission
Paul McDougall, David Navarrette, Marisa Prasse, Chelsea Lee - California State Housing and Community Development Office

October 27, 2021

Re: October 27, 2021 City Council Meeting Agenda Item #6.1 – Public Review Draft Housing Element Presentation

Dear RSM Mayor Tony Beall, Mayor Pro Tem Anne Figueroa, and City Council Members Gamble, Holloway & McGirr:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM.

We have reviewed Rancho Santa Margarita's September 2021 Housing Element Draft. We offer the following comments and questions – some of which amplify our previously submitted comments dated June 1, 2021 and October 5, 2021.

PUBLIC INPUT:

We thank the city for offering yesterday's one-hour virtual Q&A session at 4:30 pm in response to our previous comment. Given the magnitude of importance of the city's Housing Element, we would encourage further opportunities to engage the public outside of normal business hours and widely publicized, as many community events are, by posting signs on our high traffic street corners.

SITE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

We are concerned that the site inventory proposed will not allow the city to be successful in meeting the city's RHNA numbers due to the inclusion of several sites whose current uses constitute an impediment to new residential development and the exclusion of sites that have a far greater likelihood of being developed. We offer the following feedback:

1. **Feasibility of "block" sites including the RSM Health Center & Town Center Car Wash** – While we appreciate the prime location of this group of sites, we question how feasible

they are for housing given that they contain several thriving businesses including the RSM Health Center, BJ's Restaurant and the Town Center Car Wash (which includes a gas station). We did not see any analysis that shows the feasibility of these sites transitioning to include residential units. Has any outreach been conducted to determine the likelihood that the current owners would like to sell their property? What would be the costs to remove the gas tanks to build housing and mitigate any toxicity concerns?

Photo below: RSM Health Center, Wednesday 10/20/21 1:20pm



Photo below: BJs Restaurant, Saturday 10/23/21 8:25pm



Next two photos below: Town Center Car Wash, Wednesday 10/27/21 12:40pm





2. **Dove Canyon Plaza** – The city has not included the Dove Canyon Plaza located outside the gated community of Dove Canyon as a potential site despite it being in a High Resource area. There are many vacancies and photos from a recent Saturday morning (see below) document how underutilized this shopping center is. One concern raised by a minority of residents is that housing at this location would burden the ability of Dove Canyon residents to evacuate in the event of an emergency. However, If the shopping center was thriving, there would be a significant number of people seeking to evacuate from the center. The objection seems to only be raised if residents are living there in high density housing vs. patronizing businesses in the Plaza. Zoning this area to be mixed use would increase the chances of this becoming a more vibrant area. If housing were

built over the stores, or nearby, it would help bring business to the stores (thus producing sales tax revenue) – and provide some much-needed housing.

Photos below: Dove Canyon, some of the vacant sites, Saturday 10/9/21 10:28 am





3. **El Paseo** - A large percentage of the RHNA needs (190 units) are proposed to be met at the El Paseo shopping center by re-zoning for mixed-use. Unlike the Dove Canyon Plaza, 1.5 mi away, this is a thriving neighborhood shopping center in a densely utilized area, with popular restaurants busy in the evenings and businesses such as Kohls and Bed, Bath & Beyond busy during the day. While Parcel 11 includes a large amount of parking that may only become full during events at Central Park across the street, Parcels 10 and 13-15 are highly utilized. It is hard to envision how this shopping center could accommodate such a large number of housing units and parking for those units. Additionally, it is not located on any major roads and would potentially cause traffic congestion. We do not see any analysis to show how such an ambitious transition, to include 190 housing units in this area, would be accomplished.

Photo Below: Parcel 10, Saturday, 10/23/2021, 7:20pm

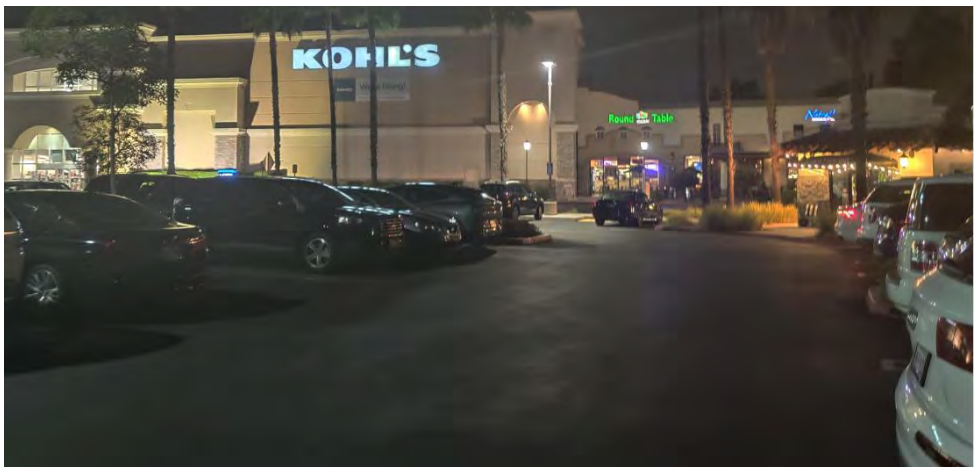


Photo Below: Parcel 13, Saturday, 10/23/2021, 7:15pm



Photo Below: Parcel 14, Saturday, 10/23/2021, 7:17pm facing the newly opened The Stand restaurant



Photo Below: Parcel 14 – Brand new Devi Rebel Yoga Studio on left, Tutto Fresco on right, 10/23/2021, 7:15pm



Photo Below: Parcel 15 Facing BevMo, Saturday, 10/23/2021, 7:15pm



4. **Chiquita Ridge** – Chiquita Ridge, an undeveloped parcel of land owned by the city with 32 developable acres, has not been included as a site. This is despite the fact that undeveloped/underdeveloped land was the top choice of land types indicated by stakeholders in Survey #2 (https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=668&meta_id=50539, pg. 5):

> The three **most** acceptable development types among all respondents were as follows:
>
> - Development on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites (58.47%)
> - Repurposing of office sites to accommodate a mix of uses (office with residential) (52.54%)
> - Workforce housing in the business park (43.22%)

Additionally, at the June 2nd Planning Commission meeting, the Commissioners directed city staff to develop a Scenario C that included development of Chiquita Ridge. One of

the Commissioners stated, "It is almost conspicuous by its absence." (https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=668, 2:06:27)

At the August 11th City Council Meeting, the Planning Commission's input was summarized here: (https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&event_id=281&meta_id=51177 , pg 12)

> Planning Commission Discussion
>
> The Planning Commission discussed pros and cons of various aspects of Scenarios A and B. The consensus among the Commission included the following:
>
> - Support for including ADUs in the Sites Inventory due to State policies;
> - A desire to reduce reliance on repurposed office sites to meet RHNA;
> - A request to explore the use of the City-owned Chiquita Ridge property; and,
> - Support for maintaining the integrity of the City's master plan.
>
> Overall, the Planning Commission preferred Scenario B over Scenario A. Additionally, the Planning Commission requested that staff take the input provided and develop a Scenario C to include use of the City-owned Chiquita Ridge property for City Council consideration.

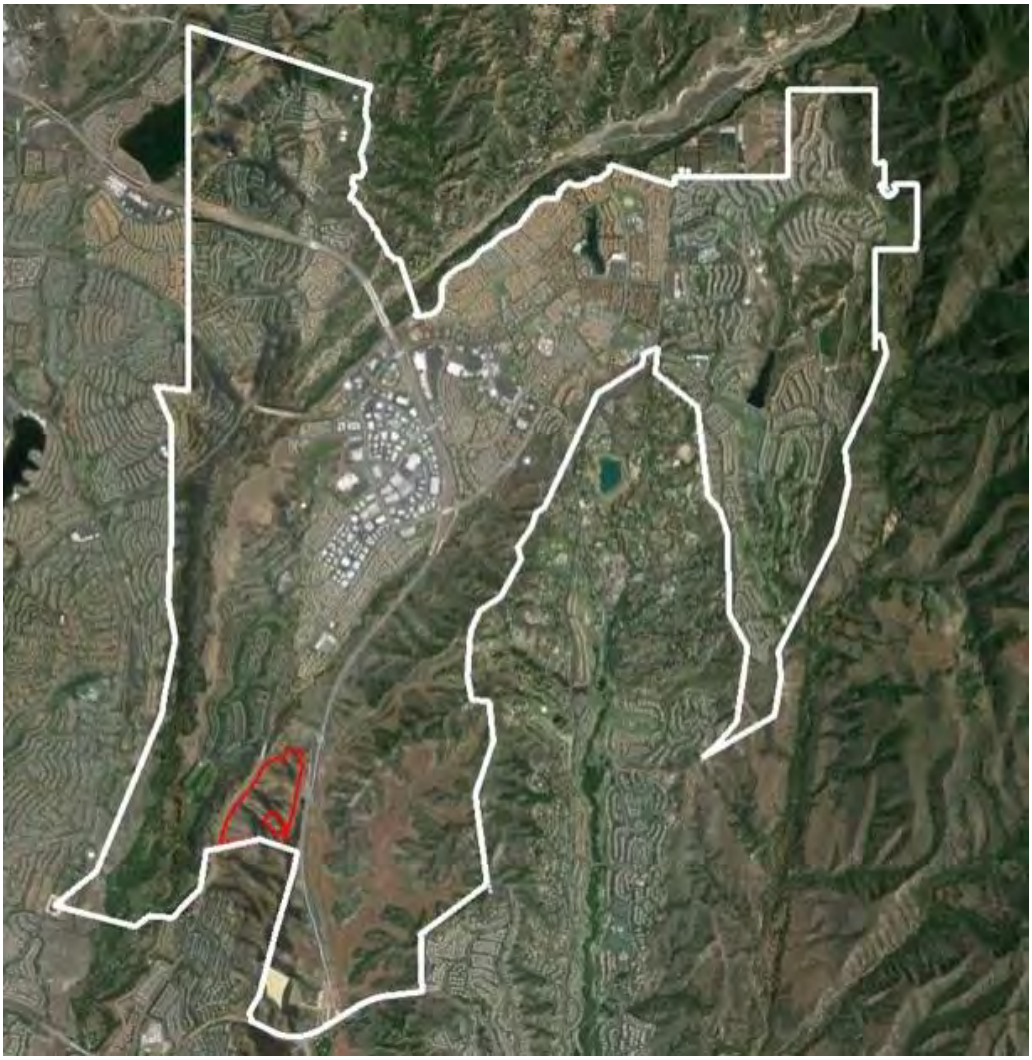
However, this input was overridden at the August 11th City Council meeting, with discussion regarding the negative consequences of triggering the Surplus Land Act due to the loss of the city's control over how this land might be used. (https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=678, 1:17:17). The fact that our five city council members are choosing to override all the input gathered as part of the Housing Element process is concerning. Chiquita Ridge has 33 acres of developable land to meet the region's severe housing shortage.

Chiquita Ridge is listed under the Future Land Use Opportunities section of the city's General Plan revised in 2020. While the loss of control seems to be the prime motivator in excluding Chiquita Ridge from the Site Inventory list, the land's fire hazard rating has been given as a further reason to not develop here. While the land is located in a Very High Fire Hazard zone, newer building codes allow for housing to be developed far more safely than in the past. As Richard Montague, former director of Aviation and Fire Management for the US Forest Service wrote, "…if new home construction in [very high fire hazard severity] zones were to be banned, new home construction would […] effectively cease. The fact is that [we] are in the midst of an historic housing crisis in California. [Elected officials] have been working with the development community to strengthen building regulations and create communities that are far more resistant to wildfires."[1] As we know, the city has no authority to build or mandate any housing, only to zone to allow for the possibility. We encourage the city to include Chiquita Ridge and proceed with the steps to develop this land as has always been intended by the city. Much preliminary analysis can be found here: http://www.cityofrsm.org/540/Chiquita-Ridge.

[1] https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/opinion/new-developments-in-fire-hazard-areas-are-safer-than-ever/

Excerpt from: https://ca-ranchosantamargarita.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/876/May-27-2015-Urban-Land-Institute-Technical-Assistance-Panel-Final-Report?bidId=

White = City boundary, Red = Chiquita Ridge



We understand in talking with city staff at the Q&A session yesterday that there were some other concerns about the site. Infrastructure costs associated with developing this land were noted. But we have seen other cities negotiate with developers to pay infrastructure costs – so we are unclear why this should be a factor. Staff also mentioned the issue of the agreement with the County and how any development would trigger the need to build a Sports Park. As another attendee at the Q&A session noted, there seems to be waning interest in a Sports Park over the years – especially given what's been developed around RSM. We believe it would make sense to renegotiate that agreement with Orange County.

5. **Workforce Housing -** We appreciate the support the city has secured from Applied Medical for Workforce Housing. What specific measures will the city adopt to ensure that the 107 units of the proposed 344 Workforce Housing units designated for Extremely-Low and Very-Low-income levels will be built? What additional programs and

incentives will the City propose to ensure that these sites maximize affordable housing for people with extremely-low and very-low incomes? We recommend the City and property owner should partner with an affordable housing developer who has expertise in leveraging regional and state funding sources to create deeper levels of affordability.

PROGRAM FEEDBACK:

1. We note that all the sites on the Site Inventory have existing uses and structures. Our concern is that **we do not see a set of housing programs that we think are commensurate with the challenge of attracting developers to build <u>affordable housing</u> on these sites with existing structures**.

    a. **We wish the city had achieved a more balanced distribution between lower and above moderate income housing units during the 5th RHNA Cycle. Only 1 lower income unit was built compared to 36 Above-Moderate units.**
    b. We fear this unbalanced ratio, favoring above-moderate income units will only continue unless a more robust set of housing programs are implemented.
    c. Further, we are concerned that the city has identified a surplus of only 4% overall on its Site Inventory – when the best practice is to identify 15% to 20%. **We are especially troubled that the surplus in the Extremely-Low and Very-Low Income categories is only 2%.**

2. **Program 5 – Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Assistance**

    We encourage the city to set a specific, measurable goal to expand assistance to an increased number of households. We encourage the city to identify specific activities to conduct outreach efforts to recruit potential landlords and increase program participation. We recommend that the city review the success of these efforts annually and revise as needed.

3. **Program 17 - Expand Housing Opportunities**

    On pg. 181 of the Housing Element almost the entire city is displayed in orange and red, representing the percentage of renters who spend 40-60% (orange) or 60-80% (red) of their income on rent. Given that so many of our residents lack access to affordable housing, **we recommend that the Housing Element reflect the urgency of this problem and commit to making the necessary zoning changes in one year rather than three years**.

RECOMMENDED HOUSING PROGRAMS:

We have consulted with staff at the Kennedy Commission to learn what housing programs facilitate the production of affordable housing. Below is their advice. We are in agreement with their recommendations.

==========

The Kennedy Commission recommends the following affordable housing policies and programs to provide development incentives and collaborative opportunities for the production of affordable homes:

1. **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance** - Given the urgent need of residents for low-income housing, the Commission strongly recommends the City adopt an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance within the next year to ensure that identified sites are truly feasible and effectively provide affordable housing in a balanced manner. We recommend that the ordinance include a 15% **requirement** of affordable housing production at extremely-low-, very-low- and low-income categories and that it apply to all residential projects. The ordinance should be flexible to allow for the development of affordable housing onsite, off site, or provide for an appropriate in-lieu fee option. We recommend an in-lieu fee option in the range of $10,000 to $15,000 per unit, or $10 to $15 per square foot, to go along with this policy. The in-lieu fee must be calculated to achieve the gap financing needed to create affordable housing and be used to leverage additional state and federal housing funds. We recommend the affordable units be deed restricted for at least 55 years. A feasibility study and implementation of the ordinance should be completed no later than one year from the adoption of the Housing Element.

2. **Mixed-Use Zoning** – We support the city's planning for mixed-use developments that provide residential units along major corridors and can provide significant opportunities for affordable housing development. We understand that mixed-use zoning allows for the integration of housing with other uses on underutilized commercial or industrial sites while retaining existing commercial/industrial square footage usage to provide services to new residents and the surrounding community. We recommend that the City require 15% of housing to be affordable at the extremely-low-, very-low-, and low-income levels in the mixed-use zoned focus areas.

3. **Affordable Housing Overlay** – The Commission recommends that the City adopt an Affordable Housing Overlay, especially over the mixed-use focus areas that are being rezoned and upzoned. A minimum of 15% of all units should be set aside for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income levels in exchange for development and regulatory incentives. The City must identify a timeframe to study the policy and a timeframe for adoption and implementation. We recommend that this happen in the first year of the 6th Cycle as part of the Zoning Code update.

4. **Congregational Housing Overlay** - A Congregational Housing Overlay Zone provides an opportunity for the development of affordable housing on religious sites while retaining the existing religious use. The overlay would provide 100% affordable units on congregational sites, with a focus on extremely-low-, very-

low- and low-income categories. Click here for a survey of how other cities are using congregational zoning.

5. **Adaptive Reuse Ordinance** - Certain building, fire code, and parking requirements add additional costs to building conversion projects and reduce the likelihood of developers converting commercial buildings to residential. The City should consider the adoption of an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, such as Santa Ana's ordinance, to provide alternative building and fire standards for the conversion of eligible buildings in exchange for 15% of converted units dedicated to extremely low-, very low- and low-income categories.

6. **Affordable ADU Program** - We recommend developing an ADU program that incentivizes homeowners to create an affordable rental unit on their property. The City should offer homeowners assistance for financing (e.g. an ADU Forgivable Loan Program, designing, and permitting ADUs in exchange for a deed-restricted, affordable ADU. In addition, the City should implement a monitoring program to track the creation and *affordability* of ADUs. The City must also commit to a mid-cycle review if ADU production is not meeting projected affordability targets.

7. **Community Land Trust** - The City should consider developing a Community Land Trust that would allow the City to retain ownership of land (either donated or purchased) and lease the land to the owner of the improvements for community benefit and the creation of 100% affordable housing.

8. **Density Bonus** - The City should analyze the effectiveness of the City's density bonus ordinance to develop affordable housing for lower-income households. The City's 5th cycle RHNA progress demonstrates that above moderate-income housing production has outpaced lower-income housing development by a 36 to 1 ratio. The City should prioritize affordable housing for lower-income households in its update and implementation of density bonuses. The review should include analysis as to how the density bonus is being implemented. This is especially important when analyzing its effectiveness in higher density specific plans and rezonings that give density and land use incentives and parking reductions, similar to the density bonus, but without requiring affordable housing. It is worth noting that rental developments can only use density bonuses to incentivize lower-income units.

9. **Incentivizing 100% Affordable Housing** - Regulatory, zoning and administrative requirements can contribute to high construction costs, and negatively affect the feasibility of producing affordable housing. The City should develop a program that incentivizes 100% affordable developments and reevaluate the current zoning code to eliminate barriers and create incentives for affordable housing developments. Incentives could include reducing or eliminating permitting fees, offering additional by-right incentives beyond density bonus, reducing parking

standards, and alternative development standards. The City should consult with for-profit and nonprofit developers to determine appropriate regulatory incentives.

10. **City Owned Sites and Surplus Property** - The city should prioritize city owned sites and surplus land to be developed exclusively for 100% affordable housing for low, very low and extremely low-income families. The City must be proactive and implement a program that markets available surplus land to affordable housing developers.

==========

The need for more affordable housing for those earning less than $50,000 per year is acute. We urge the city to take proactive steps, such as those outlined above, to promote the production of more affordable housing in Rancho Santa Margarita.

We also recommend that the city issue an RFP to actively solicit affordable housing developers to the city. We would like to see the city offer support from the fund of collected in-lieu fees in exchange for development of extremely-low-, very-low and low-income housing units as well as funding available from the State of California's HomeKey funds (https://homekey.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2021-09/NOFA_Homekey_0.pdf), and the federal government American Rescue Plan Act funds. It is important for the city to take advantage of these funding sources NOW to make important strides in the provision of affordable housing.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Tasia Surch, RSM Resident

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Cc: Planning Commission Chair Camuglia
Planning Commission Vice Chair Nelson
Planning Commissioner Leach
Planning Commissioner McQuaid
Planning Commissioner Triepke
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Cesar Covarrubias, Mildred Perez, Cynthia Guerra and Daisy Cruz - Kennedy Commission
Paul McDougall, Melina Coy, Marisa Prasse, Chelsea Lee, Collin Cross, Mashal Ayobi - California State Housing and Community Development Office

From:	Tony Belello
To:	Wendy Starks
Cc:	Cheryl Kuta
Subject:	FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date:	Wednesday, October 6, 2021 3:44:18 PM
Attachments:	image001.png

Wendy

No. 9

Tony Belello

Development Services Administrative Assistant
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
949-635-1800, ext. 6701
www.cityofrsm.org

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 3:37 PM
To: Tony Belello <TBelello@cityofrsm.org>; Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

If you are having problems viewing this HTML email, click to view a Text version.

Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[ ] City Council	[X] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	10/06/2021	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	Update Housing Element 7.0	
Position	[Oppose \/]	
Comment*	I find the Staff Report for the Updated Housing Element very confusing. I am most concerned about the following issues: 1. Why does the staff report now list 15 Sites, when Scenario D in the August 11, 2021, Staff Report and the August 30, 2021, Potential Mixed-Use Site Inventory only shows 8 sites. 2. Why are 710 housing units listed in this report, when the State has mandated 680 units for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita? 3. What is the Consultant talking about when he refers to No Net Loss Requirements of State Law? Could someone explain? In the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Appeal to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the City	

	requested that RSM's RHNA housing units be reduced by 426. 4. Why does the Staff Report show that RSM can exceed their RHNA housing goal (i.e, 710 housing units instead of the RSM's RHNA goal of 680 housing units)? and 5. Won't the City of RSM be leading the State to believe that we can accommodate many more RHNA housing units. Please help me understand the logic behind these choices! Thank You, Rhonda Lundberg
Name	Rhonda R Lundberg
Address	18 Mountain Laurel
Email Address	lundbergfamily1@cox.net
Phone Number	9495101387
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=2937

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: Planning Commission

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 10/06/2021

Agenda Item No. or Subject: Update Housing Element 7.0

Position: Oppose

Comment: I find the Staff Report for the Updated Housing Element very confusing. I am most concerned about the following issues:
1. Why does the staff report now list 15 Sites, when Scenario D in the August 11, 2021, Staff Report and the August 30, 2021, Potential Mixed-Use Site Inventory only shows 8 sites.
2. Why are 710 housing units listed in this report, when the State has mandated 680 units for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita?
3. What is the Consultant talking about when he refers to No Net Loss Requirements of State Law? Could someone explain?
In the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Appeal to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the City requested that RSM's RHNA housing units be reduced by 426.
4. Why does the Staff Report show that RSM can exceed their RHNA housing goal (i.e, 710 housing units instead of the RSM's RHNA goal of 680 housing units)? and
5. Won't the City of RSM be leading the State to believe that we can accommodate many more RHNA housing units.
Please help me understand the logic behind these choices!
Thank You,
Rhonda Lundberg

Name: Rhonda R Lundberg

Address: 18 Mountain Laurel

Email Address: lundbergfamily1@cox.net

Phone Number: 9495101387

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 10/6/2021 3:36:56 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 72.219.186.63
Referrer Page: No Referrer - Direct Link
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 4:19:23 PM

Hello,

We received the following eComment for tonight's Council meeting.

Sincerely,

Amy Diaz, CMC
City Clerk
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
(949) 635-1806

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 3:30 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

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Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[X] City Council [ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	10/27/2021
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	Housing Element Update
Position	[Support \/]
Comment*	Thank you Cheryl Kuta and Wendy Starks for having a question and answer Public Hearing via Zoom on the Housing Element Update. Cheryl answer my questions and I was able to learn more about the Housing Element through others people's questions. Thank you again for holding this Public Hearing via Zoom.
Name	Rhonda Lundberg
Address	18 Mountain Laurel
Email Address	Lundbergfamily1@cox.net
Phone Number	9495101387
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=2977

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 10/27/2021

Agenda Item No. or Subject: Housing Element Update

Position: Support

Comment: Thank you Cheryl Kuta and Wendy Starks for having a question and answer Public Hearing via Zoom on the Housing Element Update. Cheryl answer my questions and I was able to learn more about the Housing Element through others people's questions. Thank you again for holding this Public Hearing via Zoom.

Name: Rhonda Lundberg

Address: 18 Mountain Laurel

Email Address: Lundbergfamily1@cox.net

Phone Number: 9495101387

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 10/27/2021 3:29:54 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 172.58.22.207
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

Fighting for a future of abundant housing in Orange County.
peopleforhousing.org

City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Wendy Starks, Principal Planner
City Hall
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Via Email: wstarks@cityofrsm.org
Cc: housingelements@hcd.ca.gov

October 20, 2021

RE: Comments on 6th Cycle Housing Element, City of Rancho Santa Margarita

Dear Rancho Santa Margarita City Councilmembers:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the 6th cycle housing element. Together with the Campaign for Fair Housing Elements, we have reviewed the current draft and wish to bring the following issues to your attention. We hope that city staff and elected leaders will address these issues before the final adoption of the Housing Element.

Overview:

- Plan lacks the 15-30% buffer recommended by HCD to prevent No Net Loss
- Unrealistic ADU projections (40 x the number produced during the 5th cycle)
- Lack of meaningful efforts to AFFH
- The city does not estimate the likelihood of development
- Failure to recognize the role of single-family-only zoning and high parking requirements as constraints to development

Issues:

1) **No Buffer for development** -- The city's projections assume that every single site will be developed to the full capacity as specified, which is highly unlikely. In the unlikely chance that the sites do develop at full capacity, and all 40 ADUs are developed, the city will only have a 4% buffer. HCD recommends a 15 - 30% buffer. We would advise the city to increase the number of sites, especially for low and very low income housing, to enable the recommended buffer for development.

2) **Unrealistic ADU projections** -- RSM permitted ONE (1) ADU in the entire 5th cycle, and that was WITH a program to encourage ADU projects. We question the efficacy of that program. For the 6th cycle, the city is projecting 40 ADUs, which would be 5 ADUs / year over the eight year planning period. How will the city change its program, or what new program will the city introduce to produce the higher number of ADUs?

3) **Lack of meaningful effort to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH)** -- ADUs are the only way that the city proposes to integrate low income housing into existing neighborhoods, resulting in very limited choices for low income households. It is concerning that the majority of sites for multifamily housing (and therefore low-income housing) are concentrated in the parking lots of industrial complexes. The clustering of these sites in industrial areas cordons low and moderate income housing away from existing residential neighborhoods, shopping, and other community resources like libraries and schools. The city must do better to integrate affordable housing into the community.

4) **Inaccurate assessment of the city's role in perpetuating historic patterns of segregation by race, ethnicity or income**-- The city says it finds no such patterns, but that is because nearly the entire city is zoned for single family homes, which is the most expensive type of housing. If you compare RSM to the rest of Orange County, the exclusion of low income and non-white people from RSM becomes apparent. In addition, the assertion that the sites inventory does not concentrate low income housing in areas of concentrated poverty or racial/ethnic populations is disingenuous. While technically correct, there is no poverty or racial/ethnic populations *because there are no people in these areas*; the sites for multifamily / affordable housing sites (called Workforce Housing Overlay or a Mixed Use 35 Overlay) are in the parking lots of industrial parks.

5) **Non-vacant sites listed are not really available because the current use (industrial) is expected to remain**-- Low-income housing sites Ii.e. industrial center parking lots) will

be rezoned to 35 du /acre, but the full area is not available because the remaining use is expected to continue. Therefore, the city is only counting 35% of a site as available (buildable area), which effectively reduces the size of the parcel, and therefore the feasibility of building affordable housing. For example, on a .5 acre site, the city would count 35% of it as available, which means only six (6) units of housing can be built on that site. The purpose of a Mullin density (minimum 30 du / acre) is to enable by-right the density needed to develop low-income housing. This 35% available methodology undermines the efficacy of the Mullin density to make affordable housing financially feasible. It is essential that the city better analyze the likelihood of development given the reduction in capacity of the proposed multifamily sites.

Final recommendation: The city should consider opting-in to the zoning rules and CEQA exemption created by SB 10, which would enable the development of small multifamily buildings in single-family-only zones. This policy would go a long way to increasing the city's capacity for new housing development, enabling a larger buffer for No Net Loss, and integrating affordable housing in existing neighborhoods.

Thank you for all of your efforts to create a fair and legally compliant housing element. As frequent attendees in community meetings, we understand the city council has many difficult choices to make with regard to its 6th Cycle Housing Element. We encourage the RSM City Council to do what is right, even if it is unpopular, and to develop an exemplary housing element that will comply with both the spirit and letter of state housing element law.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hansburg
Executive Director
People for Housing Orange County

People for Housing Orange County is a nonprofit, community-based organization of Orange County residents organized to advocate for more homebuilding and lower housing costs. Our vision is an Orange County with enough housing for the people already here and those who move for job opportunities in our county's strong economy. I am signing this letter in my role as an employee of People for Housing Orange County and as a resident of California who is affected by the statewide housing shortage.

From: Dick Aced
To: Wendy Starks; Bradley McGirr
Subject: Housing Element Update Public Review Draft, Comments On
Date: Friday, October 22, 2021 4:04:07 PM

Wendy and Brad,

I have reviewed all 400+ pages of the subject plan and find most of my comments are regards the opening discussion. I would be glad to discuss these separately.

In general I support the plan. However, many of the comments reviewed seem to be well conceived and need to be reviewed further. Two things I did not see was an estimated of how many people will move into RSM as a result of the 680 additional residences and will our present infrastructure support this increase in population. Regarding the infrastructure will there be a need for one or more new schools and if so, where would they be placed?

Thank you,

Dick Aced

Sent from Mail for Windows

From:	Carol Wheeler
To:	Wendy Starks
Cc:	tbeall@thecityofrsm.org; Anne Figueroa; Carol Gamble; Jerry Holloway; Bradley McGirr; Cheryl Kuta; paul.mcdougall@hcd.ca.gov; melinda.coy@hcd.ca.gov; chelsea.lee@hcd.ca.gov; marisa.prasse@hcd.ca.gov; colin.cross@hcd.ca.gov; marshal.ayobi@hcd.ca.gov
Subject:	Comments on Housing Element - Rancho Santa Margarita
Date:	Tuesday, October 26, 2021 10:48:00 AM

As a 28 year resident, I love living (and now working from home) in RSM! Over the decades, I've seen a LOT of changes and developments —and the community has adapted. The addition of 680 affordable housing units is not just a REQUIRED change, but one that the people of this city will in time adapt as well.

I understand the current issue is selecting the sites of the affordable housing units. I'm strongly in favor of rezoning under-utilized existing structures and using them for housing. I suggest reopening discussions of the Paloma Project (Dove Canyon Plaza). I'm in favor of repurposed office sites and workforce housing. Some property owners have already expressed willingness to support this mixed-use as well.

I like the 15 sites under consideration (Table H-57 RHNA Sites Summary in the **RSM-Public-Review-Draft-Housing-Element-Update** that are spread out throughout the city. This will create a more seamless integration of these units in the community without segregating or isolating them into a designated "ghetto" and the stigma it implies to those who will live there.

The City Council can also adopt an **Adaptive Reuse Ordinance** such as the one used by the city of Santa Ana that streamlines the regulatory process for converting non-residential buildings into affordable housing. This ordinance was applied in the building of the Santa Ana Arts Collective.

If the City develops the Chiquita Ridge property at any time, it's development should stipulate the inclusion of Very Low and Low Income Housing Units. Even if the current RNHA requirements are met elsewhere.

I appreciate your action in moving forward in meeting RHNA requirements and creating a more inclusive and diverse community.

Carol Wheeler
1 Alondra
RSM, CA 92688
slow.trotter@gmail.com

From:	Rona Henry
To:	Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc:	Cindy Ashley; Cesar Covarrubias; Mildred Perez
Subject:	Thank you & Congregational Overlay info
Date:	Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:03:38 PM

Dear Cheryl and Wendy,
Thanks so much for hosting the Housing Element Q&A session yesterday. I found it really helpful in getting a better context.

During the Q&A we discussed the possibility of the city including a Congregational Overlay as a program in the Housing Element. I said I would follow-up with you to share some information on what other cities are doing.

- The Kennedy Commission has been collecting information about how various cities are using Congregational Land Zoning. You can view that here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1697-jFywdBKzgKymNLJrBfdJQasiEGyuuxV9onoaafI/edit?usp=sharing
- This morning I learned that the Arroyo Group has developed a proposal for Congregational Land Overlay Zoning in Fullerton. The notes I saw looked quite detailed (e.g., density, height, parking, conditional use permits, etc) - but I don't know yet if these notes are something I can share. If you are interested in seeing them, please let me know and I will follow up.

With kind regards,
--
Rona Henry
Chair, Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation
rona.s.henry@gmail.com 609-216-1784

Wendy Starks

From: Jamoralin, Joseph@DOT <Joseph.Jamoralin@dot.ca.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2021 6:17 PM
To: Wendy Starks
Cc: Shelley, Scott@DOT
Subject: Comment Letter for City of Rancho Santa Margarita 2021-2029 Housing Element Update
Attachments: 12-ORA-2021-01800 - City of Rancho Santa Margarita 2021-2029 Housing Element Update.pdf

Good Evening Ms. Starks,

Please review the attached comment letter from Caltrans for the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding these comments.

Please confirm receipt of this email by responding.

Thank you,

Joseph Jamoralin
Transportation Planner
Caltrans District 12 | Regional-IGR-Transit Planning
1750 East 4th Street Suite 100
Santa Ana, CA 92705
Office: (657) 328-6276

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 12
1750 EAST FOURTH STREET, SUITE 100
SANTA ANA, CA 92705
PHONE (657) 328-6000
FAX (657) 328-6522
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district12

Making Conservation a California Way of Life.

October 28, 2021

Ms. Wendy Starks
Principal Planner
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92630

File: IGR/CEQA

12-ORA-2021-01800
SR 241, PM14.545-20.102
I-5, PM 15.752

Dear Ms. Starks,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the review of the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment.

The project proposes an update to the Housing Element in the City's General Plan. Regional access to the project area is provided by State Route 241 (SR 241) and Interstate 5 (I-5). Caltrans is a responsible agency for this project and upon review, we have the following comments:

Transportation Planning

1. The Department firmly embraces racial equity, inclusion, and diversity. These values are foundational to achieving our vision of a cleaner, safer, and more accessible and more connected transportation system.

   Caltrans recognizes our responsibility to assist communities of color and under-served communities by removing barriers to provide a more equitable transportation system for all.

   Please consider including a discussion on equity in General Plan Element updates.

2. Caltrans supports the city's evaluation of potential sites for housing of all income levels. The state mandates that cities must plan for housing needs of future residents of all incomes. This analysis would assist in accommodating the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation per the California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD).

3. Caltrans encourages the City to provide a discussion on improving multimodal transportation (walking, biking, and transit) opportunities for residents to address accessibility, safety, and environmental benefits as part of the Housing Element.

New development projects should also be encouraged to incorporate opportunities to support sustainable and multimodol transportation options, including, but not limited to, transit, walking, biking, shared and electric vehicles.

4. Caltrans supports projects which provide a diversity of housing choices and destinations accessible by Active Transportation (i.e. bicycle and pedestrian) and transit users. New development projects should incorporate opportunities to support sustainoble and multimodal transportation options, including, but not limited to transit, walking and biking, and electric cars and bicycles.

5. Any pedestrian facility enhancements from future housing development projects that are within Caltrans' Right of Way will need to comply with Caltrans Design Information Bulletin (DIB) 82-06. The aforementioned DIB can be found here: https://dot.ca.gov/-/medio/dot-media/programs/design/documents/dib82-06-a11y.pdf

6. According to Government Code 65302, "upon the next revision of the Housing Element on or after January 1, 2020, the Safety Element shall be reviewed and updated as necessary to identify residential developments in any hazard areas identified in the Safety Element that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes."

   Safety elements are also now required to include more information about wildfire risks in the community and how to improve wildfire safety. As well as identifying new information related to flood hazards and climate adaptation and resiliency strategies applicable to the city.

   For further information regarding required background information and policy program guidance for Safety Element updates, please see https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov.

7. Safety is one of Caltrans' strategic goals. We are striving for more equitable outcomes for the transportation network's diverse users. To achieve these ambitious goals, we will pursue meaningful collaboration with our partners.

   We encourage the implementation of new technologies, innovations, and best practices that will enhance the safety on the transportation network. These pursuits are both ambitious and urgent, and their accomplishment involves a focused departure from the status quo as we continue to institutionalize safety in all our work.

Traffic Impact Study

8. New developments resulting from the City's Housing Element update should provide a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) based Traffic Impact Study (TIS). Please

use the Governor's Office of Planning and Research Guidance to identify VMT related impacts

9. The TIS may also need to identify the future project's near-term and long-term safety or operational issues, on or adjacent to any existing or proposed State facilities.

10. We encourage the evaluation of potential Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications in order to better manage the transportation network. For additional TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference (Chapter 8). This reference is available online at: http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf

Encroachment Permit

11. Any project work proposed in the vicinity of the State Right-of-Way (ROW) would require an encroachment permit and all environmental concerns must be adequately addressed. If the environmental documentation for the project does not meet Caltrans's requirements for work done within State ROW, additional documentation would be required before approval of the encroachment permit. Please coordinate with Caltrans to meet requirements for any work within or near State ROW. For specific details for Encroachment Permits procedure, please refer to the Caltrans's Encroachment Permits Manual at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/

Please continue to keep us informed of this project and any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions or need to contact us, please do not hesitate to contact Joseph Jamoralin at (657) 328-6276 or Joseph.Jamoralin@dot.ca.gov

Sincerely,

SCOTT SHELLEY
Branch Chief, Regional-IGR-Transit Planning
Caltrans, District 12

From:	Michael Ebel
To:	Wendy Starks
Cc:	Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov; melinda.coy@hcd.ca.gov; Chelsea.lee@hcd.ca.gov; Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.gov; colin.cross@hcd.ca.gov; mashal.ayobi@hcd.ca.gov
Subject:	RHNA goals for Rancho Santa Margarita
Date:	Friday, October 29, 2021 2:47:27 PM

Hello Wendy,
Thank you for the presentation at the City Council meeting recently.

As our city and state's housing costs skyrocket, it becomes apparent that the need for affordable housing has also becomes an urgency. We raised our children in southern California, and as they become adults, we would like for them to reside this region with us. In many cases, unfortunately, they are forced to seek affordable housing out of state. In my engagement with local employees, I am amazed at the high percentage of them living outside Orange County and commuting long distances to work here.
We think that the suggestions put forth by the "Welcoming Neighbors Home" organization to identify and rezone properties to allow more residential building for the local work force as well as other suggestions made are the right thing to do for our community, in order to meet the RHNA goals required by the state.

Thank You
Michael & Patty Ebel

From: Beth Heard
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Public Comment on the Draft Housing Element
Date: Friday, October 29, 2021 3:15:05 PM

I have the following questions and concerns regarding the approach the City of Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) has chosen to take in Updating of the 2021 Housing Element. These issues are as follows:

1. With the rezoning of Commercial Properties along El Paseo and Santa Margarita Parkway, how does the City plan to tackle increases in traffic and the loss of parking in and around, one of only two main streets (Santa Margarita Parkway) in and out of RSM ?

2. Since the core part of the City already experiences parking and traffic congestion during peak traffic hours 7 days a week, what strategies will the City implement to mitigate issues of:

   - ***Traffic gridlock*** in and around the El Paseo and Santa Margarita Parkway where popular commercial businesses, RSM Community Center, RSM City Hall and business offices as well as a favorite public park are located.

   - ***Evacuation route gridlock*** for residents as well as emergency vehicle access to render aid to the City during an emergency. Given that RSM is surrounded by high fire hazard severity zones and there have been several major wildfires within 10 miles of RSM in the past few years, wildfires are a constant danger to residents and property in the RSM areas nearest these high fire hazard severity zones. In addition, earthquakes and other natural or person-made disasters are also possible in RSM. Since the two main ways out of RSM are two bridges over 30-to-40-foot ravines, evacuations during a natural disaster could be disastrous for both residents trying to evacuate as well as emergency responders trying to get into the Community to render aide.

   - ***Parking availability*** for customers not living in the immediate area as well as residents living in the mixed-use high-density housing, where most of RSM's shops, restaurants, county library, city park, city hall and city offices as well as a community center are located. These commercial businesses, city offices and the community center situated along El Paseo and Santa Margarita Parkway are already the most utilized commercial and public properties in the City.

   - ***Loss of commercial property revenue*** due to the repurposing of 35% of commercial property acreage to allow for high density housing. Currently the City uses commercial property revenues to finance affordable essential services to RSM residents as well as provide for the City's fiscal stability.

   - ***Safety of pedestrians*** and people riding bicycles, scooters etc. from oncoming traffic in and around rezone areas of El Paseo and Santa Margarita Parkway. This is important since there have been fatalities of people walking or on bikes in and around the Santa Margarita and San Antonio Parkways in recent years. With the addition of people living in the mixed-use high-density housing around the highly used commercial and community properties at the core of the City there will be a significant increase in both foot and vehicle traffic which will have to compete for the same space.

Although the rezoning of the commercial properties to accommodate high density housing is the City's selected approach to comply with the RHNA housing unit goal it is vital that public health and safety as well as the City's fiscal stability be maintained.

Your consideration on these critical issues is appreciated

Beth Heard

Sent from Mail for Windows

From:	Cindy Gildersleeve
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	Draft housing element - comments
Date:	Friday, October 29, 2021 3:48:18 PM

I have the following concerns regarding RSM's update to the 2021 Housing Element:

- Traffic. It's bad enough that there has been very high traffic along Santa Margarita Parkway, particularly around El Paseo. How does the City plan to address this situation if commercial properties along those streets are rezoned for housing, adding more cars to our already congested roadways?

- Emergency Evacuation. Wildfires continue to be a danger to residents and property, especially given that RSM is surrounded by high fire hazard severity zones. Just this past Monday, in the rain, some teenagers set a bonfire in a remote area of Dove Canyon; thankfully OCFA quickly put the fire out, but what if this had happened on one of the hotter days this week, with high wind warnings? With only one route out of Dove Canyon, our community could have literally been toast. Adding more housing just makes it more difficult to evacuate in an emergency.

- Loss of commercial property revenue. If 35% of commercial property is to be repurposed to allow for high density housing, how does the City plan to make up for the loss in revenue those companies provide, which are used for essential services?

- Pedestrian safety. Just a couple of weeks ago, a resident of RSM was tragically hit and killed while crossing Santa Margarita Parkway at El Paseo. Adding more homes in this area will mean both more traffic and more pedestrians trying to share the same space.

- Parking. There are already commercial areas of RSM around El Paseo where parking is difficult for anyone not within walking distance. By eliminating these areas, it could cause extra traffic from cars trying to find alternate parking solutions, or cause more pedestrians to traverse the roadways, resulting in more tragedies.

Health and safety should be of utmost importance to the officials of the City of RSM.

Thank you for considering these important issues.

Cindy Gildersleeve

From:	tasia Surch
To:	Wendy Starks; Anne Figueroa; Bradley McGirr
Subject:	Fwd: RSM HOUSING ELEMENT FEEDBACK
Date:	Friday, October 29, 2021 4:18:33 PM

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: tasia Surch <tasiasurch@me.com>
Date: October 29, 2021 at 4:16:12 PM PDT
To: tbeall@cityofrsm.org
Subject: RSM HOUSING ELEMENT FEEDBACK

As a resident of Rancho Santa Margarita since 1995, I have seen the disparity in housing equity and am tired of hearing Brad McGirr, Carol Gamble et al complaining about having to follow mandates from Sacramento regarding housing equity (RHNA), recycling etc and doing little or nothing to comply. I would like to see our city grow and thrive as affordable housing allows. To that end and with regard to this issue I have the following comments and questions for the City Council:

1. Not all of us have the privilege of a good education, high paying jobs and family wealth which shield the privileged from many forms of inequity, including housing. As a single parent with 2 young boys I never could have afforded to buy a home here and most of my salary as a full time legal secretary went toward our rent. Had I not been blessed with meeting and marrying my educated and hard working husband I would not own a home and would never have been able to send my kids to college. I am one of the privileged by reason of my marriage only

We MUST provide affordable housing for hard working people who do the best they can with what little means they have available, not punish them for working those minimum wage jobs that many of our local residents would never consider doing

I feel we must require that developers can at least build 15% affordable housing for very low and low-income residents by adopting a housing policy that requires at least 15% of all new housing of 6 or more units be for very low income (i.e. for those earning under $50,000 a year) in exchange for zoning properties for higher density (which increases the property's value), If that cannot be accomplished, we must urge the city to require an in-lieu fee of at least $10,000 to $15,000 per unit to create a fund for building affordable housing elsewhere. These measures will help the city meet their required housing units.

2. Fear of triggering the Surplus Land Act is not a valid reason for excluding Chiquita Ridge as a site in the Housing Element. Undeveloped land was the #1 development choice by residents in the city surveys and the Planning Commission

was in support of including Chiquita Ridge in its June meeting. Chiquita Ridge is listed in the city's 2020 General Plan under Future Land Use Opportunities. New building standards allow for building in fire hazard zones more safely than ever. (Reference:
<https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/opinion/new-developments-in-fire-hazard-areas-are-safer-than-ever/>
https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/opinion/new-developments-in-fire-hazard-areas-are-safer-than-ever/). This land has the greatest ability to help with the housing shortage in a way that would integrate seamlessly into the existing city.

3. What analysis and outreach has been done to determine the feasibility of building 190 units at the El Paseo shopping center (where Bev Mo, Tutto Fresco & Kohls are)? Why wasn't the Dove Canyon Plaza included instead? This is a large shopping center with many vacant spots that is highly underutilized in a High Resource area. If it were thriving, there would be many cars at this site. It would appear that the concern for lack of ability to evacuate in the case of emergency is only for those who might live here in high-density housing vs. patrons of the businesses.

4. What analysis and outreach has the city conducted on the block of sites that include The Town Center Car Wash (which has a gas station) and the RSM Health Center? What is the likelihood that the existing use of these properties will cease and they will transition to housing? These two sites are currently highly utilized.

5. What specific measures will the city adopt to ensure that 107 units of the proposed 344 Workforce Housing units will be designated for Extremely Low and Very Low-income levels?

6. Too many households in RSM spend over 40-80% of their income on housing which is not good for our local businesses. The city's three year timeline for
rezoning is unacceptable. This timeline must be changed to one year. We are in the midst of a housing crisis and the City must act quickly and stop dragging their feet to avoid compliance

7. What data does Mercy House provide regarding success with the unhoused. Do they only offer shelter beds located outside of the city? Shelters are not safe in a pandemic and often not appropriate for those who find themselves unhoused. Evidence supports the Housing First Model as the option with the most success to transition individuals successfully back into housing.

Thank you in advance for your attention to these issues and prompt com0liance with the states mandates

Anastasia Surch

Sent from my iPad

Sent from my iPad

From:	Chris McLaughlin
To:	Wendy Starks
Cc:	Chris McLaughlin
Subject:	Public Comment on the Housing Element Update from Chris McLaughlin
Date:	Friday, October 29, 2021 4:57:05 PM

Hi Wendy,

This is my Public Comment on our City's Housing Element Update submission, for inclusion with our package to HCD:

"RSM's Housing Element Update should be properly thought of as a 'No-Housing Element Update', because from my perspective, this is the update the City would submit, if they wanted no new housing built within the City limits. (Not just affordable housing, but any housing at all.)
The plan can be summarized as "Rezoning existing commercial real estate in the center of the City as mixed-use or workforce overlay housing." There is no plan to rezone any open space for new housing, and existing under-utilized commercial real estate on the edges of the City, such as the Dove Canyon Plaza, are not considered to be re-zoned. Also, the plan is to allow up to three years to do the re-zoning, which if they were serious, could be in one year.
The reason why re-zoning existing commercial real estate is a non-starter in RSM, is because someone has already been trying that for years now, and it's going nowhere fast. A few years ago a developer tried to have existing commercial real estate just re-zoned from commercial-automotive to commercial-general, and the City fought it all the way to an unsuccessful ballot measure by the owner to get it re-zoned, and that was existing commercial real estate. The idea that the City would seriously consider re-zoning existing commercial real estate, that is already occupied and thriving, into residential areas is preposterous. This plan is just to comply legally with the State's mandates, and is designed to ensure nothing gets built in RSM in the next decade."

Thanks, and have a great weekend!

Chris McLaughlin
ckmclaughlin@gmail.com
949-433-6496

From:	Coy, Melinda@HCD
To:	Mendoza, Kathyren@HCD
Subject:	FW: Rancho Santa Margarita
Date:	Monday, March 8, 2021 2:26:51 PM

Can you add this email to the public comments folder in the G:drive?

From: Jon Wizard <jon@yimbylaw.org>
Sent: Friday, March 5, 2021 1:15 PM
To: Compliance Review@HCD <compliancereview@hcd.ca.gov>
Subject: Rancho Santa Margarita

Hello,

RSM issued a press release [cityofrsm.org] telling people about its online HE survey. Unfortunately, in that press release, they solicited input only from those who "live or work in Rancho Santa Margarita." According to HCD's Building Blocks page on Public Participation, "[t]he local government shall make a diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the housing element, and the program shall describe this effort." I'm not aware of where in the Government Code local agencies are instructed, directed, or encouraged to limit that public participation exclusively to those who live or work within that agency's political boundaries. For instance, do people who own homes in RSM that are rented out not get to participate in the survey? What about grandparents whose extended families live in RSM? How about business owners who live elsewhere but have a store in RSM?

Thank you,
Jon

--
Jon Wizard
he/him/his
Housing Elements Coordinator

YIMBY Law [yimbylaw.org]
1260 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

fairhousingelements.org [fairhousingelements.org]

calendly.com/jonyimbylaw/30min [calendly.com] → personal calendar
calendly.com/housingelements [calendly.com] → housing element watchdogs calendar

June 1, 2021

Regarding: June 2, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting - RSM Housing Element Update Workshop

Dear RSM Planning Commission Chair Camuglia, Vice Chair Nelson, and Commissioners Leach, McQuaid & Triepke:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM.

Three important requests up front:

1) **Please use a track changes method as your team goes through its DRAFT revisions,** so content changes can be apparent to the reader.
2) Can you **provide us with an electronic file of the site inventory**, i.e., a spreadsheet so we may conduct our own analysis?
3) **We are requesting confirmation from the city that it will allow a public review period of at least 30 days before any version of the revised Housing Element (HE) – either the Draft HE or FINAL HE – is transmitted to HCD.** We request that the city publicly announce the dates for the commencement and end of the review period.

We realize that you are still early in the process of completing the update to the Housing Element. We urge you to be creative and intentional in meeting the need for more affordable housing in RSM – especially for those with extremely-low- incomes (e.g. $28,250 and below) and very- low- incomes ($47,100 and below). We ask this because 9.6%, or 1,635 households out of 17,074 in RSM in 2013 to 2016 fell into the "Extremely Low Income" category.

Extremely Low Income Housing Needs

	Total Households	Households below 30% HAMFI	Share below 30% HAMFI
White, non-Hispanic	11,890	1,095	9.2%
Black, non-Hispanic	285	0	0.0%
Asian and other, non-Hispanic	2,225	100	4.5%
Hispanic	2,674	440	16.5%
TOTAL	**17,074**	**1,635**	**9.6%**
Renter-occupied	4,905	1,065	21.7%
Owner-occupied	12,180	580	4.8%
TOTAL	**17,085**	**1,645**	**9.6%**

HUD CHAS, 2012-2016. HAMFI refers to Housing Urban Development Area Median Family Income.

Housing the extremely-low income population (below 30% of area median income) can be especially challenging. HUD's CHAS dataset provides a wealth of information on such households in Rancho Santa Margarita. The above table provides a breakdown of extremely low income households by race and ethnicity. The race/ethnicity with the highest share of extremely-low income households in Rancho Santa Margarita is Hispanic (16.5% compared to 9.6% of total population). In the SCAG region, the highest share of extremely-low income households is Black, non-Hispanic (27.1% compared to 17.7% of total households).

Source: SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020.

As a reminder, below is the chart showing what the income levels are for Orange County. It's worth noting that Extremely Low Income is $28,250 for a single person and $40,350 for a family of 4.

Number of Persons in Household:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Orange County Area Median Income: $106,700	Extremely Low	28250	32300	36350	40350	43600	46850	50050	53300
	Very Low Income	47100	53800	60550	67250	72650	78050	83400	88800
	Low Income	75300	86050	96800	107550	116200	124800	133400	142000
	Median Income	74700	85350	96050	**106700**	115250	123750	132300	140850
	Moderate Income	89650	102450	115250	128050	138300	148550	158800	169050

Source: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits/docs/income-limits-2021.pdf

Another reminder of the economic make-up of RSM comes from the HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset – which shows, for the period 2013 to 2017, that 40.5% of the households were earning less than 100% of HAMFI (Housing Urban Development Area Median Family Income). From this dataset we see that 16.9% of households qualified as "very low income" – earning less than or equal to 50% of the HAMFI.

Displaying data for Rancho Santa Margarita city, California
Year Selected: 2013-2017 ACS

Income Distribution Overview	Owner	Renter	Total
Household Income <= 30% HAMFI	530	905	1,435
Household Income >30% to <=50% HAMFI	650	840	1,490
Household Income >50% to <=80% HAMFI	1,135	1,125	2,260
Household Income >80% to <=100% HAMFI	1,205	635	1,840
Household Income >100% HAMFI	8,765	1,545	10,310
Total	12,290	5,050	17,340

FEEDBACK ON COMMUNITY INPUT:

On Page 7 of the staff report, it mentions that Housing Advocacy Groups were consulted.

- **Please let us know which groups/individuals, other than Habitat for Humanity, that were respresented as part of the Advocacy Groups.**
- **NOTE: We would welcome a dialog with city staff, and De Novo consulting staff, to be able to give our input on the housing element draft.**

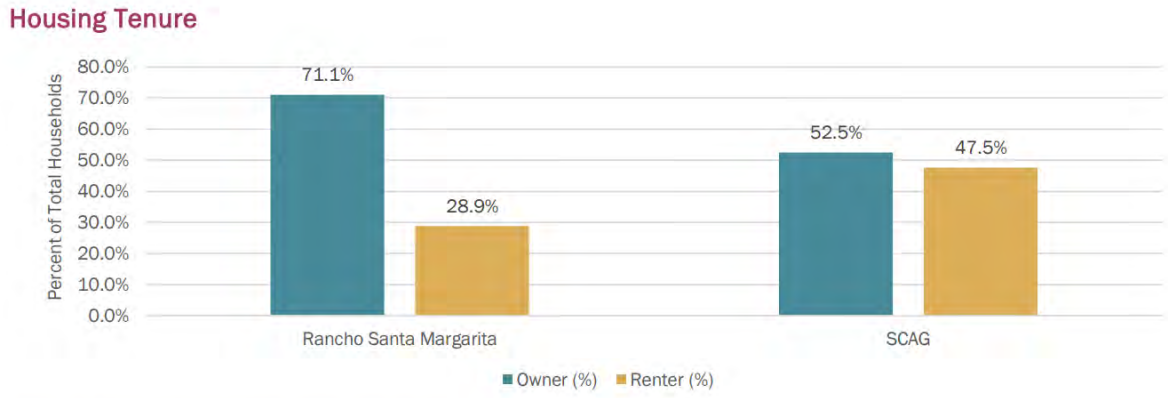
How were At-Large Community Members selected?

With regards to Survey #2 on development types, 52% of the residents live in Dove Canyon and appear to be overrepresented.

We are concerned that the Scenarios presented have been developed based on community input that is not truly representative of the make-up of the community. Of particular concern is the following:

- Only 11% (85) of the housing element survey respondents were renters. According to page 6 of the SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020, 28.9% (4,995) of the households are renters.

LOCAL HOUSING DATA, 2020



American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-year estimates.

Housing security can depend heavily on housing tenure, i.e. whether homes are owned or rented. Rancho Santa Margarita's housing stock consists of 17,290 total units, 12,295 of which are owner-occupied and 4,995 of which are renter-occupied. The share of renters in Rancho Santa Margarita is lower than in the SCAG region overall.

Source: SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020.

- 89% of survey respondents earned more than $100,000. As noted above, 40% of RSM households earn less than the HAMFI – which is close to $100,000.

We are concerned that scenarios are being constructed to meet the RHNA goals that are not taking into account the needs of renters and people with lower incomes.

QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK ON THE PROPOSED SITE SCENARIOS

- We note from the survey results that **"Repurposing Neighborhood Commercial Centers to Residential Use" was considered less acceptable. Can you please explain what it is that people object to with this option?** It seems to not be considered in the scenario options and we seek to understand why this option is considered unacceptable. Both Dove Canyon Plaza and Trabuco Marketplace may be potential sites for mixed-use zoning. As mentioned above, it was noted that 52% of Survey #2 were from Dove Canyon which has had a vocal group in opposition to repurposing the Dove Canyon Plaza, which has many vacant units. We are concerned that their views have been overrepresented in developing potential solutions.

- In reviewing the Scenarios presented in the May 2021 Housing Element document prepared for the workshop, we are struck by the fact that all but one site listed has existing structures on it. Only in Scenario A is the Rose Canyon site included.
  - What affordability levels does the city envision assigning to these sites?
  - What analysis has the staff or consultant done to assess the feasibility of these sites?
  - Why wasn't the city-owned Chiquita Ridge site included in either Scenarios A or B?

  We are concerned about the feasibility of the sites listed that are currently occupied.

  According to the California State Office of Housing & Community Development Housing Element Completeness Checklist – If nonvacant sites accommodate 50% of more of the lower income RHNA, the city will need to "***demonstrate the existing use is not an impediment to additional development and will likely discontinue in the planning period, including adopted findings based on substantial evidence*".**

  In addition, the checklist states:

  > ***Nonvacant Sites Analysis****: For nonvacant sites, demonstrate the potential and likelihood of additional development within the planning period based on extent to which existing uses may constitute an impediment to additional residential development, past experience with converting existing uses to higher density residential development, current market demand for the existing use, any existing leases or other contracts that would perpetuate the existing use or prevent redevelopment of the site for additional residential development, development trends, market conditions, and regulatory or other incentives or standards to encourage additional residential development on these sites.*

- We also request that the city abide by Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing principles in their planning and site selection. Affordable housing should be distributed evenly throughout the city so as to avoid economic and racial segregation. Future affordable housing should be placed in high opportunity areas with good jobs, good schools, services, and public transportation. The city has a responsibility to plan thoughtfully and intentionally in order to create equitable growth. We look forward to reviewing the housing element draft and hope to see specific milestones and metrics with regard to the plan for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.

Here are some ideas for your consideration:

- Creatively use public lands, such as Chiquita Ridge, or if feasible, build over existing city buildings, by partnering with a non-profit affordable housing developer, such as Jamboree or National CORE. The city could donate land in exchange for a commitment from the developer to build affordable housing for people with extremely-low and very-low incomes.

- Increase mixed use zoning throughout the city that allows for substantial numbers of housing units when developing nonresidential land.
    - Due to the limited availability of new residential zoned sites, more mixed-use zoning can increase housing development opportunities, as well as offer convenience and a small community atmosphere for the residents.
    - New housing sites can be incorporated into re-vitalization of sites when older commercial buildings or housing complexes are being renovated or upgraded.

Additional Recommendations

1) **Institute an Inclusionary Housing policy**
Require all housing development projects to have 15% of units as affordable, dedicated for extremely-low (5%), very-low (5%), and low-income (5%) residents. This will be a critical element for meeting RHNA goals over the next 8 years.

2) **Identify land sites in the city that can be repurposed and rezoned to increase opportunity for more housing for very low-income residents**.

    a) **Consider adopting an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance** such as the one used by the city of Santa Ana[1] that streamlines the regulatory process for converting non-residential buildings into affordable housing. This ordinance applied in the building of the Santa Ana Arts Collective.[2]

[1] https://www.santa-ana.org/sites/default/files/pb/planning/Counter%20Forms/Adaptive%20Reuse%20Ord.%206.30.20.pdf
[2] https://voiceofoc.org/2019/06/public-demand-for-affordable-artists-apartments-in-santa-ana-prompts-city-outreach-effort/

b) **Other Fiscal Incentives*:*** Emphasize, promote, and encourage the use of incentives available to those developers that include affordable housing. Typical incentives include waivers or reductions in fees, low interest loans or subsidies, and financial or mortgage assistance for acquisition of property.

c) **Proactively develop relationships with non-profit housing developers***.* Such a partnership could yield millions of dollars in matching funds from state and federal housing funds and specialty mortgages for building affordable housing for extremely-low, very- low, and low- income. These specialty builders can work alone or with market rate builders, enabling a faster, more cost-effective outcome.

i) **Today's non-profit developers have honed their abilities** to build attractive, quality housing cost effectively for low wage workers and their families. *These affordable communities are very different from the low-income housing erected 30-60 years ago!*

ii) **Some examples of these developments** include: Mendocino in Talega (San Clemente), Heritage Village (Mission Viejo), Alice Court (Laguna Beach) by Jamboree, and Oakcrest Terrace (Yorba Linda) by National Core. Generally, tours can be arranged to get an up-close look at results. Developments include new from the ground up as well as rehabilitation of older existing buildings.

(1) Jamboree: https://www.jamboreehousing.com/blogs/affordable-housing-developer-partner

(2) National CORE OC sites: https://nationalcore.org/portfolio/california-communities/orange-county-ca/

3) **Ease governmental constraints for developers who build Inclusionary housing.**

a) **Streamlined Procedural Incentives*:*** Emphasize processes/procedures like the consolidation of applications to one hearing, fast-tracking of design, and review and inspections with priority processing and scheduling for interim inspections.

b) **Reduction in Development Standards*:*** Offer a reduction in setback and square footage requirements and in the ratio of required vehicle parking.

4) Prioritize getting access to affordable housing funding.

a) Increased diligence to identify and access new funding sources, state and federal, to facilitate solutions. Due to the economic crisis, there is more need, and more funds are available now for support of affordable housing.

b) Join the Orange County Housing Trust, to tap grants and loans for housing and support services, to enable successful transition for those without shelter.

Given the importance of the 6th Cycle Housing Element, as noted above, Welcoming Neighbors Home representatives would like the opportunity to dialogue with RSM City staff and their Housing Element consultant on how to achieve a 6th Cycle Housing Element plan that includes improved policies and processes which will result in new affordable homes for people with extremely-low, very-low- and low-incomes.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cindy at 949-689-8830 or cindy.ashley@cox.net.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Cc: L. Anthony Beall, Mayor
Anne D. Figueroa, Mayor Pro Tempore
Carol A. Gamble, Council Member
Jerry Holloway, Council Member
Bradley J. McGirr, Council Member
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Cesar Covarrubias, Executive Director, Kennedy Commission
Paul McDougall, David Navarrette, Marisa Prasse, Chelsea Lee - California State Housing and Community Development Office

From:	Prasse, Marisa@HCD
To:	Mendoza, Kathyren@HCD
Cc:	McDougall, Paul@HCD; Lee, Chelsea@HCD; Navarrette, David@HCD
Subject:	FW: RSM Housing Element Comment for tonight"s Planning Workshop
Date:	Wednesday, June 2, 2021 3:16:54 PM
Attachments:	RSM HE Comment to Planning Commission 2021-06-02 FINAL.pdf

Hi Kathyren – Can you add the attached to the Rancho Santa Margarita HE folder?

Thank you!

From: Cindy Ashley <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 2:51 PM
To: kcamuglia@cityofrsm.org; bnelson@cityofrsm.org; jleach@cityofrsm.org; mmcquaid@cityofrsm.org; dtriepke@cityofrsm.org
Cc: Tasia Surch <tasiasurch@me.com>; rev@tapestryuu.org; 'Rona Henry' <rona.s.henry@gmail.com>; tbeall@cityofrsm.org; afigueroa@cityofrsm.org; cgamble@cityofrsm.org; jholloway@cityofrsm.org; bmcgirr@cityofrsm.org; jcervantez@cityofrsm.org; ckuta@cityofrsm.org; mlinares@cityofrsm.org; cesarc@kennedycommission.org; mildredp@kennedycommission.org; McDougall, Paul@HCD <Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov>; Lee, Chelsea@HCD <Chelsea.Lee@hcd.ca.gov>; Prasse, Marisa@HCD <Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.gov>; Navarrette, David@HCD <David.Navarrette@hcd.ca.gov>; 'Wendy Starks' <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RSM Housing Element Comment for tonight's Planning Workshop

Good Afternoon RSM Planning Commissioners,

Attached please find a letter that I have submitted to you via the e-comment on the city website from the Welcoming Neighbors Home initiative, of which I am a member.
I hope you find the feedback and information helpful and look forward to supporting you in meeting our city's RHNA goals. We hope to have the opportunity to meet with you, city staff and the De Novo consulting staff to give our input on the housing element draft in the future.

Regards,

Cindy Ashley
RSM Resident

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
701 OCEAN STREET, 4TH FLOOR, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
(831) 454-2580 FAX: (831) 454-2131 TDD: 711
KATHLEEN MOLLOY, PLANNING DIRECTOR

Accessory Dwelling Unit Forgivable Loan Program

Updated October 2019

Program Summary

The County's Accessory Dwelling Unit Forgivable Loan Program (ADU Loan Program) offers loans of up to $40,000 to homeowners adding an ADU to their property who are willing to rent the ADU to low income households at affordable rents for up to 20 years.

In exchange for the ADU Loan, homeowners will sign a deed restriction that requires them to rent the ADU or the main house at a low-income rent, as set forth below and in the County's Affordable Housing Guidelines.

The ADU Loan is provided at 3% simple interest, deferred for 20 years, and will be forgiven after 20 years if the ADU has been rented in compliance with the low-income restriction for the entire 20-year term. Homeowners may opt out of the deed restriction agreement at any time by paying back the loan in full (principal plus accrued interest) when they wish to opt out.

Loan funds may be used to pay for the ADU, including permitting and impact fees, design costs, utility connections and/or septic system improvements, and other project costs as approved by the Housing Division. Once applicants are approved and a project budget and timeline has been finalized, the County will fund the loan and record the deed restriction. Most ADU projects cost more than the loan amount. The homeowner must provide the remaining funds needed to complete the project, whether with savings or another loan. The homeowner must contribute at least 10% of the total ADU project cost.

Program Guidelines

Property Location

The new ADU must be located in the unincorporated Santa Cruz County area, which includes the North Coast, San Lorenzo Valley, Live Oak, Soquel, Aptos, Corralitos, Freedom and Amesti.

Loan Terms

Maximum loan amount:	$40,000
Interest rate:	Three percent (3%) simple interest
Term:	20 years
Repayment:	Loan is forgiven at the end of the 20-year term, if the unit has been rented consistent with the affordability restrictions.
Security:	Loan and rent restriction agreement are secured by a deed of trust with the County of Santa Cruz recorded against the property.

Maximum Loan to Value Ratio

Total liens of record (including County loan) cannot exceed 100% of "post-construction" value of the property at the time of loan closing as estimated by an appraisal.

http://www.sccoplanning.com/ADU.aspx
HousingProgramsInfo@santacruzcounty.US

Eligible Costs

Loan transaction costs: County must approve budget for eligible costs including permit fees, design and construction. Loan transaction costs including property appraisal, escrow fees and title insurance costs are eligible loan expenses. Funds will be released upon submittal of draws to the County.

Ineligible Costs

Code enforcement costs: Code enforcement staff costs to investigate existing units that were built without permits will not be reimbursed from County loan proceeds.

Tenant Income Limits

County assisted ADUs can only be rented to lower-income households at lower-income rents, including to Section 8 tenants, as defined below.

The current "lower income" limits, as adjusted by household size, are as follows:

Household Size	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Low Income Limit (80% of median)	$68,900	$78,750	$88,600	$98,400	$106,300

Rent Limits

The current maximum rent limits for ADUs assisted by this loan program are based on an income of 70% AMI, adjusted for unit size, and include utility allowances. If the ADU is rented through the Housing Authority to a Section 8 tenant, the Housing Authority will determine the total amount of rent that can be paid for the ADU ("Payment Standard").

2019 ADU Rent Limits		
Unit Size	**Low Income Rent** *(70% AMI)*	**Section 8 Payment Standards** *Varies by Location**
Studio	$1,201	$1,477 - $1,567
1 Bedroom	$1,372	$1,722 - $1,844
2 Bedroom	$1,544	$2,268 - $2,439
3 Bedroom	$1,715	$3,008 - $3,241

**Section 8 payment standards* vary by zip code, as determined by the Housing Authority of Santa Cruz County. See link for 2019 payment standards: Link*

General Terms

Tenant Income Verification: Housing Program staff will verify the eligibility of tenants.
Ongoing unit monitoring: Housing Program staff will verify affordable rent levels annually.
Exceptions to Guidelines: The Planning Director may make reasonable exceptions to these guidelines.

For more information about the ADU loan program, please call the Housing Division at (831) 454-2332.

http://www.sccoplanning.com/ADU.aspx
HousingProgramsInfo@santacruzcounty.US



October 5, 2021

Re: October 6, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting Agenda Item #7.1 – Public Review Draft Housing Element

Dear RSM Planning Commission Chair Camuglia, Vice Chair Nelson, and Commissioners Leach, McQuaid & Triepke:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM.

We have reviewed Rancho Santa Margarita's September 2021 Housing Element Draft. We offer the following comments and questions – some of which amplifies our previously submitted comments (included below).

1. **Public Input** - Will the city be offering any opportunity for stakeholders and city staff to review and discuss the proposed Housing Element in an informal setting to allow an opportunity for questions and answers?
2. **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance** – A program that we believe will help the city achieve its low-income housing goal is an inclusionary housing policy. We recommend that the city adopt an inclusionary housing ordinance that will require that at least 15% of any new development of 6 or more units be for very low income people, i.e., those earning less than $50,000 per year. When this is not possible, we urge the city to require an in-lieu fee of at least $10,000 to $15,000 per unit - to build a fund for building affordable housing elsewhere.
3. **Chiquita Ridge** - The Planning Commission recommended that the city pursue development of Chiquita Ridge in early June. As Chair Camuglia correctly pointed out, it has always been the city's plan to develop this land. In fact, it is listed under the Future Land Use Opportunities section of the city's General Plan revised in 2020. The city council had concluded that it is impossible to develop this land due to its location in a Very High Fire Hazard zone. However, *this is not true*. As Richard Montague, former director of Aviation and Fire Management for the US Forest Service wrote, "…if new

home construction in [very high fire hazard severity] zones were to be banned, new home construction would […] effectively cease. The fact is that [we] are in the midst of an historic housing crisis in California. [Elected officials] have been working with the development community to strengthen building regulations and create communities that are far more resistant to wildfires."[1]

As members of the planning commission, I hope you take the opportunity to educate the city council. In rejecting your recommendation, they are rejecting the number #1 development type choice of citizens surveyed, "undeveloped/underdeveloped sites" (example given for this type was open space or agricultural properties). To ignore development of this large amount of acreage based on an erroneous reason in the midst of a housing crisis is highly questionable.

We also would draw the Commission's attention to a new tool[2] that will help communities plan housing while taking into account nature conservation – and hope that you recommend staff and the housing element consultant use it – if they have not already. The SoCal Greenprint takes existing data and synthesizes it to create a more complete picture of the possibilities of incorporating nature in planning for an area. Using this tool, developers and city officials will be able to easily assess what conservation and development opportunities are available to design a sustainable and resilient region—especially knowing the climate-related challenges that lie ahead: high heat days, drought, coastal erosion, and wildfire.

3. **Town Center Car Wash** - Can you elaborate on the inclusion of Site 9, the Town Center Car Wash & gas station? It would appear to be an undesirable site for housing because the gas tanks would need to be removed and there are potential toxicity issues associated with it. Besides, the gas station and car wash are highly utilized by the community.
4. **Site Viability** - How viable are the proposed sites for development? Have the owners been contacted to see if they are interested in the redevelopment of their property?
5. **El Paseo** - A large percentage of the RHNA needs are proposed to be met at the El Paseo shopping center by re-zoning for mixed-use. What is envisioned at this shopping center?
6. **Workforce Housing -** We appreciate the support the city has secured from Applied Medical for Workforce Housing. What specific measures will the city adopt to ensure that 107 units of the proposed 344 Workforce Housing units will be designated for Extremely Low and Very Low-income levels?

[1] https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/opinion/new-developments-in-fire-hazard-areas-are-safer-than-ever/

[2] https://voiceofoc.org/2021/10/schlotterbeck-housing-and-conservation-can-co-exist-and-a-new-tool-makes-it-more-possible/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=cd351065-0e6d-495b-8230-d0c755fd69c1

7. **Program 3 - Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)** - We note the projection of 40 ADUs to help the city meet its RHNA goals.

    a. We recommend that ADU owners be required to report rental rates so the city can track its progress in meeting its low income RHNA goal.

    b. We also ask the city to adopt programs that would incentivize ADU owners to rent their ADU at affordable rates – such as:

        - the ADU Forgivable Loan program in Santa Cruz (see attached),
        - in exchange for committing to offer low rents, significantly reduce permit fees and application fees for construction of ADUs
        - provide a set of pre-approved ADU designs in order to streamline the approval of the ADU's construction.

8. **Program Plans** – We would like to see more specificity in the actions and associated timelines in some of the proposed programs. Without being more specific, it will be hard to judge how well the city achieves its objectives.

    a. **Program 5 – Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Assistance** and **Program 8 OCHA Special Needs Group Rental Assistance Programs**:

        - We ask that the city be more specific and proactive in its educational efforts about these programs. For instance, what is the planned in terms of frequency of outreach through the city newsletters? Are there any other communication channels that the city can use to promote the availability of vouchers?
        - Does the city maintain a list of landlords in RSM who are willing to accept Housing Vouchers? If not, we suggest the city start to do this and to publicize the list.
        - Does the city have any plans to proactively recruit landlords to accept housing vouchers?

    b. **Program 6 – Homeless Services.**

        i. Does/will the city partner with the Sherriff's Department to employ the Behavioral Health Bureau in RSM? The Behavior Health Bureau is a new unit tasked with assisting the homeless population and those with mental health disorders through a robust program that includes proactive engagement, case management, and resource distribution.

        ii. What outcome data do we have for the services that Mercy House has provided to the city in the past? The Housing First model is the evidence-based best practice solution to address the issue of homelessness. Congregate shelter beds are neither safe in a pandemic nor are they appropriate for many of our unhoused neighbors.

    c. Program 10 – Affordable Housing Development

    We were glad to note the plan to "Achieve the development of 48 affordable housing units over eight years."

- Can staff elaborate on how they envision this objective being achieved?
- Is there an affordable housing development already in the works?
- Will the affordable housing be all in one development – or is there a plan to include them in multiple developments?

d. Program 17 - Expand Housing Opportunities

On pg. 181 of the Housing Element almost the entire city is displayed in orange and red, representing the percentage of renters who spend 40-60% (orange) or 60-80% (red) of their income on rent. Given that so many of our residents lack access to affordable housing, we recommend that the Housing Element reflect the urgency of this problem and commit to making the necessary zoning changes in one year rather than three years.

The need for more affordable housing for those earning less than $50,000 per year is acute. We urge the city to take proactive steps, such as those outlined above, to promote the production of more affordable housing in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Now, with funding available from the State of California's HomeKey funds (https://homekey.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2021-09/NOFA_Homekey_0.pdf), and the federal government American Rescue Plan Act funds, it is important for the city to take advantage of these funding sources to make important strides in the provision of affordable housing.

Thank you for considering our public comment – for your public service.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Tasia Surch, RSM Resident

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Cc: L. Anthony Beall, Mayor
Anne D. Figueroa, Mayor Pro Tempore
Carol A. Gamble, Council Member
Jerry Holloway, Council Member
Bradley J. McGirr, Council Member
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Cesar Covarrubias, Executive Director, Kennedy Commission
Paul McDougall, Marisa Prasse, Chelsea Lee, Collin Cross, Mashal Ayobi - California State Housing and Community Development Office



June 1, 2021

Regarding: June 2, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting - RSM Housing Element Update Workshop

Dear RSM Planning Commission Chair Camuglia, Vice Chair Nelson, and Commissioners Leach, McQuaid & Triepke:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM.

Three important requests up front:

1) **Please use a track changes method as your team goes through its DRAFT revisions,** so content changes can be apparent to the reader.
2) Can you **provide us with an electronic file of the site inventory**, i.e., a spreadsheet so we may conduct our own analysis?
3) **We are requesting confirmation from the city that it will allow a public review period of at least 30 days before any version of the revised Housing Element (HE) – either the Draft HE or FINAL HE – is transmitted to HCD.** We request that the city publicly announce the dates for the commencement and end of the review period.

We realize that you are still early in the process of completing the update to the Housing Element. We urge you to be creative and intentional in meeting the need for more affordable housing in RSM – especially for those with extremely-low- incomes (e.g. $28,250 and below) and very- low- incomes ($47,100 and below). We ask this because 9.6%, or 1,635 households out of 17,074 in RSM in 2013 to 2016 fell into the "Extremely Low Income" category.

Extremely Low Income Housing Needs

	Total Households	Households below 30% HAMFI	Share below 30% HAMFI
White, non-Hispanic	11,890	1,095	9.2%
Black, non-Hispanic	285	0	0.0%
Asian and other, non-Hispanic	2,225	100	4.5%
Hispanic	2,674	440	16.5%
TOTAL	**17,074**	**1,635**	**9.6%**
Renter-occupied	4,905	1,065	21.7%
Owner-occupied	12,180	580	4.8%
TOTAL	**17,085**	**1,645**	**9.6%**

HUD CHAS, 2012-2016. HAMFI refers to Housing Urban Development Area Median Family Income.

Housing the extremely-low income population (below 30% of area median income) can be especially challenging. HUD's CHAS dataset provides a wealth of information on such households in Rancho Santa Margarita. The above table provides a breakdown of extremely low income households by race and ethnicity. The race/ethnicity with the highest share of extremely-low income households in Rancho Santa Margarita is Hispanic (16.5% compared to 9.6% of total population). In the SCAG region, the highest share of extremely-low income households is Black, non-Hispanic (27.1% compared to 17.7% of total households).

Source: SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020.

As a reminder, below is the chart showing what the income levels are for Orange County. It's worth noting that Extremely Low Income is $28,250 for a single person and $40,350 for a family of 4.

Number of Persons in Household:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Orange County Area Median Income: $106,700	Extremely Low	28250	32300	36350	40350	43600	46850	50050	53300
	Very Low Income	47100	53800	60550	67250	72650	78050	83400	88800
	Low Income	75300	86050	96800	107550	116200	124800	133400	142000
	Median Income	74700	85350	96050	**106700**	115250	123750	132300	140850
	Moderate Income	89650	102450	115250	128050	138300	148550	158800	169050

Source: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits/docs/income-limits-2021.pdf

Another reminder of the economic make-up of RSM comes from the HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset – which shows, for the period 2013 to 2017, that 40.5% of the households were earning less than 100% of HAMFI (Housing Urban Development Area Median Family Income). From this dataset we see that 16.9% of households qualified as "very low income" – earning less than or equal to 50% of the HAMFI.

Displaying data for Rancho Santa Margarita city, California
Year Selected: 2013-2017 ACS

Income Distribution Overview	Owner	Renter	Total
Household Income <= 30% HAMFI	530	905	1,435
Household Income >30% to <=50% HAMFI	650	840	1,490
Household Income >50% to <=80% HAMFI	1,135	1,125	2,260
Household Income >80% to <=100% HAMFI	1,205	635	1,840
Household Income >100% HAMFI	8,765	1,545	10,310
Total	12,290	5,050	17,340

FEEDBACK ON COMMUNITY INPUT:

On Page 7 of the staff report, it mentions that Housing Advocacy Groups were consulted.

- **Please let us know which groups/individuals, other than Habitat for Humanity, that were respresented as part of the Advocacy Groups.**
- **NOTE: We would welcome a dialog with city staff, and De Novo consulting staff, to be able to give our input on the housing element draft.**

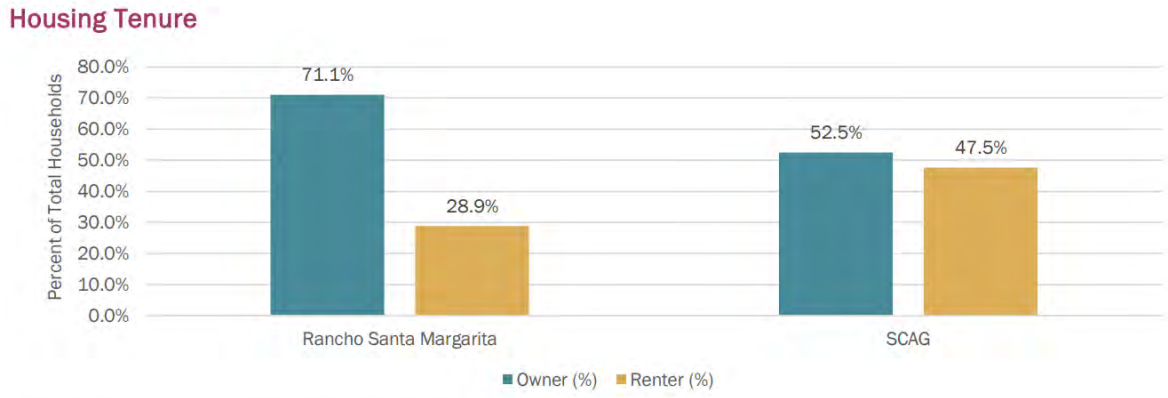
How were At-Large Community Members selected?

With regards to Survey #2 on development types, 52% of the residents live in Dove Canyon and appear to be overrepresented.

We are concerned that the Scenarios presented have been developed based on community input that is not truly representative of the make-up of the community. Of particular concern is the following:

- Only 11% (85) of the housing element survey respondents were renters. According to page 6 of the SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020, 28.9% (4,995) of the households are renters.

LOCAL HOUSING DATA, 2020



American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-year estimates.

Housing security can depend heavily on housing tenure, i.e. whether homes are owned or rented. Rancho Santa Margarita's housing stock consists of 17,290 total units, 12,295 of which are owner-occupied and 4,995 of which are renter-occupied. The share of renters in Rancho Santa Margarita is lower than in the SCAG region overall.

Source: SCAG Pre-Certified Local Housing Data for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita , August 2020.

- 89% of survey respondents earned more than $100,000. As noted above, 40% of RSM households earn less than the HAMFI – which is close to $100,000.

We are concerned that scenarios are being constructed to meet the RHNA goals that are not taking into account the needs of renters and people with lower incomes.

QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK ON THE PROPOSED SITE SCENARIOS

- We note from the survey results that **"Repurposing Neighborhood Commercial Centers to Residential Use" was considered less acceptable. Can you please explain what it is that people object to with this option?** It seems to not be considered in the scenario options and we seek to understand why this option is considered unacceptable. Both Dove Canyon Plaza and Trabuco Marketplace may be potential sites for mixed-use zoning. As mentioned above, it was noted that 52% of Survey #2 were from Dove Canyon which has had a vocal group in opposition to repurposing the Dove Canyon Plaza, which has many vacant units. We are concerned that their views have been overrepresented in developing potential solutions.

- In reviewing the Scenarios presented in the May 2021 Housing Element document prepared for the workshop, we are struck by the fact that all but one site listed has existing structures on it. Only in Scenario A is the Rose Canyon site included.
  - What affordability levels does the city envision assigning to these sites?
  - What analysis has the staff or consultant done to assess the feasibility of these sites?
  - Why wasn't the city-owned Chiquita Ridge site included in either Scenarios A or B?

  We are concerned about the feasibility of the sites listed that are currently occupied.

  According to the California State Office of Housing & Community Development Housing Element Completeness Checklist – If nonvacant sites accommodate 50% of more of the lower income RHNA, the city will need to "***demonstrate the existing use is not an impediment to additional development and will likely discontinue in the planning period, including adopted findings based on substantial evidence*".**

  In addition, the checklist states:

  > ***Nonvacant Sites Analysis****: For nonvacant sites, demonstrate the potential and likelihood of additional development within the planning period based on extent to which existing uses may constitute an impediment to additional residential development, past experience with converting existing uses to higher density residential development, current market demand for the existing use, any existing leases or other contracts that would perpetuate the existing use or prevent redevelopment of the site for additional residential development, development trends, market conditions, and regulatory or other incentives or standards to encourage additional residential development on these sites.*

- We also request that the city abide by Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing principles in their planning and site selection. Affordable housing should be distributed evenly throughout the city so as to avoid economic and racial segregation. Future affordable housing should be placed in high opportunity areas with good jobs, good schools, services, and public transportation. The city has a responsibility to plan thoughtfully and intentionally in order to create equitable growth. We look forward to reviewing the housing element draft and hope to see specific milestones and metrics with regard to the plan for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.

Here are some ideas for your consideration:

- Creatively use public lands, such as Chiquita Ridge, or if feasible, build over existing city buildings, by partnering with a non-profit affordable housing developer, such as Jamboree or National CORE. The city could donate land in exchange for a commitment from the developer to build affordable housing for people with extremely-low and very-low incomes.

- Increase mixed use zoning throughout the city that allows for substantial numbers of housing units when developing nonresidential land.
    - Due to the limited availability of new residential zoned sites, more mixed-use zoning can increase housing development opportunities, as well as offer convenience and a small community atmosphere for the residents.
    - New housing sites can be incorporated into re-vitalization of sites when older commercial buildings or housing complexes are being renovated or upgraded.

Additional Recommendations

1) **Institute an Inclusionary Housing policy**
Require all housing development projects to have 15% of units as affordable, dedicated for extremely-low (5%), very-low (5%), and low-income (5%) residents. This will be a critical element for meeting RHNA goals over the next 8 years.

2) **Identify land sites in the city that can be repurposed and rezoned to increase opportunity for more housing for very low-income residents**.

    a) **Consider adopting an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance** such as the one used by the city of Santa Ana[3] that streamlines the regulatory process for converting non-residential buildings into affordable housing. This ordinance applied in the building of the Santa Ana Arts Collective.[4]

[3] https://www.santa-ana.org/sites/default/files/pb/planning/Counter%20Forms/Adaptive%20Reuse%20Ord.%206.30.20.pdf
[4] https://voiceofoc.org/2019/06/public-demand-for-affordable-artists-apartments-in-santa-ana-prompts-city-outreach-effort/

b) **Other Fiscal Incentives*:*** Emphasize, promote, and encourage the use of incentives available to those developers that include affordable housing. Typical incentives include waivers or reductions in fees, low interest loans or subsidies, and financial or mortgage assistance for acquisition of property.

c) **Proactively develop relationships with non-profit housing developers***.* Such a partnership could yield millions of dollars in matching funds from state and federal housing funds and specialty mortgages for building affordable housing for extremely-low, very- low, and low- income. These specialty builders can work alone or with market rate builders, enabling a faster, more cost-effective outcome.

i) **Today's non-profit developers have honed their abilities** to build attractive, quality housing cost effectively for low wage workers and their families. *These affordable communities are very different from the low-income housing erected 30-60 years ago!*

ii) **Some examples of these developments** include: Mendocino in Talega (San Clemente), Heritage Village (Mission Viejo), Alice Court (Laguna Beach) by Jamboree, and Oakcrest Terrace (Yorba Linda) by National Core. Generally, tours can be arranged to get an up-close look at results. Developments include new from the ground up as well as rehabilitation of older existing buildings.

(1) Jamboree: https://www.jamboreehousing.com/blogs/affordable-housing-developer-partner

(2) National CORE OC sites: https://nationalcore.org/portfolio/california-communities/orange-county-ca/

3) **Ease governmental constraints for developers who build Inclusionary housing.**

a) **Streamlined Procedural Incentives*:*** Emphasize processes/procedures like the consolidation of applications to one hearing, fast-tracking of design, and review and inspections with priority processing and scheduling for interim inspections.

b) **Reduction in Development Standards*:*** Offer a reduction in setback and square footage requirements and in the ratio of required vehicle parking.

4) Prioritize getting access to affordable housing funding.

a) Increased diligence to identify and access new funding sources, state and federal, to facilitate solutions. Due to the economic crisis, there is more need, and more funds are available now for support of affordable housing.

b) Join the Orange County Housing Trust, to tap grants and loans for housing and support services, to enable successful transition for those without shelter.

Given the importance of the 6th Cycle Housing Element, as noted above, Welcoming Neighbors Home representatives would like the opportunity to dialogue with RSM City staff and their Housing Element consultant on how to achieve a 6th Cycle Housing Element plan that includes improved policies and processes which will result in new affordable homes for people with extremely-low, very-low- and low-incomes.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cindy at 949-689-8830 or cindy.ashley@cox.net.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Tasia Surch, RSM Resident

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Cc: L. Anthony Beall, Mayor
Anne D. Figueroa, Mayor Pro Tempore
Carol A. Gamble, Council Member
Jerry Holloway, Council Member
Bradley J. McGirr, Council Member
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Cesar Covarrubias, Executive Director, Kennedy Commission
Paul McDougall, David Navarrette, Marisa Prasse, Chelsea Lee - California State Housing and Community Development Office

From:	Prasse, Marisa@HCD
To:	Mendoza, Kathyren@HCD
Cc:	McDougall, Paul@HCD; Lee, Chelsea@HCD; Cross, Colin@HCD; Ayobi, Mashal@HCD
Subject:	FW: RSM Housing Element Draft Comment to Planning Commission 2021-10-05
Date:	Wednesday, October 6, 2021 7:49:01 AM
Attachments:	image001.png image002.png image003.png image004.png WNH RSM HE Comment to Planning Commission 2021-10-06 SUBMITTED.pdf ADU Forgivable Loan Program (1).pdf

Hi Kathyren - Please add to the HE folder for Rancho Santa Margarita.

Thank you!

Marisa Prasse *(she/her)*
Housing Policy Specialist
Land Use & Planning Unit
Housing Policy Development Division

Housing and Community Development
2020 W. El Camino Avenue, Suite 500 | Sacramento, CA 95833
Phone: 916-603-4890 (work cell)

From: Cindy Ashley <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 5, 2021 8:08 PM
To: kcamuglia@cityofrsm.org; bnelson@cityofrsm.org; jleach@cityofrsm.org; mmcquaid@cityofrsm.org; dtriepke@cityofrsm.org
Cc: tbeall@cityofrsm.org; afigueroa@cityofrsm.org; cgamble@cityofrsm.org; jholloway@cityofrsm.org; bmcgirr@cityofrsm.org; jcervantez@cityofrsm.org; ckuta@cityofrsm.org; mlinares@cityofrsm.org; cesarc@kennedycommission.org; mildredp@kennedycommission.org; McDougall, Paul@HCD <Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov>; Lee, Chelsea@HCD <Chelsea.Lee@hcd.ca.gov>; Prasse, Marisa@HCD <Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.gov>; David.navarrette@hcd.ca.gov; Collin.Cross@hcd.ca.gov; 'Mashal' <Ayobi@hcd.ca.gov>
Subject: RSM Housing Element Draft Comment to Planning Commission 2021-10-05

Good Evening RSM Planning Commissioners,

Attached please find a letter that I have submitted to you via the e-comment on the city website along with the attachment referenced in the letter.

I hope you find the feedback and questions helpful in developing a successful 6th Cycle Housing Element that will address the need for low-income and affordable housing in the city in addition to programs to assist those with housing insecurity and those who find themselves unhoused in our community.

Regards,
Cindy Ashley
RSM Resident
Welcoming Neighbors Home
RSM City Monitor

Fighting for a future of abundant housing in Orange County.
peopleforhousing.org

City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Wendy Starks, Principal Planner
City Hall
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Via Email: wstarks@cityofrsm.org
Cc: housingelements@hcd.ca.gov

October 20, 2021

RE: Comments on 6th Cycle Housing Element, City of Rancho Santa Margarita

Dear Rancho Santa Margarita City Councilmembers:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the 6th cycle housing element. Together with the Campaign for Fair Housing Elements, we have reviewed the current draft and wish to bring the following issues to your attention. We hope that city staff and elected leaders will address these issues before the final adoption of the Housing Element.

Overview:

- Plan lacks the 15-30% buffer recommended by HCD to prevent No Net Loss
- Unrealistic ADU projections (40 x the number produced during the 5th cycle)
- Lack of meaningful efforts to AFFH
- The city does not estimate the likelihood of development
- Failure to recognize the role of single-family-only zoning and high parking requirements as constraints to development

Issues:

1) **No Buffer for development** -- The city's projections assume that every single site will be developed to the full capacity as specified, which is highly unlikely. In the unlikely chance that the sites do develop at full capacity, and all 40 ADUs are developed, the city will only have a 4% buffer. HCD recommends a 15 - 30% buffer. We would advise the city to increase the number of sites, especially for low and very low income housing, to enable the recommended buffer for development.

2) **Unrealistic ADU projections** -- RSM permitted ONE (1) ADU in the entire 5th cycle, and that was WITH a program to encourage ADU projects. We question the efficacy of that program. For the 6th cycle, the city is projecting 40 ADUs, which would be 5 ADUs / year over the eight year planning period. How will the city change its program, or what new program will the city introduce to produce the higher number of ADUs?

3) **Lack of meaningful effort to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH)** -- ADUs are the only way that the city proposes to integrate low income housing into existing neighborhoods, resulting in very limited choices for low income households. It is concerning that the majority of sites for multifamily housing (and therefore low-income housing) are concentrated in the parking lots of industrial complexes. The clustering of these sites in industrial areas cordons low and moderate income housing away from existing residential neighborhoods, shopping, and other community resources like libraries and schools. The city must do better to integrate affordable housing into the community.

4) **Inaccurate assessment of the city's role in perpetuating historic patterns of segregation by race, ethnicity or income**-- The city says it finds no such patterns, but that is because nearly the entire city is zoned for single family homes, which is the most expensive type of housing. If you compare RSM to the rest of Orange County, the exclusion of low income and non-white people from RSM becomes apparent. In addition, the assertion that the sites inventory does not concentrate low income housing in areas of concentrated poverty or racial/ethnic populations is disingenuous. While technically correct, there is no poverty or racial/ethnic populations *because there are no people in these areas*; the sites for multifamily / affordable housing sites (called Workforce Housing Overlay or a Mixed Use 35 Overlay) are in the parking lots of industrial parks.

5) **Non-vacant sites listed are not really available because the current use (industrial) is expected to remain**-- Low-income housing sites Ii.e. industrial center parking lots) will

be rezoned to 35 du /acre, but the full area is not available because the remaining use is expected to continue. Therefore, the city is only counting 35% of a site as available (buildable area), which effectively reduces the size of the parcel, and therefore the feasibility of building affordable housing. For example, on a .5 acre site, the city would count 35% of it as available, which means only six (6) units of housing can be built on that site. The purpose of a Mullin density (minimum 30 du / acre) is to enable by-right the density needed to develop low-income housing. This 35% available methodology undermines the efficacy of the Mullin density to make affordable housing financially feasible. It is essential that the city better analyze the likelihood of development given the reduction in capacity of the proposed multifamily sites.

Final recommendation: The city should consider opting-in to the zoning rules and CEQA exemption created by SB 10, which would enable the development of small multifamily buildings in single-family-only zones. This policy would go a long way to increasing the city's capacity for new housing development, enabling a larger buffer for No Net Loss, and integrating affordable housing in existing neighborhoods.

Thank you for all of your efforts to create a fair and legally compliant housing element. As frequent attendees in community meetings, we understand the city council has many difficult choices to make with regard to its 6th Cycle Housing Element. We encourage the RSM City Council to do what is right, even if it is unpopular, and to develop an exemplary housing element that will comply with both the spirit and letter of state housing element law.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hansburg
Executive Director
People for Housing Orange County

People for Housing Orange County is a nonprofit, community-based organization of Orange County residents organized to advocate for more homebuilding and lower housing costs. Our vision is an Orange County with enough housing for the people already here and those who move for job opportunities in our county's strong economy. I am signing this letter in my role as an employee of People for Housing Orange County and as a resident of California who is affected by the statewide housing shortage.

From:	Elizabeth Hansburg P4H
To:	Wendy Starks
Cc:	Housing Elements@HCD; McDougall, Paul@HCD
Subject:	Housing Element Comments, RSM, Orange County
Date:	Wednesday, October 20, 2021 8:54:55 PM
Attachments:	P4HOC HE letter on 6th cycle Rancho Santa Margarita .pdf

---

Dear Ms. Starks,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Housing Element. Please find attached our letter. Thank you.

Best regards,

--

Elizabeth Hansburg

Co-Founder & Executive Director

c. (714) 872-1418

e. elizabeth@peopleforhousing.org

Click here to become a member of People for Housing! [peopleforhousing.org]

From: Mendoza, Kathyren@HCD
To: Lanza, Tristan@HCD
Subject: FW: Comments on Housing Element - Rancho Santa Margarita
Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:38:10 PM
Attachments: image001.png
image002.png
image003.png
image004.png
image005.png

Kathyren Mendoza | Division of Housing Policy Development
Office Technician
California Department of Housing & Community Development
2020 W. El Camino Avenue, Suite 500 | Sacramento, CA 95833
Phone (916) 694-2607

From: Coy, Melinda@HCD <Melinda.Coy@hcd.ca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:26 PM
To: Mendoza, Kathyren@HCD <Kathyren.Mendoza@hcd.ca.gov>
Subject: FW: Comments on Housing Element - Rancho Santa Margarita

Another

From: Carol Wheeler <slow.trotter@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 10:48 AM
To: wstarks@cityofrsm.org
Cc: tbeall@thecityofrsm.org; afigueroa@cityofrsm.org; Carol Gamble <cgamble@cityofrsm.org>; jholloway@cityofrsm.org; bmcgirr@cityofrsm.org; ckuta@cityofrsm.org; McDougall, Paul@HCD <Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov>; Coy, Melinda@HCD <Melinda.Coy@hcd.ca.gov>; Lee, Chelsea@HCD <Chelsea.Lee@hcd.ca.gov>; Prasse, Marisa@HCD <Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.gov>; Cross, Colin@HCD <Colin.Cross@hcd.ca.gov>; marshal.ayobi@hcd.ca.gov
Subject: Comments on Housing Element - Rancho Santa Margarita

As a 28 year resident, I love living (and now working from home) in RSM! Over the decades, I've seen a LOT of changes and developments —and the community has adapted. The addition of 680 affordable housing units is not just a REQUIRED change, but one that the people of this city will in time adapt as well.

I understand the current issue is selecting the sites of the affordable housing units. I'm strongly in favor of rezoning under-utilized existing structures and using them for housing. I suggest reopening discussions of

the Paloma Project (Dove Canyon Plaza). I'm in favor of repurposed office sites and workforce housing. Some property owners have already expressed willingness to support this mixed-use as well.

I like the 15 sites under consideration (Table H-57 RHNA Sites Summary in the **RSM-Public-Review-Draft-Housing-Element-Update** [cityofrsm.org] that are spread out throughout the city. This will create a more seamless integration of these units in the community without segregating or isolating them into a designated "ghetto" and the stigma it implies to those who will live there.

The City Council can also adopt an **Adaptive Reuse Ordinance** [santa-ana.org] such as the one used by the city of Santa Ana that streamlines the regulatory process for converting non-residential buildings into affordable housing. This ordinance was applied in the building of the Santa Ana Arts Collective.

If the City develops the Chiquita Ridge property at any time, it's development should stipulate the inclusion of Very Low and Low Income Housing Units. Even if the current RNHA requirements are met elsewhere.

I appreciate your action in moving forward in meeting RHNA requirements and creating a more inclusive and diverse community.

Carol Wheeler
1 Alondra
RSM, CA 92688
slow.trotter@gmail.com

From:	Cheryl Kuta
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	FW: Update regarding Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)
Date:	Monday, November 8, 2021 8:17:28 AM

From: Kevin Shaw <kevin@voicegroups.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 7, 2021 8:13 PM
Subject: Update regarding Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

Fellow residents,

By now, most of you have been informed of the mandate imposed on our city by the government regarding Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). We have published several articles and informative write-ups (included in our website). In addition, we have encouraged your involvement through communications with the elected officials of all levels. To their credit, our city staff has done their best to be informative and solicit participation by the citizens at every stage. We now encourage you to refer to their well-prepared update included in the city's website, the link to which is below.

https://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

The members of our group have been in continuous contact with the city and other elected officials, expressing their concerns in writing and personally by attending the meetings. We appreciate the cooperation received and responsiveness to our inquiries while they have been hard at work to meet the mandated milestones to avoid severe penalties for non-conformance.

For example, to clarify some of the requirements, we met with the senior staff, who explained some of the Questions and Concerns we had, which will impact our city in a significant way. The summary of that meeting is linked below.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lsp4TD5fhaPahbpVF1gWCzraGIY8s5y5/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=114049829616712014595&rtpof=true&sd=true

After all, said and done, our city government, including the Planning Commission, City Council, and City Staff, may have never faced a more significant challenge than the RHNA mandates. Their path to conform is narrow and leaves very little room to make the requirements match the city's General Plan, which is so popular with the residents. The bottom line is, considering the challenges involved, we applaud our city for its due diligence in making the best of a controversial situation.

So, what now?

There are welcomed opportunities for the citizens to ask questions, express concerns, and even make suggestions outside what has been done by our group.

We have also included a write-up titled "Regional Housing Needs Allocation" in our website's "Community Concerns" Section, which includes the latest information collected so far.

We hope you will find the above will serve you to be informed regarding this highly impacted development.

Thank you for your continued support.

--
Please access our website via the link below.
RSM Voice
Kevin Shaw
kevin@voicegroups.com

Saddleback Valley
Unified School District

25631 Peter A. Hartman Way, Mission Viejo, California 92691
(949) 586-1234
www.svusd.org

Board of Education
Suzie R. Swartz, President · Amanda Morrell, Vice President · Barbara Schulman, Clerk · Dr. Edward Wong, Member · Greg Kunath, Member

Crystal Turner, Ed.D.
Superintendent

November 9, 2021

Wendy Starks, AICP, Principal Planner
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Via Email: wstarks@cityofrsm.org

Subject: Rancho Santa Margarita 2021-2029 Housing Element

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Rancho Santa Margarita 2021-2029 Housing Element. Rancho Santa Margarita is within the Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) boundaries. A portion of the city also lies within the Capistrano Unified School District.

The Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element includes provisions to accommodate 710 new housing units (including a 30-unit surplus over the State-allocated number of 680 units) at all income levels. In compliance with State law, the City must identify adequate sites with appropriate density and development standards to accommodate these units. The City is projecting that 40 accessory dwelling units could be constructed within existing residential areas through existing zoning standards, resulting in the need to accommodate the remaining 680 units by amending the Zoning Code to include a new Workforce Housing Overlay, and by amending the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to establish the Mixed-Use Housing land use/zoning designation. The City has identified 12 viable housing sites on 13 parcels which are currently designated at Commercial General or Business Park, and as noted on p. HEMP-8 of the Draft Housing Element, within three years of adoption, would implement the General Plan and Zoning Code Amendments to allow for housing in these areas.

Given that the proposed Housing Element does not include the necessary amendments to the City's Zoning Code and General Plan elements that allow for future housing development, no actual development on these potential sites could occur and result in environmental impacts, including impacts to schools. We assume that after the State certifies the 2021-2029 Housing Element, a separate environmental study will be prepared to address the regulatory changes described above.

SVUSD requests that this subsequent environmental study include an analysis of the proposed project's impacts on SVUSD school facilities. Please continue to notify us of all actions on the 2021-2029 Housing Element and other resulting development projects provide us with the opportunity to review future environmental documents. We look forward to working cooperatively with the City to create the best environment for our students and staff. Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Stella Escario-Doiron
Chief of Facilities, Maintenance, Operations, Construction and Transportation

From: Dick Aced
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: RE: RSM Consolidated Plan, dated 05/27/2020
Date: Thursday, November 11, 2021 10:32:51 AM
Attachments: image001.png

Thank you! I will reread the response below a number of times to insure my understanding. My purpose is to advocate for the city and not against it and to share what I might know through personal contacts. In no way am I willing or need to debate my thoughts below. I am impressed by the correspondences that I have received from you.

Homelessness is a horrendous problem within our country and my desire is to work with those in charge within our community. I know that Councilman Brad McGirr and his wife run a food collection held periodically in front of Pavilions and I would be assisting if I were physically able. Brad has shown me some opportunities to volunteer within the city office complex which I have avoided as I believe that helping those who financially do not need help are not my top priority. My desire is to help the homeless and the helpless.

Although you did not respond to my concern regarding future schools, Councilman McGirr did. His position is that we will not need additional schools for the children who will come with the occupants of the 680 parcels. If he is wrong and new schools will have to be built where will the California Department of Education, the county Superintendent of School, the local school board, etc., find property. I believe that I heard during one of the Zoom that I attended, that the city is essential built out right now. I am jumping to a conclusion that this means there is no property for new schools.

You have taken a lot of time responding to me on two occasions for which I greatly appreciative. Thank you. I do not need a response. Please pass on my appreciation to Ms. Kuta and Mr. Linares for all that they do for the city and the citizens thereof.

Dick Aced

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: Wendy Starks
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 10:57 AM
To: 'dickaced@cox.net'
Cc: Cheryl Kuta; Mike Linares
Subject: RE: RSM Consolidated Plan, dated 05/27/2020

Mr. Aced;

Thank you for your comments regarding the City's Consolidated Plan, specifically, information regarding homelessness. I'm happy to clarify a few concerns you raised.

Please note that staff is planning on modifying the passage in the Consolidated Plan in the FY 22-23 Annual Action Plan regarding the City's membership in the regional Continuum of Care (CoC) The existing language is reflective of the early configuration of the regional CoC, which had an open membership. Over time, the CoC governance has evolved, and similarly, the role of municipalities has evolved. For example, HUD now requires that certain grantees participate in the CoC. The City of Anaheim is the recipient of the County's Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds, and has an obligation to ensure CoC input on the use of this funding source. Cities that receive Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds are required by HUD to coordinate with the regional CoC to develop funding priorities, and policies and procedures for the operation and administration of the regional HMIS and are also required to develop performance standards and evaluation outcomes for projects and activities assisted by ESG funds "in consultation with the regional CoC." In Orange County Anaheim, Garden Grove, Irvine, and Santa Ana receive ESG funding,; and the County of Orange receives ESG funding on behalf of all other Orange County municipalities. Based on these HUD requirements, it stands to reason that these communities must participate in the regional CoC regardless of its configuration.

Over-time, the City has functioned as a member of the CoC in various ways. Annually, the City provided the CoC with a list of mainstream funding in support of the regional CoC, which was incorporated into the OC CoC application for HUD funding. Under the current CoC governance, the City may not be a voting "member;" however, the City continues to support the regional CoC. Biennially, the City supports and participates in the Point-In-Time homeless survey. On request, the City will provide a Certification of Consistency with the Consolidated Plan for local nonprofits that may be applying to HUD for CoC funding. Annually, the City allocates a significant percentage of its CDBG public service grant funds to support local nonprofits that assist households at risk of becoming homeless or that are homeless.

With respect to South County Outreach (SCO), the City is aware of the housing and service resources that SCO provides to RSM residents. SCO owns several housing units in neighboring communities that were specifically purchased to provide transitional housing for homeless families. Neighboring cities utilized CDBG funds to help SCO purchase these units. RSM staff is aware that SCO has asked these funders to modify agreements to reclassify these units from transitional to permanent affordable housing. To date, this reclassification has not been finalized; therefore, referencing these units as transitional housing in the City's General Plan remains accurate. Also, note that SCO operates a regional food bank and a homelessness prevention program. The latter program provides rent and utility assistance to lower-income households that are at risk of eviction or utility shut-off. SCO traditionally applies to the City for CDBG funding for this program, and this is the funding that is accurately referenced in the Consolidated Plan.

I hope the above information addresses your comments. If you need additional information regarding the City's support for the regional CoC, please contact Mike Linares, the City's community

development consultant. Mike can be reached by email at mlinares@cityofrsm.org or by telephone (949) 635-1800 X6702. Staff is also available to address any additional questions regarding the General Plan.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688



From: Dick Aced <dickaced@cox.net>
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2021 11:35 AM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RSM Consolidated Plan, dated 05/27/2020

Dear Ms. Kuta,

Over the past year or so, I have become very interested in the plight of the homeless in Orange. Included in my research was a review of the RSM General Plan 2020, the Consolidated Plan and the Housing element Update 2021. In addition I have attended one Planning Commission meeting remotely and the recent review of the final plan that was presented to the City Council.

I am a non-voting member of the Orange County Continuum of Care and have noticed that Rancho Santa Margarita is not listed as a member on the CoC roster. However, I read in the various city documents that the city believes that it is a member. If I can help resolve this discrepancy, please let me know.

During my review if the General Plan 2020, I noticed reference and description of the support to the City by the South Coast Outreach. I am concerned about the work description and wrote an email to Laval Brewer to clarify the support being offered. His response was as follows: " We provide support to homeless individuals and families. We are an access point for the family coordinated entry system. I did say that we are moving our transitional housing program to affordable housing." On page 102, of the Consolidated Plan, Project 9, "South County Outreach" , the description of the services performed reads as follows: "Rent or utility assistance to prevent eviction or utility service

shut-off (50 individuals) and access to foodbank (300 individuals)" I believe that what Mr. Brewer wrote to me and the description in the Consolidated plan are not consistent and would suggest that someone from you office contact Mr. Brewer to ascertain the correct wordage.

Thank you for your time,
James R. (Dick) Aced

Sent from Mail for Windows

From:	Wendy Starks
To:	"Dennis Shoji"
Cc:	Cheryl Kuta
Subject:	RE: Housing Element Update January Public Hearings
Date:	Monday, January 3, 2022 7:19:14 AM
Attachments:	image001.png

Happy New Year Dennis!

I hope you and your loved ones had a wonderful holiday.

We don't need anything at this time. The public hearings are this Wednesday, January 5th with the Planning Commission and on January 26th with City Council before we resubmit to HCD. There may or may not be more hearings going forward depending upon how well the resubmittal is received by HCD. Staff and the consultant worked diligently to address all of their requests for additional information.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 1, 2022 3:09 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update January Public Hearings

Wendy do you or staff need any help from our group.

Dennis Shoji
949 5331332

On Wed, Dec 29, 2021, 10:43 AM Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update Interest List.
>
> There are several important updates as detailed below:
>
> 1) Staff submitted the Public Review Draft to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for their 60-day review on October 22, 2021. The City received HCD's review

letter on December 21, 2021. HCD is requiring that the City and the Housing Element consultant provide additional information and make revisions to the Public Review Draft. HCD's letter can be reviewed on the dedicated Housing Element webpage at this link:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

2) Staff is providing the Planning Commission with updated information on HCD's letter, staff's efforts and strategy to respond to the requests, and will present all at the Planning Commission's regular meeting on January 5, 2022. The Planning Commission packet can be viewed here:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes

3) Staff will be presenting the full redline of the Housing Element Update that incorporates HCD's requests for changes and additional information to the City Council for adoption. This is expected to occur at the January 26, 2022 meeting.

4) The adopted 6th Cycle Housing Element Update will be resubmitted to HCD after the City Council hearing with the goal for HCD to certify the adopted Housing Element by the deadline of February 12, 2022.

Adoption of the revised Housing Element Update on January 26, 2022 will complete the City's obligation to have an adopted 6th Cycle Housing Element by February 12, 2022. However, it should be recognized that submittal of an adopted Housing Element to HCD following the January 26, 2022 public hearing does not guarantee that the Housing Element will be found fully compliant with State law, and that additional revisions may be requested by HCD. In this case, additional public hearings will be scheduled.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From:	Dennis Shoji
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	Re: Housing Element Update January Public Hearings
Date:	Monday, January 3, 2022 8:25:58 AM
Attachments:	image001.png image001.png

A lot of busy work by the state.

Dennis

On Mon, Jan 3, 2022, 7:19 AM Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> Happy New Year Dennis!
>
> I hope you and your loved ones had a wonderful holiday.
>
> We don't need anything at this time. The public hearings are this Wednesday, January 5th with the Planning Commission and on January 26th with City Council before we resubmit to HCD. There may or may not be more hearings going forward depending upon how well the resubmittal is received by HCD. Staff and the consultant worked diligently to address all of their requests for additional information.
>
> Wendy Starks, AICP
>
> Principal Planner
>
> 949-635-1807
>
> City of Rancho Santa Margarita
>
> 22112 El Paseo
>
> Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
>
> 

From: Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 1, 2022 3:09 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update January Public Hearings

Wendy do you or staff need any help from our group.

Dennis Shoji

949 5331332

On Wed, Dec 29, 2021, 10:43 AM Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update Interest List.
>
> There are several important updates as detailed below:
>
> 1) Staff submitted the Public Review Draft to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for their 60-day review on October 22, 2021. The City received HCD's review letter on December 21, 2021. HCD is requiring that the City and the Housing Element consultant provide additional information and make revisions to the Public Review Draft. HCD's letter can be reviewed on the dedicated Housing Element webpage at this link: http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021
>
> 2) Staff is providing the Planning Commission with updated information on HCD's letter, staff's efforts and strategy to respond to the requests, and will present all at the Planning Commission's regular meeting on January 5, 2022. The Planning Commission packet can be viewed here: http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes
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Wendy Starks, AICP

Principal Planner

949-635-1807

City of Rancho Santa Margarita

22112 El Paseo

Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688



From: Wendy Starks
To: "Lauren"
Cc: Sergio
Subject: RE: Housing Element interest list
Date: Monday, January 3, 2022 7:49:43 AM

Good morning Lauren and Sergio,

I have added you to the email interest group. There is a lot of information on our dedicated webpage for the Housing Element Update that details the work that the City and the housing element update consultant has done throughout 2021. I will try to briefly bring you up to speed. The State of California assigns the Regional Housing Needs Allocation to all jurisdictions in the State every 8 years and each jurisdiction is required to update the Housing Element of the General Plan at least every 8 years. The State allocated 1.3 million housing units to the State of California, 183,000 housing units to the SCAG region (Southern California Association of Governments for which Orange County is a part), and 680 housing units to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The State REQUIRES the City of RSM to plan for - not build - 680 housing units. This is not an option, this action is mandatory. Therefore, the City conducted two surveys, and held focus groups to determine how best to plan for (zone for) the 680 housing units that the City was allocated. Please see the dedicated webpage to read the list of potential penalties should the City fail to zone for these units.

After public outreach and several meetings with the Planning Commission and City Council 15 sites were chosen to rezone to accommodate the 680 units via Workforce Housing on 3 Applied Medical sites in the Business Park, and 12 sites that will be rezoned to Mixed-Use, and 40 Accessory Dwelling Units. Please note that while these sites will be rezoned for workforce housing or to allow residential in addition to the uses currently occupying the sites - the City is not requiring the owners of these properties to do any action. The owners can choose to keep them as they currently are, or add residential in addition to what they have. The property owners still retail complete control over if and how residential units are added.

I hope this cleared up some confusion or concerns you have. You are welcome to call me at any time to discuss your questions or concerns. It is a confusing process. There are lots of staff reports and powerpoint presentations that you can read on the webpage. Staff submitted the Housing Element to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and received their review letter on December 21, 2021. Staff is presenting the revisions to the Planning Commission on Wednesday, January 5th at 6:30 p.m. and you are welcome to either listen in remotely via our webpage, or attend in person. Listening to the presentation may help bring you up to speed on the efforts to-date. Again, call me anytime and I'll talk to you about the process.

Here is the link for the dedicated webpage:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Here is the link for the public hearing this Wednesday:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

-----Original Message-----

From: Lauren <lauren.a.rivera@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 1, 2022 8:36 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Cc: Sergio <sgrivera13@gmail.com>
Subject: Housing Element interest list

Hello Wendy and Happy New Year,

Please add me (Lauren.a.rivera@gmail.com) and my husband, Sergio (sgrivera13@gmail.com) to the housing element interest list. We are very disheartened to hear about the possible closing of more retail stores in our community (when we already have less availability than other cities) and even more saddened to think that our community will increase the offering of low-income housing. This news makes us question the likeliness of continuing to live in a community we have gratefully called home for the last 7.5 years.

Thank you,
Lauren Rivera

From: Rona Henry
To: Cheryl Kuta
Cc: Cindy Ashley; Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: Gates locked - 1/5 Planning Commission Mtg
Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022 3:37:06 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Gosh Cheryl, what a lot of trouble. I hope you don't have to have another meeting just on my account. I was just trying to figure out what happened - because I thought I had the right time and place.

Thank you for the commitment to let us know when the revised housing element is posted. We hope we will have more than just a few business days to review it.
Thanks, Rona

On Thu, Jan 6, 2022 at 1:14 PM Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> Rona,
>
> Based on your email, we have investigated and determined that the gates were inadvertently closed by a member of another department just before the start of the Planning Commission meeting. The gates were found to be open at the conclusion of the Planning Commission meeting when my staff went to lock up, leading us to believe that they had been open the entire time, which is what I indicated to you previously. However, upon your email and further investigation, we believe that the gates were closed from approximately 6:28-7:15. I apologize for the confusion.
>
> We realize that this invalidates the decision made by the Planning Commission last night. We will be scheduling special meeting of the Planning Commission to hold a properly noticed and publicly-accessible public hearing regarding adoption of the Housing Element.
>
> Thank you for bringing this to my attention. We will provide notice to the email interest list when the upcoming public hearing is scheduled, and when the revised Housing Element is posted for public review.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> *Cheryl Kuta, AICP*

Development Services Director

City of Rancho Santa Margarita

(949) 635-1800 x6707

From: Rona Henry <rona.s.henry@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 6, 2022 9:06 AM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Cc: Cindy Ashley <cindy.ashley@cox.net>; Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Gates locked - 1/5 Planning Commission Mtg

Hi Cheryl,

I first tried to enter through the park side - and the big wood door was locked. I pushed hard - but it would not open. Then I went around to the street side and as you said, that gate was locked too. I was very disappointed to be locked out of the meeting.

Will you be able to notify us when the revised housing element is updated and posted for public review?

Rona

On Thu, Jan 6, 2022 at 8:19 AM Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> Hi Rona,
>
> The gates on the fountain side of the courtyard nearest El Paseo are always closed and locked at 5:00 p.m. The gates on the Central Park side of the courtyard remain open during all public meetings. The Planning Commission did

meet in person and I have verified that the gates were open for the duration of the meeting.

Responses to the Welcoming Neighbor's Home letters from October 27 and January 5 will be included in the upcoming City Council agenda item for the public hearing. The redlined version of the Housing Element will be made public as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Kuta, AICP

Development Services Director

City of Rancho Santa Margarita

(949) 635-1800 x6707

From: Rona Henry <rona.s.henry@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 7:45 PM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Cc: Cindy Ashley <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Subject: Gates locked - 1/5 Planning Commission Mtg

Dear Cheryl,

I went to the RSM City Hall tonight to attend the Planning Commission meeting to give an oral public comment. I arrived at 6:30pm and the outside gates were locked. Did the Planning Commission meet in person? If so, why were the gates locked to the public?

If the Planning Commission was meeting virtually, why was notice not given on the agenda (screenshot below from

agenda that was posted as of 7:30pm tonight)? (I also did not see any notice on the city's homepage of any virtual meetings.)

Relatedly, could you please respond to the public comment that Cindy Ashley submitted on our behalf? Will the next redlined version of the housing element draft be made public at least 2 weeks prior to the city council meeting at which it will be considered?

Thank you, Rona Henry



PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

January 5, 2022
6:30 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Location: **Rancho Santa Margarita City Hall, Council Chambers**
22112 El Paseo, Rancho Santa Margarita, California 92688

Any person wishing to address the Planning Commission on any matter, whether or not it appears on this Agenda, is asked to complete a Speaker Request Form available at the side table. The completed form is to be submitted to the Secretary prior to an individual being heard by the Planning Commission.

There will be one opportunity for members of the public to address the Planning Commission during the Public Comment portion of the Agenda with a time limitation of three minutes per person and a time limit of thirty minutes for the entire Public Comment portion of the Agenda. If you are commenting on an Agenda Item, your comments will be heard at the time that item is scheduled on the Agenda. If you are addressing the Planning Commission on an item not listed on the agenda, the Planning Commission is prohibited by law from discussing or taking any action on that item.

--

Rona Henry

Chair, Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

rona.s.henry@gmail.com 609-216-1784

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Date: Wed, Jan 5, 2022 at 7:29 PM
Subject: FW: Public Comment - RSM Planning Commission Meeting 1/5/2022
To: Rona Henry <rona.s.henry@gmail.com>

From: cindy.ashley@cox.net <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 2:23 PM
To: 'kcamuglia@cityofrsm.org' <kcamuglia@cityofrsm.org>; 'bnelson@cityofrsm.org' <bnelson@cityofrsm.org>; 'jleach@cityofrsm.org' <jleach@cityofrsm.org>; 'mmcquaid@cityofrsm.org' <mmcquaid@cityofrsm.org>; 'dtriepke@cityofrsm.org' <dtriepke@cityofrsm.org>
Cc: 'bmcgirr@cityofrsm.org' <bmcgirr@cityofrsm.org>; 'tbeall@cityofrsm.org' <tbeall@cityofrsm.org>; 'afigueroa@cityofrsm.org' <afigueroa@cityofrsm.org>; 'cgamble@cityofrsm.org' <cgamble@cityofrsm.org>; 'jholloway@cityofrsm.org' <jholloway@cityofrsm.org>; 'jcervantez@cityofrsm.org' <jcervantez@cityofrsm.org>; 'ckuta@cityofrsm.org' <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>; 'mlinares@cityofrsm.org' <mlinares@cityofrsm.org>; 'Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov' <Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov>; 'melinda.coy@hcd.ca.gov' <melinda.coy@hcd.ca.gov>; 'Chelsea.lee@hcd.ca.gov' <Chelsea.lee@hcd.ca.gov>; 'Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.govcolin.cross' <Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.govcolin.cross>; 'cesarc@kennedycommission.org' <cesarc@kennedycommission.org>; 'mashal.ayobi@hcd.ca.gov' <mashal.ayobi@hcd.ca.gov>; 'colin.cross@hcd.ca.gov' <colin.cross@hcd.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment - RSM Planning Commission Meeting 1/5/2022

Dear Planning Commission Members,

Please see attached for tonight’s Planning Commission Meeting. It has also been submitted via the e-comment page on the city’s website.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

RSM Resident

--

Rona Smyth Henry

609-216-1784
rona.s.henry@gmail.com

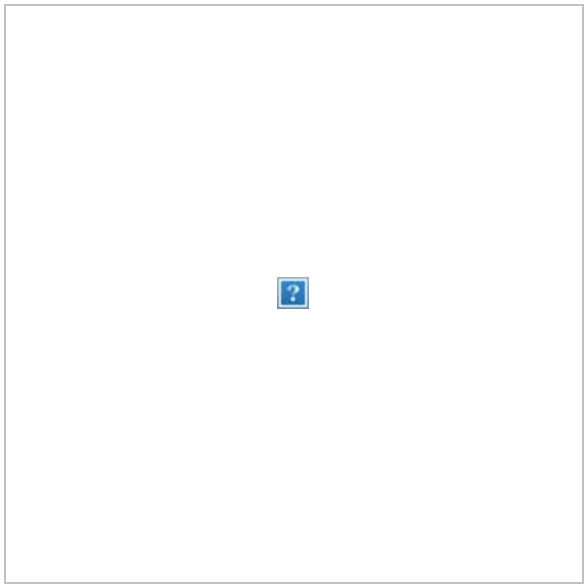
Respect science, respect nature, respect each other.

--
Rona Smyth Henry
609-216-1784
rona.s.henry@gmail.com

Respect science, respect nature, respect each other.

From:	Judy
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	Fw: Thank you for joining us!
Date:	Thursday, January 6, 2022 11:33:16 AM

----- Forwarded Message -----
From: Our Neighborhood Voices <info@ourneighborhoodvoices.com>
To: "pifa@att.net" <pifa@att.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 6, 2022, 11:22:37 AM PST
Subject: Thank you for joining us!



Dear Judith,

Thank you so much for joining us as we fight to preserve our ability to speak out about what happens in our own neighborhoods!

Instead of actually working to create new housing without traffic gridlock, sprawl and environmental damage—Sacramento politicians want to hand a blank check to developers to build what they want, where they want, without contributing to new transit, schools, or roads—and without our ability to speak out.

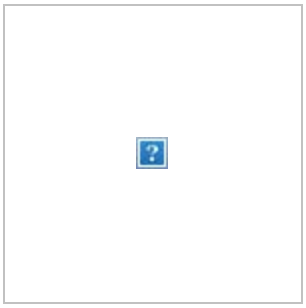
These laws will lead to displacement and gentrification as developers force working families out of their own communities.

But we still have a chance to **stand up, fight back & win!** But it will take all of us and our neighbors working together to bring back the balance so that we all can be heard.

Thank you for your commitment to this fight,

Our Neighborhood Voices

*P.S. Stay tuned by following our fight on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter! You can help our campaign even more by **making a contribution** today.*



Paid for by Brand-Huang Mendoza Tripartisan Land Use Initiative, committee major funding from AIDS Healthcare Foundation. FPPC ID# 1439787

11. Cindy Ashley
1/5/22

Wendy Starks

From: Cheryl Kuta
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 2:24 PM
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: FW: Public Comment - RSM Planning Commission Meeting 1/5/2022
Attachments: WNH RSM HE Comment to Planning Commission on 2022 01 05.pdf

For the file.

From: cindy.ashley@cox.net <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 2:23 PM
To: Kristen Camuglia <KCamuglia@cityofrsm.org>; Blaine Nelson <BNelson@cityofrsm.org>; Jim Leach <jleach@cityofrsm.org>; Mark D. McQuaid <mmcquaid@cityofrsm.org>; Dave Triepke <dtriepke@cityofrsm.org>
Cc: Bradley McGirr <BMcgirr@cityofrsm.org>; Tony Beall <tbeall@cityofrsm.org>; Anne Figueroa <afigueroa@cityofrsm.org>; Carol Gamble <CGamble@cityofrsm.org>; Jerry Holloway <jholloway@cityofrsm.org>; Jennifer Cervantez <JCervantez@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>; Mike Linares <mlinares@cityofrsm.org>; Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov; melinda.coy@hcd.ca.gov; Chelsea.lee@hcd.ca.gov; Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.govcolin.cross; cesarc@kennedycommission.org; mashal.ayobi@hcd.ca.gov; colin.cross@hcd.ca.gov
Subject: Public Comment - RSM Planning Commission Meeting 1/5/2022

Dear Planning Commission Members,

Please see attached for tonight's Planning Commission Meeting. It has also been submitted via the e-comment page on the city's website.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley
RSM Resident



January 5, 2022

Re: January 5, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting Agenda Item #7.1 – Public Hearing and Recommendation to the City Council for Adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update

Dear RSM Planning Commission Chair Camuglia, Vice Chair Nelson, and Commissioners Leach, McQuaid & Triepke:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM. We care deeply about our city and seek to assist the city in developing a successful Housing Element to meet our modest RHNA numbers. RSM, like many cities in Orange County, has not developed enough housing for all income levels and we have an increasing percentage of residents who are rent-burdened. To this end, we submitted a detailed letter to the City Council, City Staff and this Commission on October 27th but have yet to receive any response or acknowledgment of our input.

We have reviewed the Department of Housing and Community Development's (HCD) response to the Housing Element Draft dated December 21st. **As noted on pages 10-11, the City did not provide an adequate opportunity for the public to review and comment on a draft of the element in advance of submission, which is a statutory requirement.**

In light of this feedback, and in the interest of maximizing public engagement, we request that the city make the revised redlined (tracked changed) version of the Housing Element draft that responds to feedback in HCD's letter available to the public at least two weeks prior to the City Council's review of the document so we have time to review the document and make comments to the City Council. Specifically, we ask that the next redlined version be posted on the city's housing element update page: https://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021 - with notice sent to those who have submitted prior public comments about the housing element. In addition, we recommend that the city announce the availability of this key document on prominent city corners at major intersections, with proper explanatory

information, as it does with many other city events. We encourage the city not to sacrifice the opportunity for future informed public input that has resulted from the city's late submission of the HE Draft to HCD.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Tasia Surch, RSM Resident

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Cc: L. Anthony Beall, Mayor
Anne D. Figueroa, Mayor Pro Tempore
Carol A. Gamble, Council Member
Jerry Holloway, Council Member
Bradley J. McGirr, Council Member
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Cesar Covarrubias, Mildred Perez, Cynthia Guerra and Daisy Cruz - Kennedy Commission
Paul McDougall, Melina Coy, Marisa Prasse, Chelsea Lee, Collin Cross, Mashal Ayobi - California State Housing and Community Development Office

From: Rona Henry
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update January Public Hearing
Date: Monday, January 17, 2022 1:33:57 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Gosh Wendy - sorry I can't attend this. Needed more notice.
Thanks for sending the notice though.
Rona

On Fri, Jan 14, 2022 at 8:58 AM Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

> You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update Interest List.
>
> A Special Meeting of the Planning Commission has been scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. The only item on the agenda will be a public hearing for adoption of the Housing and Safety Element updates. The agenda materials for this meeting are posted on the City's website at this link: http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes
>
> For more information about the Housing Element Update, please refer to the City's dedicated webpage at this link: http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021
>
> Wendy Starks, AICP
>
> Principal Planner
>
> 949-635-1807
>
> City of Rancho Santa Margarita
>
> 22112 El Paseo
>
> Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

--
Rona Smyth Henry
609-216-1784
rona.s.henry@gmail.com

Respect science, respect nature, respect each other.

From: Falkenstein, Zoran
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update January Public Hearing
Date: Friday, January 14, 2022 9:54:54 AM
Attachments: image002.png
image003.png
image004.png

Hi Wendy,

I hope you had a good start into the new year. Happy New Year!

Thanks for sending the note on the public hearing regarding the Housing and Safety Element update. I assume the meeting will be live-streamed just as in previous hearings?

Thanks,
Zoran

Applied Medical

Zoran Falkenstein

O: 949.713.8462
F: 949.713.8200
E: zfalkenstein@appliedmedical.com
22872 Avenida Empresa
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

From: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2022 8:58 AM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Housing Element Update January Public Hearing

You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update Interest List.

A Special Meeting of the Planning Commission has been scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. The only item on the agenda will be a public hearing for adoption of the Housing and Safety Element updates. The agenda materials for this meeting are posted on the City's website at this link: http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes

For more information about the Housing Element Update, please refer to the City's dedicated webpage at this link: http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita

22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Tony Belello
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 8:11:51 AM
Attachments: image001.png

TONY BELELLO
Development Services Administrative Assistant
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
949-635-1800, ext. 6701
www.cityofrsm.org

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Monday, January 17, 2022 2:19 PM
To: Tony Belello <TBelello@cityofrsm.org>; Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

If you are having problems viewing this HTML email, click to view a Text version.

Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[ ] City Council	[X] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	01/18/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	2.1	
Position	[Oppose \/]	
Comment*	Sending out an email on Friday January 14, 2022, for the Rancho Santa Margarita Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday January 18, 2022, gives the public less than a week to review the 400 plus page Rancho Santa Margarita's (RSM) 2020 - 2029 Updated Housing and Safety Element attached to the January 18, 2022, meeting agenda. Giving the public less than 5 days to review this large document is woefully inadequate. In addition, per the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) December 21, 2021, Letter which is 11 pages cites that RSM's proposed 2020 - 2029 Housing and Safety Element is incomplete and must be revised to comply with the State Housing Element Law. The combination of: a) the largeness of the RSM Housing Element Plan, b) the significant amount of issues that have not been included in this document and c) the extreme short time period the public has to review the information in the RSM proposed Housing and Safety Element Plan, makes it impossible for the public to knowledgably comment on this document or whether they concur with the City	

	of Rancho Santa Margarita's proposed 2020 - 2029 Updated Housing and Safety Element. Moreover, the importance of the RSM's residents' engagement in this process is critical since the 2021-2029 Housing and Safety Element has a major impact on the health and safety of the community for at least the next 9 years as well as setting in place permanent changes to the development of housing within RSM for the foreseeable future. I understand that this exceedingly flawed process is not generated by the City but is being propagated by the State legislature and HCD at a time when the general population's ability to participate in the updating of the City's Housing Element has been seriously compromised by state-imposed restrictions due to the pandemic on public gatherings in 2020 and much of 2021. The artificially imposed deadlines that have been put on local government regarding the development of housing within local communities which are already built out as well as located within environmentally sensitive communities is both unreasonable and dangerous to current and future residents. These rigid deadlines do not allow for flexibility of a well thought out planning process which is critical to the health and safety of the community as well as promoting a plan that can adjust for State feedback and public comment. Since the City is the voice of the people living in RSM, it is vital that our local government representatives speak out on the violation of the public trust regarding the States' setting up a system that mandates and regulates such a critical function as the development of housing within a community without allowing adequate time or financial resources for the creation and implementation of extremely complex processes, procedures and policies which have not been the main responsibility of many of these communities until now. Many of the deficiencies noted in the State's HCD December 21, 2021, letter appear to be a transfer of responsibilities from what has traditionally been obligations assumed by the Federal, State and County departments or agencies. In addition, rezoning timelines established at the start of the 6th cycle of the housing element rezoning process has dramatically been cut from a 3-year cycle to a 1-year process without giving the city adequate time to redesign and compress the rezoning process to meet housing law. It is concerning that these changes in housing laws were changed by the legislature in the midst of the pandemic with unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when local governments are scrambling to meet the needs of the communities during a national public health and safety crisis. In general, it appears that the State Authorities are using the ongoing public health crisis as a rationale to take over the planning and zoning of housing away from local government which leaves the people living in those communities no voice in how housing is developed in their community. I urge the city to reach out to the Orange County Council of Governments, California State Association of Counties as well as the League of California Cities regarding the State's pursuit to neuter local government's key responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of the local population through the responsible zoning and rezoning of property within the city and county. It is imperative that local governments ban together to fight overreach by State entities with debilitative and destructive regulations as well as oversight which silent public input and eliminate governance by residents in their community. Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated
Name	Beth Heard
Address	4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.
Email Address	bethannheard@cox.net
Phone Number	9496971251
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
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The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: Planning Commission

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 01/18/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 2.1

Position: Oppose

Comment: Sending out an email on Friday January 14, 2022, for the Rancho Santa Margarita Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday January 18, 2022, gives the public less than a week to review the 400 plus page Rancho Santa Margarita's (RSM) 2020 - 2029 Updated Housing and Safety Element attached to the January 18, 2022, meeting agenda. Giving the public less than 5 days to review this large document is woefully inadequate. In addition, per the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) December 21, 2021, Letter which is 11 pages cites that RSM's proposed 2020 - 2029 Housing and Safety Element is incomplete and must be revised to comply with the State Housing Element Law.

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Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated

Name: Beth Heard

Address: 4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.

Email Address: bethannheard@cox.net

Phone Number: 9496971251

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 1/17/2022 2:18:30 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.96.79.169
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

From:	Tony Belello
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date:	Tuesday, January 18, 2022 8:15:16 AM
Attachments:	image001.png

TONY BELELLO
Development Services Administrative Assistant
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
949-635-1800, ext. 6701
www.cityofrsm.org

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Monday, January 17, 2022 7:27 PM
To: Tony Belello <TBelello@cityofrsm.org>; Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

If you are having problems viewing this HTML email, click to view a Text version.

Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[ ] City Council	[X] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	1/18/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	Update RSM Housing Element	
Position	[Support \/]	
Comment*	Good Evening City Planning Commissioners, Thank You for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion on the RSM Update Housing Element Document. I was not able to get through the 437 pages of the RSM Updated Housing Element. Getting an email on January 14th, 2022, and expecting the public to review and understand this large document in less than a week to review is very poor. I am sure that the City Staff wrote an executive summary to the City Planning Commission, outlining the important aspects of the document. This would have been very useful for the average citizen to understand the RSM Update Housing Element Document. I thought that the public had a 30 day period to figure out this document and to voice their opinion. I am also a little confused about the Letter from the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) that cites that the RSM proposed 2020-2029 Housing and Safety Element is incomplete and must	

	be revised. The citizens that have signed up for RSM updates of the Housing Element are the only people that are aware of this Special Meeting of the Planning Commission. The documents are buried under the RSM City's Webpage. When RSM wants the citizens to participate in events, for example RSM RANCHO FAMILY FEST, it is blasted on social media. Not one word was mentioned on Social Media about this important Public Hearing. It is disappointing that more citizens are unaware of what is about to happen to the RSM General Plan. Only when they see their shops, restaurants, and other businesses torn down and housing built in their place will they realize how the City Commissioners and City Council Members did not represent them. I applaud the City of Irvine, who stood their ground with the Orange County Council of Governments in their lawsuit against the California Department of Housing and Community Development. I am aware that the lawsuit was dismissed on November 18, 2021, but an appeal was filed with the California Court of Appeal. OCCOG's board voted unanimously to appeal the court's dismissal of this lawsuit because Orange County's citizens and taxpayers deserve to be treated fairly under the law. This statement really struck me, because it seems that the taxpayers are not fairly represented by their State Representatives and their City Representatives. Over the last year, I have seen more friends and neighbors fleeing the State of California. They are tired of the high taxes, crime, COVID mandates and frankly not having a voice anymore in their government. It appears that the State Authorities are using the ongoing public health crisis as a rationale to take over local government, which leaves the people in these communities no voice. I urge the City of Rancho Santa Margarita to stand with the Orange County Council of Governments, City of Irvine, California Association of Counties as well as the League of Cities, regarding the State's pursuit to change local government's key responsibilities. It is critical that local governments stand together to fight the overreach by the State. Thank You again for letting my voice be heard. Rhonda Lundberg
Name	Rhonda Lundberg
Address	18 Mountain Laurel
Email Address	lundbergfamily1@cox.net
Phone Number	9495101387
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=3119

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: Planning Commission

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 1/18/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: Update RSM Housing Element

Position: Support

Comment: Good Evening City Planning Commissioners,

Thank You for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion on the RSM Update Housing

Element Document. I was not able to get through the 437 pages of the RSM Updated Housing Element. Getting an email on January 14th, 2022, and expecting the public to review and understand this large document in less than a week to review is very poor. I am sure that the City Staff wrote an executive summary to the City Planning Commission, outlining the important aspects of the document. This would have been very useful for the average citizen to understand the RSM Update Housing Element Document. I thought that the public had a 30 day period to figure out this document and to voice their opinion. I am also a little confused about the Letter from the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) that cites that the RSM proposed 2020-2029 Housing and Safety Element is incomplete and must be revised.

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Thank You again for letting my voice be heard.

Rhonda Lundberg

Name: Rhonda Lundberg

Address: 18 Mountain Laurel

Email Address: lundbergfamily1@cox.net

Phone Number: 9495101387

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 1/17/2022 7:27:09 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.99.187.37
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

From:	Tony Belello
To:	Wendy Starks
Subject:	FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date:	Tuesday, January 18, 2022 1:05:58 PM
Attachments:	image001.png

TONY BELELLO
Development Services Administrative Assistant
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
949-635-1800, ext. 6701
www.cityofrsm.org

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 11:36 AM
To: Tony Belello <TBelello@cityofrsm.org>; Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

If you are having problems viewing this HTML email, click to view a Text version.

Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[ ] City Council	[X] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	01/18/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	Adoption of Housing Element	
Position	[Oppose \/]	
Comment*	Sending out an email on Friday January 14, 2022, for the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday January 18, 2022, gives the public less than a week to review the 400+ page Rancho Santa Margarita 2020-2029 Updated Housing & Safety Element included with the January 18, 2022 meeting agenda. Giving the public less than 5 days to review this large document is woefully inadequate. In addition, per the State Housing and Community Development December 21, 2021, Letter, which is 11 pages, cites that RSM's proposed 2020-2029 Housing and Safety Element is incomplete and must be revised to comply with the State Housing Element Law. The combination of: a) the scope of the RSM Housing Element Plan, b) the significant amount of issues that have not been included in this document and c) the extreme short time period the public has to review the information in the RSM proposed Housing and Safety Element Plan, makes it impossible for the public to knowledgeably comment on this document or whether they	

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Name	Cindy Gildersleeve
Address	59 Bell Canyon Dr
Email Address	cindygildersleeve@gmail.com
Phone Number	
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
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The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: Planning Commission

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 01/18/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: Adoption of Housing Element

Position: Oppose

Comment: Sending out an email on Friday January 14, 2022, for the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday January 18, 2022, gives the public less than a week to review the 400+ page Rancho Santa Margarita 2020-2029 Updated Housing & Safety Element included with the January 18, 2022 meeting agenda. Giving the public less than 5 days to review this large document is woefully inadequate. In addition, per the State Housing and Community Development December 21, 2021, Letter, which is 11 pages, cites that RSM's proposed 2020-2029 Housing and Safety Element is incomplete and must be revised to comply with the State Housing Element Law.

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Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated

Name: Cindy Gildersleeve

Address: 59 Bell Canyon Dr

Email Address: cindygildersleeve@gmail.com

Phone Number:

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 1/18/2022 11:36:18 AM
Submitted from IP Address: 107.217.169.189
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

January 18, 2022

www.kennedycommission.org
17701 Cowan Ave., Suite 200
Irvine, CA 92614
949 250 0909
Fax 949 263 0647

Planning Commission
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Rancho Santa Margarita City Hall, Council Chambers
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, California 92688

RE: 2.1 PUBLIC HEARING AND RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR ADOPTION OF THE 2021-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE AND SAFETY ELEMENT UPDATE

Dear Chair Camuglia and Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on staff strategy to address HCD comments. We have reviewed the responses and are submitting this letter to provide public comments.

The Kennedy Commission (the Commission) is a broad-based coalition of residents and community organizations that advocates for the production of homes affordable for families earning less than $27,000 annually in Orange County. Formed in 2001, the Commission has been successful in partnering and working with Orange County jurisdictions to create effective housing and land-use policies that has led to the new construction of homes affordable to lower income working families.

Given the importance of the 2021-2029 Housing Element update to provide equitable growth in the City, we recommend the following changes to the Housing Element:

1. Sites Inventory – HCD requests significant additional information regarding the sites inventory and strategies to accommodate the City's RHNA, with a focus on justifying the strategy for workforce housing in the Business Park. **We ask that the City adopt specific measures to ensure that workforce housing units are designated for extremely low- and very low-income levels.** The City must ensure opportunity sites are not simply upzoned or rezoned without including affordable housing policies that will capture the financial and land use incentives being given to property owners and market rate developers.

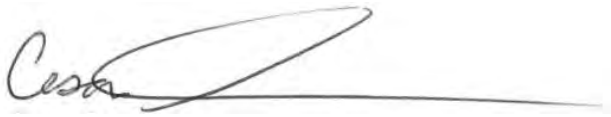
2. Implementation of Housing Programs - HCD requests the augmentation of several programs to take specific actions to facilitate development of affordable housing and go "beyond status quo actions" to specifically respond to fair housing issues.**We ask that the City adopt an Inclusionary Housing ordinance with a 15% requirement of extremely low-, very low-, and low income units.** These are the categories that

market-rate development is not addressing in the City. The ordinance should be flexible to allow for the development of affordable housing onsite, off site or provide for an appropriate in-lieu fee option. We recommend an in-lieu fee option in the range of $10,000 to $15,000 per unit, or $10 to $15 per square foot, to go along with this policy. The in-lieu fee must be calculated to achieve the gap financing needed to create affordable housing and be used to leverage additional state and federal housing funds. A feasibility study and implementation of the ordinance should be completed no later than one year from the adoption of the Housing Element.

3. Future Public Review Opportunities - We understand that City staff is facing a deadline to certify its Housing Element. Allowing residents and advocates a chance to review all changes in a redlined document provides much needed clarity on how revisions affect the document as a whole. **We ask that the City provide fully revised versions of the Draft Housing Element for public review in the future.**

The Commission looks forward to partnering with the City of Rancho Santa Margarita to create opportunities to increase affordable homes for lower income households in the City. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (949) 250-0909 or cesarc@kennedycommission.org.

Sincerely,



Cesar Covarrubias
Executive Director

/. Susan Schnaars
1/22/22

From: Susan
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: Add us to list
Date: Friday, January 21, 2022 5:11:07 PM

Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jan 21, 2022, at 2:57 PM, Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:
>
> Good afternoon Susan,
>
> I have added you to the email interest list.
>
> I double checked all of the links and they appear to be working. Try this link:
>
> http://www.cityofrsm.org/DocumentCenter/View/7522/RSM-Public-Review-Draft-Housing-Element-Update
>
> Page 191 is the RHNA sites inventory.
> Page 193 is the map of the sites
> Pages 195-210 detail specific information about each of the sites.
>
> You can also click on this link, and then agenda item 2.1 for the entire agenda packet.
>
> https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=702&meta_id=52786
>
> The information you are looking for mirrors that in the above link and is on pages 212-231 of the pdf. You are looking for Appendix A of the Draft Housing Element in both documents.
>
>
> Wendy Starks, AICP
> Principal Planner
> 949-635-1807
> City of Rancho Santa Margarita
> 22112 El Paseo
> Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
>
>
>
>
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Susan <sschnaars@yahoo.com>
> Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 2:47 PM
> To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
> Subject: Add us to list
>
> Please add my email to the list
>
> I live in RSM on Teaberry Ln
>
> Thanks
>
> ps: links to Housing Elements site proposals are not working- can they be accessed somewhere else?

>
> Sent from my iPhone

2. Dick Aced
1/22/23

From: Dick Aced
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update January Public Hearing
Date: Saturday, January 22, 2022 2:53:46 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Thanks for reminding me. I now remember that the two meeting that I had with you were audio only. My mistake. Dick

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: Wendy Starks
Sent: Wednesday, January 19, 2022 8:37 AM
To: 'Dick Aced'
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update January Public Hearing

Good morning Dick,

All of the Planning Commission and City Council meetings can be accessed via this link:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes

The City does not have video capabilities in Council Chambers. However, the link allows people to access the audio live while the meetings are in progress, or to listen to the meeting afterwards.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Dick Aced <dickaced@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 19, 2022 8:34 AM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update January Public Hearing

Sorry I missed the meeting. I am pretty much home-bound and need access via ZOOM whenever possible. Dick Aced

Sent from Mail for Windows

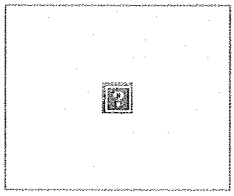
From: Wendy Starks
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2022 8:58 AM
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Housing Element Update January Public Hearing

You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Update Interest List.

A Special Meeting of the Planning Commission has been scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. The only item on the agenda will be a public hearing for adoption of the Housing and Safety Element updates. The agenda materials for this meeting are posted on the City's website at this link: http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes

For more information about the Housing Element Update, please refer to the City's dedicated webpage at this link: http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688



3. Beth Heard
1/26/22

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, January 26, 2022 3:51:24 PM

Below is an eComment we received for tonight's Council meeting.

Amy Diaz, CMC
City Clerk
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
(949) 635-1806

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2022 3:16 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

If you are having problems viewing this HTML email, click to view a Text version.

Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[X] City Council	[ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	01/26/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	4.6	
Position	[Oppose V]	
Comment*	Per the January 18, 2022, Planning Commission Staff Report there are many issues cited in the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) December 21, 2021, Letter which still need to be updated in the Rancho Santa Margarita's (RSM) proposed 2020 - 2029 Housing and Safety Element. Given that all the issues noted in HCD's December 21, 2021, letter must be revised to comply with the State Housing Element Law prior to HCD's imposed deadline of February 12, 2022, there is little time for the public to review the completed draft Housing and Safety Element which is scheduled to be adopted by the City Council on February 9, 2022. The combination of: a) the largeness of the RSM Housing Element Plan, b) the significant amount of issues that continue to need to be updated in the document and c) that there is no specific date for when all the updates will be included in the draft of the RSM proposed Housing and Safety Element Plan makes it impossible for the public to knowledgably comment on the completed Updated document or whether they concur with the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's proposed 2020 - 2029 Updated Housing and Safety Element. Since the next Public Hearing per the 1-18-2022 Planning Commission Staff Report will occur on February 9, 2022, there will be little time for RSM residents to review and provide comments on their support or opposition to the completed Housing and Safety Element prior to approval by the City Council which is also scheduled for the City Council's approval on February 9, 2022. Moreover, the importance of the RSM's residents'	

engagement in this process is critical since the 2021-2029 Housing and Safety Element has a major impact on the health and safety of the community for at least the next 9 years as well as setting in place permanent changes to the development of housing within RSM for the foreseeable future. I understand that this exceedingly flawed process is not generated by the City but is being propagated by the State legislature and HCD at a time when the general population's ability to participate in the updating of the City's Housing Element has been seriously compromised by state-imposed restrictions due to the pandemic on public gatherings in 2020 and much of 2021. The artificially imposed deadlines that have been put on local government regarding the development of housing within local communities which are already built out as well as located within environmentally sensitive communities is both unreasonable and dangerous to current and future residents. These rigid deadlines do not allow for flexibility of a well thought out planning process which is critical to the health and safety of the community as well as promoting a plan that can adjust for State feedback and public comment. Since the City is the voice of the people living in RSM, it is vital that our local government representatives speak out on the violation of the public trust regarding the States' setting up a system that mandates and regulates such a critical function as the development of housing within a community without allowing adequate time or financial resources for the creation and implementation of extremely complex processes, procedures and policies which have not been the main responsibility of many of these communities until now. Many of the deficiencies noted in the State's HCD December 21, 2021, letter appear to be a transfer of responsibilities from what has traditionally been obligations assumed by the Federal, State and County departments or agencies. In addition, rezoning timelines established at the start of the 6th cycle of the housing element rezoning process has dramatically been cut from a 3-year cycle to a 1-year process without giving the city adequate time to redesign and compress the rezoning process to meet housing law. It is concerning that these changes in housing laws were changed by the legislature in the midst of the pandemic with unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when local governments are scrambling to meet the needs of the communities during a national public health and safety crisis. In general, it appears that the State Authorities are using the ongoing public health crisis as a rationale to take over the planning and zoning of housing away from local government which leaves the people living in those communities no voice in how housing is developed in their community. I urge the city to reach out to the Orange County Council of Governments, California State Association of Counties as well as the League of California Cities regarding the State's pursuit to neuter local government's key responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of the local population through the responsible zoning and rezoning of property within the city and county. It is imperative that local governments ban together to fight overreach by State entities with debilitative and destructive regulations as well as oversight which silent public input and eliminate governance by residents in their community. Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated Beth Heard

Name	Beth Heard
Address	4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.
Email Address	bethannheard@cox.net
Phone Number	9496971251
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=3133

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 01/26/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 4.6

Position: Oppose

Comment:
Per the January 18, 2022, Planning Commission Staff Report there are many issues cited in the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) December 21, 2021, Letter which still need to be updated in the Rancho Santa Margarita's (RSM) proposed 2020 - 2029 Housing and Safety Element. Given that all the issues noted in HCD's December 21, 2021, letter must be revised to comply with the State Housing Element Law prior to HCD's imposed deadline of February 12, 2022, there is little time for the public to review the completed draft Housing and Safety Element which is scheduled to be adopted by the City Council on February 9, 2022.

The combination of: a) the largeness of the RSM Housing Element Plan, b) the significant amount of issues that continue to need to be updated in the document and c) that there is no specific date for when all the updates will be included in the draft of the RSM proposed Housing and Safety Element Plan makes it impossible for the public to knowledgably comment on the completed Updated document or whether they concur with the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's proposed 2020 - 2029 Updated Housing and Safety Element. Since the next Public Hearing per the 1-18-2022 Planning Commission Staff Report will occur on February 9, 2022, there will be little time for RSM residents to review and provide comments on their support or opposition to the completed Housing and Safety Element prior to approval by the City Council which is also scheduled for the City Council's approval on February 9, 2022. Moreover, the importance of the RSM's residents' engagement in this process is critical since the 2021-2029 Housing and Safety Element has a major impact on the health and safety of the community for at least the next 9 years as well as setting in place permanent changes to the development of housing within RSM for the foreseeable future.

I understand that this exceedingly flawed process is not generated by the City but is being propagated by the State legislature and HCD at a time when the general population's ability to participate in the updating of the City's Housing Element has been seriously compromised by state-imposed restrictions due to the pandemic on public gatherings in 2020 and much of 2021. The artificially imposed deadlines that have been put on local government regarding the development of housing within local communities which are already built out as well as located within environmentally sensitive communities is both unreasonable and dangerous to current and future residents. These rigid deadlines do not allow for flexibility of a well thought out planning process which is critical to the health and safety of the community as well as promoting a plan that can adjust for State feedback and public comment.

Since the City is the voice of the people living in RSM, it is vital that our local government representatives speak out on the violation of the public trust regarding the States' setting up a system that mandates and regulates such a critical function as the development of housing within a community without allowing adequate time or financial resources for the creation and

implementation of extremely complex processes, procedures and policies which have not been the main responsibility of many of these communities until now.

Many of the deficiencies noted in the State's HCD December 21, 2021, letter appear to be a transfer of responsibilities from what has traditionally been obligations assumed by the Federal, State and County departments or agencies. In addition, rezoning timelines established at the start of the 6th cycle of the housing element rezoning process has dramatically been cut from a 3-year cycle to a 1-year process without giving the city adequate time to redesign and compress the rezoning process to meet housing law.

It is concerning that these changes in housing laws were changed by the legislature in the midst of the pandemic with unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when local governments are scrambling to meet the needs of the communities during a national public health and safety crisis. In general, it appears that the State Authorities are using the ongoing public health crisis as a rationale to take over the planning and zoning of housing away from local government which leaves the people living in those communities no voice in how housing is developed in their community.

I urge the city to reach out to the Orange County Council of Governments, California State Association of Counties as well as the League of California Cities regarding the State's pursuit to neuter local government's key responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of the local population through the
responsible zoning and rezoning of property within the city and county. It is imperative that local governments ban together to fight overreach by State entities with debilitative and destructive regulations as well as oversight which silent public input and eliminate governance by residents in their community.

Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated

Beth Heard

Name: Beth Heard

Address: 4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.

Email Address: bethannheard@cox.net

Phone Number: 9496971251

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:16:02 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.96.79.169
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/

Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

4. Julien Hoisington
1/31/22

From: Wendy Starks
To: "Julien Hoisington"
Subject: RE: Housing Element Question
Date: Monday, January 31, 2022 8:52:51 AM
Attachments: image001.png

Good morning Julien,

The redlined/revised Housing Element Update will be presented to the City Council on February 9 for adoption, and resubmitted to HCD on February 10th but it is unknown when HCD will certify it.

All updates on our efforts are on the City's dedicated webpage here:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Julien Hoisington <jhoisington@eqr.com>
Sent: Friday, January 28, 2022 3:56 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Housing Element Question

Hello,

I have a question about the city's new housing element. I saw that the city council is reviewing the housing element at the beginning of February. Has it already been approved/certified by HCD? If not, when do you expect that to happen? Thank you very much.

Regards,

Julien

Julien Hoisington
Development Director
206.755.2202 | Mobile
424.732.4198 | Direct
jhoisington@eqr.com

Equity Residential
6100 Center Drive
Suite 750
Los Angeles, CA 90045

EquityResidential.com | *live remarkably*

5. Judy Elmayan
2/4/22

From: Judy
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update February Public Hearing
Date: Friday, February 4, 2022 10:36:56 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Thanks for keeping up to date.
Judy

On Friday, February 4, 2022, 03:07:18 PM PST, Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element Interest list.

A public hearing will be held for adoption of the Housing and Safety Element updates on Wednesday, February 9th during the regularly scheduled City Council meeting. The agenda materials for this meeting are posted on the City's website at this link:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes

For more information about the Housing Element update, please refer to the City's dedicated webpage at this link:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Wendy Starks, AICP

Principal Planner

949-635-1807

City of Rancho Santa Margarita

22112 El Paseo

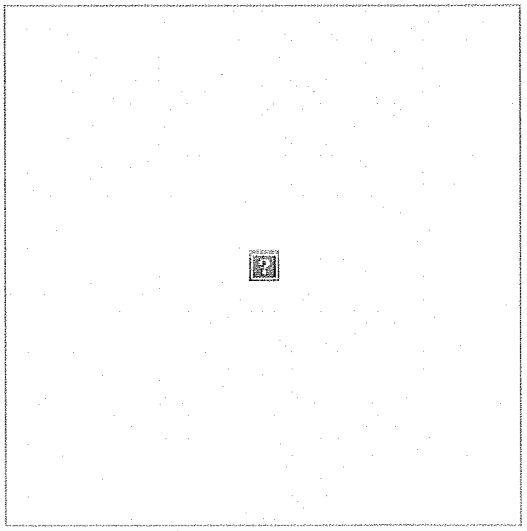
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Judy
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Fw: Our Neighborhood Voices Now Focusing on 2024 Ballot to Bring Back a Local Voice
Date: Friday, February 18, 2022 6:07:59 PM

DO NOT BUILD NOTHING UNTIL THE FAT LADY SINGS AKA IT GOES ON THE BALLOT IN 2024 OR YOU, ME, AND THE REST OF THIS CITY WILL BE VERY SORRY. YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GET RID OF WHAT YOU PUT.
YOURS, JUDY

----- Forwarded Message -----
From: Our Neighborhood Voices <info@ourneighborhoodvoices.com>
To: Judith Elmayan <pifa@att.net>
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2022, 12:05:40 PM PST
Subject: Our Neighborhood Voices Now Focusing on 2024 Ballot to Bring Back a Local Voice

Neighborhood Voices supporters – we wanted you to be the first to see that we have a new election date to take back our neighborhood voices. This announcement is going out to statewide press in just a few minutes. The election day is different – but the cause is the same. We are building an unstoppable grassroots movement that will bring back a neighborhood voice in community planning!



February 18, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Lou Penrose
info@ourneighborhoodvoices.com

Our Neighborhood Voices Now Focusing on 2024 Ballot to Bring Back a Local Voice in Community Planning

Coalition Will Focus on Organizing 250,000 Supporters Statewide as Foundation of "unstoppable grassroots movement to bring back our neighborhood voices."

California – The Our Neighborhood Voices campaign to restore a community voice in local planning announced today they will re-file their measure to qualify for the 2024 ballot and continue organizing an 'unstoppable neighborhood grassroots movement' of several hundred thousand Californians to make that qualification a certainty.

The leaders of the Our Neighborhood Voices campaign said the combination of COVID-19, the dramatic spike in the cost of paid signature gathering and the need for more time to organize volunteer signature gatherers required the change in schedule. "We are not stopping, we are not slowing down, we are not ever going to give up until we have restored a neighborhood voice in community planning," said proponent Bill Brand, Mayor of Redondo Beach.

"New State laws like SB9 are stripping local communities of their ability to control what happens in their own towns. This cannot stand and thanks to the thousands of Californians joining our cause, it will not stand," said Brand.

"Our grassroots movement is growing every single day – but we are fighting the Sacramento power structure and we need more time to build the kind of people's movement that can win back our neighborhood voice. This is going to happen by 2024," said Jovita Mendoza of the Brentwood City Council.

"Sacramento should be worried. The people are fighting back and this extra time means our grassroots movement will be even more powerful as we organize to take back our neighborhood voices," said Yorba Linda City Councilmember Peggy Huang.

"We are rolling all of our resources into this expanded effort and will spend every cent making sure we can take on the powerful Sacramento politicians and win," said co-sponsor Dennis Richards of San Francisco.

"Because so many of our families face displacement, so many of our neighborhoods are being damaged and there are so many effective ways to create affordable housing instead of handing blank checks to developers – we will never stop fighting until this job is done," said proponent John Heath, co-founder of the United Homeowners' Association.

The proponents encouraged all supporters to continue to organize by joining the effort at **OurNeighborhoodVoices.com**.

The **"Our Neighborhood Voices Initiative"** will protect the ability of local communities to adopt laws that shape local growth, preserve the character of neighborhoods, and require developers to actually produce more affordable housing and contribute to the costs associated with new housing. The initiative now seeks to qualify for the November 2024 ballot, and is actively organizing supporters across the state.

###

The Our Neighborhood Voices Initiative can be found at ***OurNeighborhoodVoices.com****.*



Paid for by Brand-Huang-Mendoza Tripartisan Land Use Initiative, committee major funding from: Reyla Graber and AIDS Healthcare Foundation

Our Neighborhood Voices
621 Capitol Mall, Suite 2500
Sacramento, CA 95814
United States

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, please unsubscribe.



6. Alison Martinez/ James Pugh Sheppard Mullin 2/7/22

Wendy Starks

From:	Amy Diaz
Sent:	Monday, February 7, 2022 4:06 PM
To:	Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks; 'atropiano@denovoplanning.com'; Z_Gregory Simonian; Jennifer Cervantez; 'Michael S. Daudt'
Subject:	FW: Comment letter re Item 5.1 on 2/9/22 City Council Agenda
Attachments:	Dove Canyon Plaza - Letter to City Council re Housing Element.pdf

Good afternoon,

For your reference, I am forwarding the following email and attachment from James Pugh with Sheppard Mullin regarding the Housing Element Agenda Item No. 5.1 scheduled for February 9th.

Sincerely,

Amy Diaz, CMC
City Clerk
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
(949) 635-1806

From: Alison Martinez <AGMartinez@sheppardmullin.com>
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 3:14 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>
Cc: James Pugh <JPugh@sheppardmullin.com>
Subject: Comment letter re Item 5.1 on 2/9/22 City Council Agenda

Good afternoon, Ms. Diaz,

Please find attached a comment letter regarding Item 5.1 on the upcoming February 9th City Council Agenda. Thank you for sharing this correspondence with the City Council.

Best,
Alison Martinez

Alison G. Martinez
+1 213-455-7706 | direct
AGMartinez@sheppardmullin.com | Bio

SheppardMullin
333 South Hope Street, 43rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071-1422
+1 213-620-1780 | main
www.sheppardmullin.com | LinkedIn | Twitter

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SheppardMullin

Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP
333 South Hope Street, 43rd Floor
Los Angeles, California 90071-1422
213.620.1780 main
213.620.1398 fax
www.sheppardmullin.com

James E. Pugh
213.617.4284 direct
jpugh@sheppardmullin.com

File Number: 81XK-346058

February 7, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

City Council
c/o Amy Diaz, City Clerk
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
E-Mail: adiaz@cityofrsm.org

Re: Housing Element Update – Inclusion of Dove Canyon Plaza as an Inventory Site

Dear Mayor Figueroa and Honorable Councilmembers:

We represent Dove Canyon Recovery Acquisition, LLC ("Dove Canyon") regarding land use and real estate issues. Dove Canyon owns the approximately 8.7-acre Dove Canyon Plaza site located at 31931 Dove Canyon Drive in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita ("City") and continues to explore redevelopment opportunities for the site. Successful redevelopment of Dove Canyon Plaza for the City, community, and stakeholders is possible if the City establishes appropriate land use and zoning regulations for the site. The 2021-2029 (6th Cycle) Housing Element Update ("Housing Element Update") is an excellent opportunity for the City to establish zoning designations at Dove Canyon Plaza that align with both the City's housing needs and the development vision of Dove Canyon.

Currently, the draft Housing Element Update does not include Dove Canyon Plaza as an inventory site. We believe that is a missed opportunity for the City. The site has excellent redevelopment potential because onsite commercial uses are not robust and Dove Canyon Plaza can help the City meet its current and long-term housing needs assessments. Accordingly, we respectfully request that the City add Dove Canyon Plaza to the inventory list and assign it the City's new Mixed-Use Housing zoning. The method to do this is simple and easy.

The City could simply change the density allowance listed in Table H-59: RHNA Sites Summary and add the site to the map in Figure H-3: Proposed 2021-2029 Housing Element Inventory. Specifically, the City would add Dove Canyon Plaza to the inventory table as follows:

Map Reference	Address	APN	Acres	Proposed Designation	Potential Capacity
16	31931 Dove Canyon Drive	804-542-26	8.7	Mixed-Use Housing	304

The RHNA Sites Summary table is on page 321 of the pdf Staff Report prepared for the February 9, 2022 City Council hearing and the map is on page 319. The table and map are also referenced on pages 39 and 45, respectively, of the Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report in the pdf Staff Report.

We recognize that the City Council needs to timely approve the Housing Element Update. We also recognize that our request is last minute. However, it is an opportunity for the City to demonstrate its ability to not only meet, but exceed, regional housing needs by utilizing Dove Canyon Plaza as an ideal infill location for residential density. Therefore, we respectfully request that the City modify the site inventory table to include Dove Canyon Plaza before adopting the Housing Element Update.

In closing, we also note that Dove Canyon could file applications for similar zoning and land use changes to facilitate infill redevelopment of Dove Canyon Plaza. We trust that the City would welcome that independent effort by Dove Canyon to help the City meets its future housing needs, and to improve an aging retail center that is ripe for redevelopment. Regardless, the City including Dove Canyon Plaza in the Housing Element Update now (as requested herein) is smart planning because it streamlines future administrative procedures for the City. We hope that the City Council will take this first step and add Dove Canyon Plaza to the Housing Element Update now.

We look forward to an ongoing dialog, and working with the City, to implement a redevelopment plan for Dove Canyon Plaza that is mutually beneficial for all.

Thank you,

James E. Pugh
for SHEPPARD, MULLIN, RICHTER & HAMPTON LLP

SMRH:4889-3818-1132.4

T. Sheppardmullin
2/8/22

From: Cheryl Kuta
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Fwd: Housing Element Update - FW: Comment letter re Item 5.1 on 2/9/22 City Council Agenda
Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 8:35:56 AM
Attachments: Dove Canyon Plaza - Letter to City Council re Housing Element.pdf

---

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: James Pugh <JPugh@sheppardmullin.com>
Date: February 8, 2022 at 7:59:54 AM PST
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Cc: Alison Martinez <AGMartinez@sheppardmullin.com>
Subject: Housing Element Update - FW: Comment letter re Item 5.1 on 2/9/22 City Council Agenda

Hi Cheryl,

We spoke last week about the housing element update. I'm keeping you in the loop by forwarding our letter submitted to the City Council below. We may also appear at the hearing if requested to by our client.

Feel free to reach out to me before the hearing if you have any questions.

Thanks,
James E. Pugh | Partner
SheppardMullin | Los Angeles
+1 213-617-4284 | ext. 14284

From: Alison Martinez <AGMartinez@sheppardmullin.com>
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 3:14 PM
To: adiaz@cityofrsm.org
Cc: James Pugh <JPugh@sheppardmullin.com>
Subject: Comment letter re Item 5.1 on 2/9/22 City Council Agenda

Good afternoon, Ms. Diaz,

Please find attached a comment letter regarding Item 5.1 on the upcoming February 9th City Council Agenda. Thank you for sharing this correspondence with the City Council.

Best,
Alison Martinez

Alison G. Martinez
+1 213-455-7706 | direct
AGMartinez@sheppardmullin.com | Bio

SheppardMullin
333 South Hope Street, 43rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071-1422
+1 213-620-1780 | main
www.sheppardmullin.com | LinkedIn | Twitter

Attention: This message is sent by a law firm and may contain information that is privileged or confidential. If you received this transmission in error, please notify the sender by reply e-mail and delete the message and any attachments.

8. Mike Sulvanski
2/8/22

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 10:40:36 AM

Good morning,

Below is an eComment received for the Housing Element item.

Sincerely,

Amy Diaz, CMC
City Clerk
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
(949) 635-1806

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 8:55 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

If you are having problems viewing this HTML email, click to view a Text version.

Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[X] City Council	[ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	02/09/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	5.1	
Position	[Oppose V]	
Comment*	As a resident of Rancho Santa Margarita, I have several concerns regarding the preparation and ultimate implementation of the State mandated 6th Cycle Housing Element Update: • Public Input – While surveys were conducted and subsequent Housing Element revisions were prepared, the massive amount of data that they contained was difficult for many residents to absorb given the schedule demands placed on cities by the State. Given the potentially impactive nature of future development resulting from this Housing Element, the State should give the cities more time to hold substantive public hearings so residents can get a better understanding of the impacts that would be seen by this latest update. • Viability – RSM's Housing Element clearly defines the areas under consideration and the number of units for each area however, it has been unclear from the beginning of the process, how these numbers of units would be conceptually developed going forward. In other words, would retail establishments be torn down and re-developed? Would new housing units be built around or over existing retail? Would additional housing units be placed in areas with existing parking areas and	

	if so, would alternate parking accommodations be provided? While it is understood that the State has a formula of how many units can be applied per acre, it is simply unclear what that might potentially look like in reality. • Infrastructure – Does the State consider the impacts to existing infrastructure as it applies to roads, power, water and sewer services? Are the impacts to law enforcement and emergency services considered? • Parking – RSM currently has a number of high density housing projects in the community and depending on the time of day, parking extends into the streets and around street corners due the high demand for vehicle parking. Will future development consider the potential impacts caused by increased housing and subsequent additional parking requirements? • Master Planned Communities – Several of the newer master planned communities in Orange County were carefully planned from the beginning. Does the State feel they have the ability to override this well thought out development and usurp local control from our cities?
Name	Mike Safranski
Address	21371 Eastglen Drive
Email Address	mike.safranski@cox.net
Phone Number	9496335345
Attachment	HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE.pdf

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=3156

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 02/09/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 5.1

Position: Oppose

Comment: As a resident of Rancho Santa Margarita, I have several concerns regarding the preparation and ultimate implementation of the State mandated 6th Cycle Housing Element Update:
• Public Input – While surveys were conducted and subsequent Housing Element revisions were prepared, the massive amount of data that they contained was difficult for many residents to absorb given the schedule demands placed on cities by the State. Given the potentially impactive nature of future development resulting from this Housing Element, the State should give the cities more time to hold substantive public hearings so residents can get a better understanding of the impacts that would be seen by this latest update.
• Viability – RSM's Housing Element clearly defines the areas under consideration and the number of units for each area however, it has been unclear from the beginning of the process, how these numbers of units would be conceptually developed going forward. In other words, would retail establishments be torn down and re-developed? Would new housing units be built around or over existing retail? Would additional housing units be placed in areas with existing parking areas and if so, would alternate parking accommodations be provided? While it is understood that the State has a formula of how many units can be applied per acre, it is simply

unclear what that might potentially look like in reality.
• Infrastructure – Does the State consider the impacts to existing infrastructure as it applies to roads, power, water and sewer services? Are the impacts to law enforcement and emergency services considered?
• Parking – RSM currently has a number of high density housing projects in the community and depending on the time of day, parking extends into the streets and around street corners due the high demand for vehicle parking. Will future development consider the potential impacts caused by increased housing and subsequent additional parking requirements?
• Master Planned Communities – Several of the newer master planned communities in Orange County were carefully planned from the beginning. Does the State feel they have the ability to override this well thought out development and usurp local control from our cities?

Name: Mike Safranski

Address: 21371 Eastglen Drive

Email Address: mike.safranski@cox.net

Phone Number: 9496335345

Attachment: HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE.pdf

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 2/7/2022 8:55:05 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 98.164.240.68
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

9. Californians For H/O 2/9/22

CALIFORNIANS FOR HOMEOWNERSHIP

MATTHEW GELFAND, COUNSEL
MATT@CAFORHOMES.ORG
TEL: (213) 739-8206

February 9, 2022

VIA EMAIL

City Council
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
Email: afigueroa@cityofrsm.org; jholloway@cityofrsm.org; bmcgirr@cityofrsm.org; cgamble@cityofrsm.org; tbeall@cityofrsm.org

RE: Insufficiency of the City's Sixth Cycle Housing Element.
February 9, 2022 City Council Meeting, Agenda Item 5.1.

To the City Council:

Californians for Homeownership is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization devoted to using legal tools to address California's housing crisis. Our organization is monitoring local compliance with the law governing housing elements.

You are scheduled to consider adoption of the City's Housing Element at your upcoming meeting. The City's Housing Element was due to be adopted by October 15, 2021, and the City has been out of compliance with state housing law in the time since. The adoption of a legally valid Housing Element would bring the City into compliance with the law and help the City avoid certain penalties and reductions in local control that result from non-compliance. Unfortunately, the proposal before you would not achieve that goal.

We have reviewed the draft Housing Element and adopting resolution provided with your agenda materials. We have also reviewed the letter the City received from the state Department of Housing and Community Development outlining its concerns about the City's draft, which we incorporate here in its entirety, by reference. Based on our review, we believe that if the City adopts the draft as planned, it will not bring the City into substantial compliance with state housing law, including the housing element law. Among other things, as we explain below, the draft does not provide adequate information about the non-vacant sites included on the City's sites inventory.

State Law Governing the Use of Nonvacant Sites to Satisfy Housing Element Obligations

Under Government Code Section 65583.2(g)(1), for each nonvacant site, a city must "specify the additional development potential . . . within the planning period," and it must explain

525 S. Virgil Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020

how the developmental potential for each site was measured. The methodology must consider the extent to which the existing use may impede development.

Additionally, if a city intends to rely on nonvacant sites to make up more than fifty percent of its lower income housing need, it is also subject to Government Code Section 65583.2(g)(2). This provision requires the city to make an affirmative factual showing that the existing use is not an impediment to development. More specifically, the city must present "findings based on substantial evidence that the use is likely to be discontinued during the planning period." Without these findings, the existing use is "presumed to impede additional residential development."

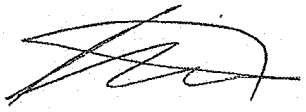
Inadequacy of the City's Draft Housing Element

The sites inventory in the City's draft Housing Element does not meet these requirements. The inventory does not adequately account for the impediment created by the existing uses on the listed nonvacant sites, including the possibility that a site will be maintained in its current use rather than redeveloped during the planning period. What's more, the City's draft housing element appears to rely on nonvacant sites to satisfy over 50% of the City's lower income RHNA. But the inventory does not identify evidence that the existing uses on some of these sites will be discontinued during the planning period. The following APNs on the City's sites inventory lack adequate information to satisfy the City's legal obligations regarding listing non-vacant sites:

> 805-062-06, 805-061-01, 805-042-02, 805-222-01, 814-153-05, 814-153-07, 814-153-14, 805-052-09, 814-153-04, 814-172-10, 814-172-11, 814-172-12, 824-172-25, 814-172-26, and 814-172-27

Accordingly, as it stands, the existing uses of the non-vacant sites listed in the City's inventory would be presumed to impede additional residential development, making those sites inappropriate for inclusion.

Sincerely,



Matthew Gelfand

cc: City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Cheryl Kuta, Dev. Services Dept. Director (by email to ckuta@cityofrsm.org)
Jennifer M. Cervantez, City Manager (by email to jcervantez@cityofrsm.org)
Wendy Starks, Principal Planner (by email to wstars@cityofrsm.org)
Amanda Tropiano, Consultant (by email to atropiano@denovoplanning.com)

California Department of Housing and Community Development
Tristan Lanza (by email to tristan.lanza@hcd.ca.gov)

10. Beth Hearn
2/9/22

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 3:25:44 PM

Forwarding an eComment regarding the Housing Element.

Thank you,

Amy Diaz, CMC
City Clerk
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
(949) 635-1806

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 3:09 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

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Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[X] City Council	[ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	02/09/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	5.1	
Position	[Oppose V]	
Comment*	My opposition to the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Housing Element Plan continues to be related to the State of California Department Housing and Community Development's (HCD) rigid timeline restrictions. Instead of encouraging inclusion, equity and transparency, HCD's insistent on inflexible deadlines has cut out most of the public's ability to provide meaningful input regarding the Housing Element Plan. These draconian timelines are both unrealistic and punitive to the public. Since the current Housing Element Plan has only been available for the public to reviewed for about 12 days and given that this Plan is 936 pages long, it is unreasonable to expect that members of the public who are not familiar with State, County or City Plans would be able to wade through a document this large in such a brief time period. This circumstance is further exacerbated by the fact that the HCD's process has been imposed on local government during a time when the general population's ability to participate in the updating of the City's Housing Element has been seriously impacted by Federal and State-imposed restrictions due to the pandemic on public gatherings in 2020 and 2021. The HCD mandated requirements being inflicted on local communities is both excessive and dangerous to current and future residents. This is especially concerning given the dramatic changes being made to the RSM current Master Plan which is a city that is already built out as well as located within an environmentally sensitive community. The	

need to engage the public in the planning process is critical to the successful implementation of any City Plan put in place. HCD's current process and deadlines have by design, via taking place during a pandemic, kept the public from actively participating in a process which educated the residents on the HCD plans as well as allow for the public to get their questions, concerns, comments and suggestions heard. Because the bulk of the time that local government was mandated to develop HCD Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) occurred in 2020 and 2021 for the current Housing Element to be adopted by RSM City Council, local government could not provide in person workshops or seminars on the Housing Element process when the community was in the middle of a public health crisis that demanded the public focus on ensuring that basic needs be met as well as protection of their health and that of their families health. State Housing and Community Development (HCD) December 21, 2021, Letter which is 11 pages long states that the City of RSM's proposed 2020 - 2029 Housing and Safety Element must be revised to meet the requested HCD requirements and be approved by HCD's deadline of February 12, 2022. Given that the RSM Housing and Safety Element is scheduled to be adopted by the City Council on February 9, 2022, there is little time for the public to be educated on the plan, review the plan and provide comments, get their questions answered and make suggestions on the completed Housing Element Plan. I understand that this exceedingly flawed process is not generated by the City but is being directed and mandated by the State legislature and HCD. The artificially imposed deadlines have made the engagement of the public in this important process impossible to achieve in a meaningful way. These rigid deadlines have not allowed for flexibility of a well thought out planning process which is critical to the health and safety of the community as well as promoting a plan that can adjust for State feedback and public comment. Since the City is the voice of the people living in RSM, it is vital that our local government representatives speak out on the violation of the public trust regarding the States' setting up a system that mandates and regulates such a critical function as the development of housing within a community without allowing adequate time or financial resources for the creation and implementation of extremely complex processes, procedures and policies which have not been the main responsibility of many of these communities until now. It is concerning that these changes in housing laws and regulations were changed by the legislature and HCD in the midst of the pandemic with unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when local governments are continuing to scramble to meet the needs of the communities during a national public health and safety crisis. In general, it appears that the State Authorities are using the ongoing public health crisis as a rationale to take over the planning and zoning of housing away from local government which leaves the people living in California communities no voice in how housing is developed in their neighborhoods. I continue to urge the city to reach out to the Orange County Council of Governments, California State Association of Counties as well as the League of California Cities regarding the State's pursuit to circumvent local government's key responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of the local population through the responsible zoning and rezoning of property within the city and county. It is imperative that local governments ban together to fight overreach by State entities with debilitative and destructive regulations as well as oversight which silent public input and eliminate governance by residents in their community. In addition, the plan of each city and county going it alone makes it easy for the State to pick-off local government entities one at a time and avoid accountability for the disaster they have created for the local communities. Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated Beth Heard

Name	Beth Heard
Address	4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.
Email Address	bethannheard@cox.net
Phone Number	9496971251
Attachment	[ ]
	Convert to PDF?[ ]
	(DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

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The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 02/09/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 5.1

Position: Oppose

Comment: My opposition to the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Housing Element Plan continues to be related to the State of California Department Housing and Community Development's (HCD) rigid timeline restrictions. Instead of encouraging inclusion, equity and transparency, HCD's insistent on inflexible deadlines has cut out most of the public's ability to provide meaningful input regarding the Housing Element Plan. These draconian timelines are both unrealistic and punitive to the public.

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The HCD mandated requirements being inflicted on local communities is both excessive and dangerous to current and future residents. This is especially concerning given the dramatic changes being made to the RSM current Master Plan which is a city that is already built out as well as located within an environmentally sensitive community.

The need to engage the public in the planning process is critical to the successful implementation of any City Plan put in place. HCD's current process and deadlines have by design, via taking place during a pandemic, kept the public from actively participating in a process which educated the residents on the HCD plans as well as allow for the public to get their questions, concerns, comments and suggestions heard.
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Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated

Beth Heard

Name: Beth Heard

Address: 4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.

Email Address: bethannheard@cox.net

Phone Number: 9496971251

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 2/9/2022 3:09:07 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.96.79.169
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

11. Rhonda Lundberg
2/9/22

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 10:18:40 AM

Good morning,

We received the following eComment for the Housing Element.

Thank you,

Amy Diaz, CMC
City Clerk
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
(949) 635-1806

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 9:09 AM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

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Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[X] City Council	[ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	2/9/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	5.1 Approval of Housing Element	
Position	[Oppose V]	
Comment*	Good Evening Mayor and City Council Members, Thank You for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion on the RSM Update Housing Element Document. The State of California has used the Public Health Crisis to their advantage; by putting policies into place, without giving the public ample opportunities to engage in public hearings. The state has mandated hard deadlines to the cities to get their Housing Element into California Housing and Community Development, not allowing the public time to read and understand the complex information of the City's Housing Element. The public has been busy with being locked down in their homes, not being able to go to work, going out to restaurants and least of all attending public meetings. The Citizens of Rancho Santa Margarita have been consumed in their daily life with mandates with their children at school, supply shortages, rising prices including gas. This point is made by the low number of responses to the City's Surveys and the low number of participants in the City's Housing Element Workshops. Number of Participants are included in the 936 pages of the Housing Element Update. It would have been nice for the Consultant of the	

RSM City Housing Element to summarize the major edits(changes due to HCD response to City of RSM) to the RSM Housing Element Update for the public. As the State of California loosen their Mandates on the Citizens of California. The Citizens of RSM will start opening their eyes to the destruction of the General Plan in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. Citizens will start seeing the change of their local businesses to housing, and wonder how did this happen. As the housing is built and they do try to patron their local business, and restaurants, why all the congestion and what happened to all the parking. Cities of the State must band together! I applaud the City of Irvine, who stood their ground with the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG) in their lawsuit against the California Department of Housing and Community Development. I am aware that the lawsuit was dismissed on November 18, 2021, but an appeal was filed with the California Court of Appeal. OCCOG's board voted unanimously to appeal the court's dismissal of this lawsuit because Orange County's citizens and taxpayers deserve to be treated fairly under the law. This statement really struck me, because it seems that the taxpayers are not fairly represented by their State Representatives and their City Representatives. Over the last year, I have seen more friends and neighbors fleeing the State of California. They are tired of the high taxes, crime, COVID mandates and frankly not having a voice anymore in their government. It appears that the State Authorities are using the ongoing public health crisis as a rationale to take over local government, which leaves the people in these communities no voice. I urge the City of Rancho Santa Margarita to stand with the Orange County Council of Governments, City of Irvine, California Association of Counties as well as the League of Cities, regarding the State's pursuit to change local government's key responsibilities. It is critical that local governments stand together to fight the overreach by the State. Thank You again for letting my voice be heard. Rhonda Lundberg

Name	Rhonda Lundberg
Address	18 Mountain Laurel
Email Address	lundbergfamily1@cox.net
Phone Number	9495101387
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
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The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 2/9/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 5.1 Approval of Housing Element

Position: Oppose

Comment: Good Evening Mayor and City Council Members,

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advantage; by putting policies into place, without giving the public ample opportunities to engage in public hearings. The state has mandated hard deadlines to the cities to get their Housing Element into California Housing and Community Development, not allowing the public time to read and understand the complex information of the City's Housing Element. The public has been busy with being locked down in their homes, not being able to go to work, going out to restaurants and least of all attending public meetings. The Citizens of Rancho Santa Margarita have been consumed in their daily life with mandates with their children at school, supply shortages, rising prices including gas. This point is made by the low number of responses to the City's Surveys and the low number of participants in the City's Housing Element Workshops. Number of Participants are included in the 936 pages of the Housing Element Update. It would have been nice for the Consultant of the RSM City Housing Element to summarize the major edits(changes due to HCD response to City of RSM) to the RSM Housing Element Update for the public.

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I urge the City of Rancho Santa Margarita to stand with the Orange County Council of Governments, City of Irvine, California Association of Counties as well as the League of Cities, regarding the State's pursuit to change local government's key responsibilities. It is critical that local governments stand together to fight the overreach by the State.

Thank You again for letting my voice be heard.

Rhonda Lundberg

Name: Rhonda Lundberg

Address: 18 Mountain Laurel

Email Address: lundbergfamily1@cox.net

Phone Number: 9495101387

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Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 2/9/2022 9:08:49 AM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.99.187.37
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

~~B~~a Cindy Ashley
12 2/16/22

Wendy Starks

From: Cheryl Kuta
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 8:47 AM
To: Wendy Starks; 'Amanda Tropiano'
Subject: FW: Feedback on RSM Housing Element Revised Draft Jan 2022
Attachments: WNH RSM HE Feedback Jan Revision 2021-02-15.pdf

From: Cindy Ashley <cindy.ashley@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 4:06 PM
To: melinda.coy@hcd.ca.gov
Cc: Kristen Camuglia <KCamuglia@cityofrsm.org>; Blaine Nelson <BNelson@cityofrsm.org>; Jim Leach <jleach@cityofrsm.org>; Mark D. McQuaid <mmcquaid@cityofrsm.org>; Dave Triepke <dtriepke@cityofrsm.org>; Bradley McGirr <BMcgirr@cityofrsm.org>; Tony Beall <tbeall@cityofrsm.org>; Anne Figueroa <afigueroa@cityofrsm.org>; Carol Gamble <CGamble@cityofrsm.org>; Jerry Holloway <jholloway@cityofrsm.org>; Jennifer Cervantez <JCervantez@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>; Mike Linares <mlinares@cityofrsm.org>; Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov; melinda.coy@hcd.ca.gov; Chelsea.lee@hcd.ca.gov; Marisa.Prasse@hcd.ca.govcolin.cross; cesarc@kennedycommission.org; 'Mildred Perez' <mildredp@kennedycommission.org>; daisyc@kennedycommission.org
Subject: Feedback on RSM Housing Element Revised Draft Jan 2022

Dear Melinda,

Thank you for your letter regarding suggestions to bring Rancho Santa Margarita's Housing Element into compliance. Attached is our feedback on the city's latest revision to the 6th cycle Housing Element.

Regards,

Cindy Ashley
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative



February 15, 2022

Melinda Coy
Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Housing Policy Development
2020 W. El Camino Ave., Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95833

Re: Summary of Concerns Regarding Rancho Santa Margarita's 6th Cycle Housing Element Update

Dear Ms. Coy:

We write as members of the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative - a ministry of the Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tapestry has members who live in Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM). Welcoming Neighbors Home volunteers work to end and prevent homelessness by advocating for more affordable housing in South OC – including RSM.

We have reviewed your letter from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) dated December 21st 2021 and the Rancho Santa Margarita's January 2022 Housing Element Draft. We offer the following comments and questions.

NONVACANT SITES:

HCD has offered the following feedback the Sept. 2021 Housing Element Draft:

> *The element must describe the methodology used to determine the additional development potential within the planning period. The methodology must consider factors including the extent to which existing uses may impede additional residential development, development trends, market conditions, and regulatory or other incentives or standards to encourage additional residential development on these sites. (Gov. Code, § 65583.2, subd. (g).) The inventory could also describe whether the use is operating, marginal or discontinued, and the condition of the structure or could describe any expressed interest in redevelopment.*

The latest draft revision does not appear to adequately respond to the request for additional evidence that many of the sites identified are likely to be developed within the planning period. For "Factors Supporting Development" the city is reporting that the:

> City specifically considered sites with very low lot coverage (below 30%) and where the allowable FAR allowed for at least twice the amount of existing development.

Given the existing uses detailed in our previous letter dated October 27th, 2021, it seems very unlikely that a majority of the sites listed in the Site Inventory will be developed. While the sites may physically be able to accommodate additional housing, additional evidence needs to be provided to explain how the existing uses do not impede additional residential development.

The **El Paseo sites** comprise a fairly new and thriving shopping center. Any development on these sites would harm the existing businesses during construction. Residential units could not be built above businesses in buildings not designed for mixed use. While we agree that mixed-use developments are a more contemporary way to address the residential/shopping/office space needs of a community, given that the El Paseo sites contain thriving businesses with adequate parking, **we do not see how these sites could accommodate the 296 units of housing plus parking concentrated in this small area in the heart of the City's center.**

Not all sites in the City's Housing Element even fit the city's own criteria of low lot coverage (below 30%). For factors supporting development at the **RSM Office Center** (Site 4), the following information was provided which seems to support the unlikelihood of development:

> The property is developed to less than 50% of the maximum allowable floor area ratio. As of September 2021, the building is 80% occupied.

It is unclear how these statements support development; they appear to do the opposite.

Town Center Car Wash (Site 9):
Not only is there a gas station on this site which would impede housing development due to environmental concerns, and impact the community with the loss of one of its few gas stations, the only factor supporting development is:

> The property is developed to 90% of the maximum allowable floor area ratio.

GENERAL CONCERNS:

We continue to be concerned that unreasonable sites for development have been chosen. Nor has the city described *specific policies* that will be adopted to provide development incentives for the production of adequate housing to meet the need of extremely-low, very-low, and moderate-income households. Program 10 Affordable Housing Development has been modified with the following addition:

The City will continue to grant concessions and incentives for projects which include housing affordable to lower-income and/or moderate-income households, such as reduced parking requirements.

We request that the city detail these incentives with specific actions and timelines, per HCD's request and we continue to recommend an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance that includes a 15% requirement of affordable housing production at extremely-low-, very-low- and low-income categories and that it apply to all residential projects.

Additionally, **we encourage the city to join the Orange County Housing Finance Trust** as the majority of cities have done in Orange County.

Many residents have expressed concern about the insufficiency of roads in and out of parts of the city. We encourage the city to address the issues caused by these deficiencies in a variety of ways. We simply can not continue to say 'no' to housing to meet the needs of our residents of all income levels.

Sincerely,

Cindy Ashley

Cindy Ashley, RSM Resident
RSM City Monitor for the Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Tasia Surch

Tasia Surch, RSM Resident

Rona Henry

Rona Henry, Chair
Welcoming Neighbors Home Initiative

Kent Doss

Rev Kent Doss, Minister
Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Cc: Mayor Anne Figueroa Tony Beall
Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Holloway
City Council Members Beall, Gamble, & McGirr
Planning Commission Chair Camuglia
Planning Commission Vice Chair Nelson

Planning Commissioner Leach
Planning Commissioner McQuaid
Planning Commissioner Triepke
Jennifer M. Cervantez, RSM City Manager
Cheryl Kuta, RSM Director of Development Services
Mike Linares, RSM Housing Programs Coordinator
Paul McDougall, California State Housing and Community Development Office
Cesar Covarrubias, Mildred Perez, Cynthia Guerra and Daisy Cruz - Kennedy Commission

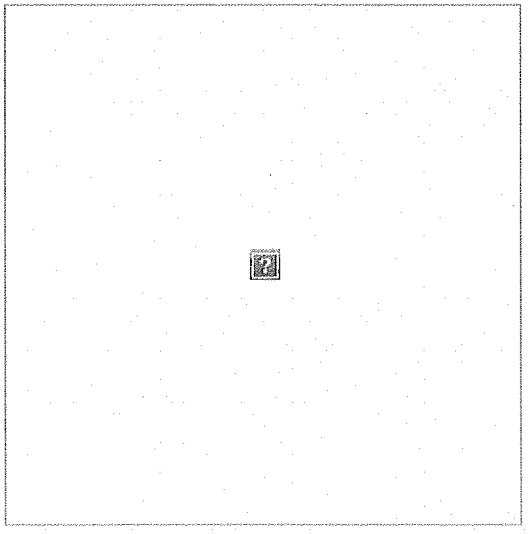
13 Judy Elmayan
2/18/22

From: Judy
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Fw: Our Neighborhood Voices Now Focusing on 2024 Ballot to Bring Back a Local Voice
Date: Friday, February 18, 2022 6:07:59 PM

DO NOT BUILD NOTHING UNTIL THE FAT LADY SINGS AKA IT GOES ON THE BALLOT IN 2024 OR YOU, ME, AND THE REST OF THIS CITY WILL BE VERY SORRY. YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GET RID OF WHAT YOU PUT.
YOURS, JUDY

----- Forwarded Message -----
From: Our Neighborhood Voices <info@ourneighborhoodvoices.com>
To: Judith Elmayan <pifa@att.net>
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2022, 12:05:40 PM PST
Subject: Our Neighborhood Voices Now Focusing on 2024 Ballot to Bring Back a Local Voice

Neighborhood Voices supporters – we wanted you to be the first to see that we have a new election date to take back our neighborhood voices. This announcement is going out to statewide press in just a few minutes. The election day is different – but the cause is the same. We are building an unstoppable grassroots movement that will bring back a neighborhood voice in community planning!



February 18, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Lou Penrose
info@ourneighborhoodvoices.com

Our Neighborhood Voices Now Focusing on 2024 Ballot to Bring Back a Local Voice in Community Planning

Coalition Will Focus on Organizing 250,000 Supporters Statewide as Foundation of "unstoppable grassroots movement to bring back our neighborhood voices."

California – The Our Neighborhood Voices campaign to restore a community voice in local planning announced today they will re-file their measure to qualify for the 2024 ballot and continue organizing an 'unstoppable neighborhood grassroots movement' of several hundred thousand Californians to make that qualification a certainty.

The leaders of the Our Neighborhood Voices campaign said the combination of COVID-19, the dramatic spike in the cost of paid signature gathering and the need for more time to organize volunteer signature gatherers required the change in schedule. "We are not stopping, we are not slowing down, we are not ever going to give up until we have restored a neighborhood voice in community planning," said proponent Bill Brand, Mayor of Redondo Beach.

"New State laws like SB9 are stripping local communities of their ability to control what happens in their own towns. This cannot stand and thanks to the thousands of Californians joining our cause, it will not stand," said Brand.

"Our grassroots movement is growing every single day – but we are fighting the Sacramento power structure and we need more time to build the kind of people's movement that can win back our neighborhood voice. This is going to happen by 2024," said Jovita Mendoza of the Brentwood City Council.

"Sacramento should be worried. The people are fighting back and this extra time means our grassroots movement will be even more powerful as we organize to take back our neighborhood voices," said Yorba Linda City Councilmember Peggy Huang.

"We are rolling all of our resources into this expanded effort and will spend every cent making sure we can take on the powerful Sacramento politicians and win," said co-sponsor Dennis Richards of San Francisco.

"Because so many of our families face displacement, so many of our neighborhoods are being damaged and there are so many effective ways to create affordable housing instead of handing blank checks to developers – we will never stop fighting until this job is done," said proponent John Heath, co-founder of the United Homeowners' Association.

The proponents encouraged all supporters to continue to organize by joining the effort at **OurNeighborhoodVoices.com**.

The **"Our Neighborhood Voices Initiative"** will protect the ability of local communities to adopt laws that shape local growth, preserve the character of neighborhoods, and require developers to actually produce more affordable housing and contribute to the costs associated with new housing. The initiative now seeks to qualify for the November 2024 ballot, and is actively organizing supporters across the state.

###

The Our Neighborhood Voices Initiative can be found at ***OurNeighborhoodVoices.com****.*



Paid for by Brand-Huang-Mendoza Tripartisan Land Use Initiative, committee major funding from: Reyla Graber and AIDS Healthcare Foundation

Our Neighborhood Voices
621 Capitol Mall, Suite 2500
Sacramento, CA 95814
United States

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, please unsubscribe.



Judy Elmayan
14 2/22/22

From: Judy
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: bill
Date: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 11:11:38 AM

I dont know about you but my home insurance is sky high because I am in a fire zone. I live behind smart and final. This bill if passed would deter building here. Knock wood.

Quirk-Silva also introduced a bill that would prevent local governments from giving permits for housing communities in areas with "very high fire" risks unless the developer takes certain steps to address the risks. The bill also would require the State Fire Marshal to help cover costs to boost fire safety for at least 300,000 existing vulnerable homes within the next three years and an additional 300,000 existing vulnerable homes every three years after.

AB-2705 Housing: fire safety standards. (2021-2022)

SHARE THIS:

Date Published: 02/18/2022 09:00 PM

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2021–2022 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 2705

Introduced by Assembly Member Quirk-Silva
(Principal coauthor: Senator Ochoa Bogh)

February 18, 2022

An act to add Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 66310) to Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code, relating to housing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2705, as introduced, Quirk-Silva. Housing: fire safety standards.

Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal to prepare, adopt, and submit building standards and other fire and life safety regulations to the California Building Standards Commission for approval establishing minimum requirements for the storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials. Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal to seek the advice of the Secretary for Environmental Protection in establishing those requirements.

This bill would prohibit the legislative body of a city or county from approving a discretionary entitlement, as defined, that would result in a new residential development project, as defined, being located within a very high fire hazard severity zone, unless the city or county finds that the residential development project will meet specified standards intended to address wildfire risks, as specified. By imposing new requirements on cities and counties in the review of residential development projects, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing law, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), requires a lead agency, as defined, to prepare, or cause to be prepared, and certify the completion of an environmental impact report on a project that it proposes to carry out or approve that may have a significant effect on the environment or to adopt a negative declaration if it finds that the project will not have that effect.

The bill would deem a residential development project that incorporates the wildfire mitigation measures to result in a less than significant impact under CEQA with respect to specified impacts, including wildfire encroaching onto the residential development project and the residential development project causing new ignition sources or contributing to new wildfires in the surrounding area.

Existing law requires the Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, through a joint powers agreement pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act, to develop and administer a comprehensive wildfire mitigation program to, among other things, encourage cost-effective structure hardening and retrofitting to create fire-resistant homes, businesses, and public buildings. Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal, in consultation with specified state officials, to identify building retrofits and structure hardening measures that are eligible for financial assistance under the program. Existing law makes the operation of the program contingent upon an appropriation by the Legislature and repeals the program's provisions on July 1, 2025.

This bill, upon appropriation by Legislature and consistent with the above-described comprehensive wildfire mitigation program, would additionally require the State Fire Marshal, in consultation with specified state officials, to provide financial assistance to fire harden at least 300,000 existing vulnerable homes within the next 3 years in very high fire hazard severity zones and an additional 300,000 existing vulnerable homes every 3 years thereafter, as specified. The bill would require the State Fire Marshal to report back to the Legislature annually on the pace of fire hardening and what constraints impair the ability to realize the targets established by these provisions.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 66310) is added to Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code, to read:

CHAPTER 13. Housing in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

66310. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) As a decades-long housing crisis continues to grip California and disproportionately impact disadvantaged communities, wildfire risks have increased in recent years, threatening public safety, environmental quality, public health, and economic development.

(b) As recognized in the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 (Chapter 654 of the Statutes of 2019), California is experiencing an extreme supply shortage of housing, with housing demand far outstripping supply. It is estimated that California has a current shortfall of over 3,000,000 housing units. California ranked 49th out of the 50 states in housing units per capita. California needs an estimated 180,000 additional homes annually to keep up with population growth. California's most vulnerable are disproportionately harmed by the housing crisis because it exacerbates the need for more homes.

(c) Moreover, paragraph (7) of subdivision (a) of Section 2 of the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 highlights that wildfire risks are worsening the housing crisis. Wildfires temporarily and permanently displace residents that cannot find homes to buy or rent. New, replacement, and retrofit housing is hindered by lengthy permitting processes and approval times, fees, exactions and costs, and other requirements that further exacerbate availability and cost of residential construction.

(d) As recognized in Executive Order No. N-05-19, California experienced the most destructive wildfire season in state history in 2018, enduring over 7,600 wildfires that burned 1,846,445 acres in total. The 2018 Camp Fire was both the deadliest fire in California history, claiming the lives of 86 people, as well as the most destructive, destroying 8,804 structures. The Camp Fire was a tragedy that impacted communities will take years to recover. At that time, 6 of the top 10 most destructive fires in California history have occurred in just the past five years, including the Camp, Tubbs, Woolsey, Carr, Nuns, and Thomas fires. Since 2019, other megafires had continued to ravage the state, including the August Complex fire, the first California fire of record to impact over 1,000,000 acres, and the Dixie, Caldor, SCU Lighting Complex, Creek, LNU Lightning Complex, North, and other fires.

(e) Executive Order No. N-05-19 also recognized that California arrived at our present wildfire emergency condition through the combined factors of fire exclusion, forest management policies that created overgrown vegetation and forests crowded with smaller fire-prone trees, a rapidly changing climate, a historic drought, and a bark beetle epidemic that was fueled by these conditions and which exacerbated fuel loads by killing millions of

trees. Further, forest fuel reduction, which encompasses a range of forest management activities, including thinning, prescribed fire, and grazing, have not kept pace with the growing wildfire threats.

(f) Executive Order No. N-05-19 ordered the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL-FIRE), in coordination with other state agencies, to report on recommendations of the most impactful administrative, regulatory, and policy changes or waivers needed to prevent and mitigate wildfires.

(g) In response, the CAL-FIRE issued its report on February 22, 2019, identifying key steps needed to manage fuel reductions to protect communities. CAL-FIRE determined that California's current forest management is inadequate to improve the health of millions of acres of forests and wildlands to reduce wildfire risk. CAL-FIRE estimated that 15,000,000 acres of California forests need some form of thinning or management to help prevent wildfires.

(h) CAL-FIRE found that climate change is acting as a force-multiplier that will increasingly exacerbate wildland fire issues over the coming decades. The state can expect to experience longer fire seasons, increased frequency and severity of drought, greater acreage burned, and related impacts such as widespread tree mortality and bark beetle infestation. Decades of fire suppression have disrupted natural fire cycles and added to the problem.

(i) CAL-FIRE emphasized the need to expand programs to fire harden existing homes to current standards, building on previous legislation, Assembly Bill 2911 (Chapter 641 of the Statutes of 2018), which requires CAL-FIRE and the Director of Housing and Community Development to develop a list of low-cost retrofits to existing homes that enhance fire resistance to better protect structures and reduce ignitions.

(j) Assembly Bill 38 (Chapter 391 of the Statutes of 2019) also requires the Office of Emergency Services to enter into a joint powers agreement with CAL-FIRE to develop and administer a comprehensive wildfire mitigation program to provide financial assistance to fire harden existing homes and businesses, while also facilitating vegetation management. The joint powers authority must submit a report to the Legislature by July 1, 2024, regarding the implementation of these fire hardening and vegetation management programs.

(k) Under Assembly Bill 38 and as enumerated in subdivision (c) of Section 8654.2 of the Government Code, the Legislature found that "while California has stringent building standards for new construction and requirements for the maintenance of defensible space in wildfire hazard areas, California must develop statewide options to encourage cost-effective structure hardening to create fire resistant homes, businesses, and public buildings within wildfire hazard areas and with a focus on vulnerable communities."

(l) Further, as provided in subdivision (e) of Section 8654.2 of the Government Code Section, "it is further the intent of the Legislature to develop a comprehensive financial assistance program to help property owners, whole communities, and local governments retrofit existing housing, commercial, and public properties in wildfire hazard areas to a cost-effective standard that provides comprehensive risk reduction to protect structures from fires spreading from adjacent structures or vegetation, and to prevent vegetation from spreading fires to adjacent structures."

(m) New housing built within the wildland-Urban interface must comply with fire-resistant building standards and fuel modification requirements. The Wildfire Urban Interface building code standards are found in Chapter 7A of Part 2 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (Chapter 7A), and are updated every 18 months by the State Fire Marshal. Chapter 7A, among other standards, protects new homes by requiring measures, including, but not limited to:

(1) Fire-protective "Class A" roof coverings.

(2) One-hour fire resistance for exterior walls and doors.

(3) Multipaned windows with one pane being tempered glass.

(4) Vents designed to prevent ember intrusion.

(5) Decks include a minimum of a six-inch metal flashing installed at all deck-to-wall intersections.

(6) Eaves protected on the exposed side with ignition-resistant material.

(n) It is equally important that the state establish construction and operational standards for the development of new housing opportunities in very high fire hazard severity zones to continue to provide for development of critically needed housing for residents of California. New residential communities built to modern Chapter 7A standards and designed with communitywide wildfire mitigation strategies, including setbacks, fuel modification

zones, multiple access routes, adequate water supplies, greenbelts, undergrounding utilities, and other measures, have withstood severe wildfire events with limited or no structural loss, such as the master planned communities threatened by the Silverado Fire, Simi Fire, Freeway Complex Fire, and Witch Creek Fire.

(o) California residents are finding homeowners' insurance in very high risk fire areas to be more difficult and costly to obtain, even if coverage is available. The California Department of Insurance has determined that the majority of nonrenewals, refusals to insure, and increased premiums resulted from insurers' increased use of wildfire-risk models that do not account for wildfire risk-reduction mitigation completed by the homeowner or community.

(p) Given the compounding harms caused by the housing availability crisis and the wildfire crisis, it is imperative that California promote new residential development that is fire resistant and climate resilient. Such development reduces wildfire risks by establishing viable wildfire reduction requirements for new residential development and incentivizing cost-effective fire hardening retrofits to existing residences.

(q) Fire hardening of existing residential units within very high fire hazard severity zones is critical to addressing compounding harms caused by the dual housing and wildfire crises. Over 1,000,000 homes exist in high fire risk areas that were constructed before the adoption of current wildland-urban interface standards established in Chapter 49 of the California Fire Code. Research shows that homes that have not been fire hardened are far more likely to be lost in fires. This inventory of existing homes that have not been fire hardened presents substantial challenges to firefighters and California's ability to reduce home loss. Accordingly, existing efforts to analyze, develop, and expand fire hardening programs, including those created by Assembly Bill 38 (2019) and Assembly Bill 2911 (2017), need to be accelerated and strengthened.

(r) The fire hardening program established by this chapter is anticipated to require at least one billion dollars ($1,000,000,000) per year. This funding would not only protect lives, avoid displacement of residents, and protect homes, businesses, and the environment during wildfire events, but it would also proactively reduce the enormous costs associated with megawildfires, including the tens of billions of dollars in air pollution impacts that can result from a single megawildfire event. Therefore, the Legislature finds and declares that it is a high priority to allocate such funding in the upcoming fiscal budget.

(s) This chapter establishes standards and measures to ensure that a new residential development project in a very high risk fire area is planned, designed, constructed, and maintained in a manner that mitigates the risk of wildfire encroaching onto the residential development project and reduces the risk of the residential development project contributing to new wildfires in the surrounding area or impairing evacuation plans.

66311. For purposes of this chapter:

(a) (1) "Discretionary entitlement" means one or more of the following discretionary approvals for a new residential development project for which a new application or preliminary application is submitted after January 1, 2023, for any of the following:

(A) A general plan amendment.

(B) A zoning ordinance amendment.

(C) A development agreement.

(D) A subdivision tract or parcel map, other than a final map.

(E) A conditional use permit.

(2) "Discretionary entitlement" does not include any modification or amendment to any previously approved development agreement, subdivision tract map, parcel map or final map, conditional use permit, or other discretionary approval for a residential development project.

(b) "Local fire authority" means the organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the applicable requirements of this chapter, or for approving equipment, materials, installations, or procedures. "Local fire authority" includes the local government and local fire authority in their respective roles of development approval process and regulatory enforcement.

(c) "Residential development project" means a development project to construct new residential units, including student and faculty housing, or a mixed-use development project with over 75 percent new residential uses by square footage.

(d) "Very high fire hazard severity zone" means any lands located within a very high fire hazard severity zone, as indicated on maps adopted by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Section 4202 of the Public Resources Code or as designated by a local agency pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 51179 of this code.

(e) "Wildfire buffer areas" means setbacks or fuel modification zones that provide a buffer between a residential development and slopes or high-risk fuel sources. Wildfire buffer areas may be satisfied by, but are not limited to, natural or manmade setbacks, maintained fuel modification zones, roads, defensible space, natural or landscaped areas with fire-resistant vegetation, fuel breaks, or nonflammable natural or manmade amenities or features.

(f) "Wildfire risk reduction program" means a program designed by a professional with experience in firefighting and wildfire risk reduction strategies for the purpose of avoiding, reducing, or mitigating fire- and wildfire-related risks to a residential development project based on the criteria provided in paragraph (6) of subdivision (c) of Section 66313.

66312. Upon appropriation from the Legislature, and in accordance with Article 16.5 (commencing with Section 8654.2) of Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2, the State Fire Marshal, in consultation with the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection and the Director of Housing and Community Development, shall do all of the following:

(a) Provide financial assistance to fire harden at least 300,000 existing vulnerable homes within the next three years in very high fire hazard severity zones, with an emphasis on disadvantaged communities identified pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code, in the form of grants and low interest loans under the wildfire mitigation program.

(b) Continue to offer financial assistance to fire harden an additional 300,000 existing vulnerable homes in very high fire hazard severity zones every three years thereafter, with a target of hardening 1,000,000 existing vulnerable homes within the first 10 years.

(c) Report back to the Legislature annually, in accordance with Section 9795, on the pace of fire hardening and what constraints impair the ability to realize the targets established by this subdivision.

66313. The legislative body of a city or county shall not approve a discretionary entitlement that would result in a new residential development project located within a very high fire hazard severity zone, unless the city or county finds that the residential development project will meet all of the following standards to reduce wildfire risk, as applicable:

(a) For a residential development project of any size the following standards adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, the State Fire Marshal, and the California Building Standards Commission intended to address wildfire risks or the successor provisions, unless such standards provide exceptions or alternative means of compliance applicable to the residential development project:

(1) Chapter 7A of the California Building Code.

(2) Chapter 49 of the California Fire Code.

(3) Section R337 of the California Residential Code.

(4) Chapter 12-7A of the California Referenced Standards Code.

(5) Subchapter 2 (commencing with Section 1270) of Chapter 7 of Division 1.5 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

(6) Article 3 (commencing with Section 1299.01) of Subchapter 3 of Chapter 7 of Division 1.5 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

(b) For a residential development project of 10 or more residential dwelling units:

(1) All of the standards set forth in subdivision (a).

(2) A plan reviewed by the local fire authority that implements, at a minimum, the following wildfire risk reduction strategies:

(A) Fire hardening of onsite structures in accordance with the fire safety standards described in subdivision (a) and any site-specific measures needed to address unique fire risks as determined by the local fire authority.

(B) Access for fire safety personal and evacuation routes for residents as determined by the local fire authority.

(C) Wildfire buffer areas of at least 30 feet or to the property line from steep slopes and high-risk fuel sources, following completion of any development grading, as determined by the local fire authority.

(D) Long-term funding and maintenance of the wildfire buffer areas through a homeowners' association or other similar organization.

(c) For a residential development project of 100 units or more:

(1) All of the standards set forth in subdivisions (a) and (b).

(2) Undergrounding of new distribution electric power lines of 66 kilovolts or less within the boundaries of the residential development project.

(3) Adequate access for firefighting equipment, taking into consideration width, turning radius, and turnaround, that meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in the California Fire Code.

(4) A demonstrated water supply to support fire suppression that meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in the California Fire Code.

(5) An evacuation plan, approved by the local fire authority, that determines that the residential development project would not significantly impair evacuation times during a wildfire event, taking into account planned improvements or measures that are conditions of approval for the residential development. The evacuation plan shall identify adequate ingress and egress for the residential development during a wildfire emergency event, including primary and secondary access points, alternative emergency access lanes or areas that can be used by emergency personnel, and other ingress and egress options that allow safe evacuation and emergency personnel access during a wildfire event. The plan may incorporate, if approved by the local fire authority, a sheltering plan for extreme conditions where evacuation is not practical.

(6) A wildfire risk reduction program, approved by the local fire authority, setting forth site-specific safety measures to ensure that the residential development project, as a whole, is planned and constructed to resist the encroachment of wildfire and to mitigate wildfire risks to surrounding areas. This program shall be deemed to satisfy the requirement for a fire protection plan described in subdivision (b). A community-wide wildfire risk reduction program shall include at least all of the following:

(A) Fire hardening of onsite structures in accordance with the fire safety standards described in subdivision (a) and any site-specific standards needed to address unique fire risks as determined by the local fire authority.

(B) Wildfire buffer areas from the perimeter of the residential development project to slopes and potential fuel sources, as determined following completion of any development grading, of at least 100 feet or to the property line, or a greater distance if determined necessary by the local fire authority.

(C) Enhanced fire sprinklers pursuant to NFPA 13D, if determined necessary by the local fire authority.

(D) A development pattern and layout for the residential development project that is intended to reduce wildfire risk through measures that may include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

(i) Incorporating natural and manmade features on the perimeter of the property as wildfire buffer areas between higher risk fuel sources or steep slopes and residential structures within the property.

(ii) Encouraging the placement of residential structures on the inner side of perimeter roads or other perimeter wildfire buffer areas.

(iii) Discouraging the placement of residential structures on portions on the property that have disproportionately high risk to wildfires compared to other residential structures on the property.

(E) An ongoing education program by a homeowners' association or similar organization that includes, at a minimum, ongoing materials and activities to educate residents about wildfire risks, evacuation routes, landscaping restrictions, and other fire protection measures. This education program shall include periodic wildfire evacuation drills.

(F) An ongoing implementation and maintenance program to ensure that the wildfire buffer areas and other applicable measures in the community-wide wildfire risk reduction program are implemented and maintained over the life of the residential development. Consistent with the California Constitution, this program may be

funded through a fee, tax, assessment, homeowners' association assessment, or similar funding mechanism for the life of residential development. Compliance shall be documented by the homeowners association or similar organization and submitted to the local fire authority annually for the first three years and then at least every five years thereafter.

66314. (a) For the purpose of evaluating a residential development project's wildfire impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code), if a legislative body of a city or county finds that a residential development project complies with the standards described in subdivision (c) of Section 66313, the residential development project shall be deemed to result in a less than significant impact related to wildfire, including, without limitation, the impacts related to any of the following:

(1) Wildfire encroaching onto the residential development project.

(2) The residential development project causing new ignition sources or contributing to new wildfires in the surrounding area.

(3) The residential development project impairing evacuation plans during a wildfire.

(b) Nothing in this subdivision shall be interpreted to limit or prohibit the ability of a legislative body of a city or county to adopt more stringent standards than those described in subdivision (c) of Section 66313.

SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because this act provides for offsetting savings to local agencies or school districts that result in no net costs to the local agencies or school districts, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code.

15 Beth Hearing
2/23/22

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 3:03:12 PM

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 2:56 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

If you are having problems viewing this HTML email, click to view a Text version.

Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[X] City Council	[ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	02/23/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	3.	
Position	[Support V]	
Comment*	I greatly appreciate the City Council's opposition to the request from the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's that the Dove Canyon Plaza be added to the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Housing Element Site Inventory during the Public Hearing on February 9, 2022. This request made at this City Council Meeting was both unreasonable and was not in the best interest of the public. I concur with Josh Bastian, RSM Chamber of Commerce President in his public comment to the Council regarding his concerns with the Dove Canyon Owners' proposal. I also agree with Mr. Bastian when he voiced his concerns regarding the safety issues as well as the lack of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's efforts to retain the great businesses currently in the Plaza or promote more businesses to situate at this location. Furthermore, I agree with many of the Council Members who spoke on their concern regarding the inappropriate lateness of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owners' bid to have their property included in the RSM Housing Element Site Inventory and the disastrous impact that adding the Dove Canyon Plaza property to the Housing Element Site Inventory would have on the City's ability to comply with the HCD's deadline requirement. In addition, I also concur with the Council Members' concerns related to suitability of a residential development at this location given issues related to safety, traffic and adequate evacuation routes for residents living in this area of RSM. The State of California Department Housing and Community Development's (HCD) mandated requirements and deadlines inflicted on local communities are both excessive and dangerous to current and future residents. This is especially concerning given the dramatic changes that HCD has required the City of RSM make to the current RSM Master Plan which is a city that is already built out as well as located within an environmentally sensitive community. It is also concerning that these housing laws and regulations were changed by the legislature and HCD in the midst of the pandemic with unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when local governments are continuing to scramble to meet the needs of the communities during a national public health and safety crisis. I continue to urge the city to reach out to the Orange County Council of Governments, California State Association of Counties as well as the League of California Cities regarding the State's pursuit to circumvent local government's key	

	responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of the local population through the responsible zoning and rezoning of property within the city and county. It is imperative that local governments ban together to fight overreach by State entities with debilitating and destructive regulations as well as oversight which silences public input and eliminates governance by residents in their communities. Additionally, I also implore the City Council to support AB1154 The California Environmental Quality Act Exemption: Egress Fire Safety Route. This bill would better help protect residential communities located in fire prone areas with only one way in and out of their neighborhoods. Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated Beth Heard
Name	Beth Heard
Address	4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.
Email Address	bethannheard@cox.net
Phone Number	9496971251
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=3196

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 02/23/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 3.

Position: Support

Comment: I greatly appreciate the City Council's opposition to the request from the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's that the Dove Canyon Plaza be added to the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Housing Element Site Inventory during the Public Hearing on February 9, 2022. This request made at this City Council Meeting was both unreasonable and was not in the best interest of the public.

I concur with Josh Bastian, RSM Chamber of Commerce President in his public comment to the Council regarding his concerns with the Dove Canyon Owners' proposal. I also agree with Mr. Bastian when he voiced his concerns regarding the safety issues as well as the lack of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's efforts to retain the great businesses currently in the Plaza or promote more businesses to situate at this location.

Furthermore, I agree with many of the Council Members who spoke on their concern regarding the inappropriate lateness of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owners' bid to have their property included in the RSM Housing Element Site Inventory and the disastrous impact that adding the Dove Canyon Plaza property to the Housing Element Site Inventory would have on the City's ability to comply with the HCD's deadline requirement. In addition, I also concur with the Council Members' concerns related to suitability of a residential development at this

location given issues related to safety, traffic and adequate evacuation routes for residents living in this area of RSM.

The State of California Department Housing and Community Development's (HCD) mandated requirements and deadlines inflicted on local communities are both excessive and dangerous to current and future residents. This is especially concerning given the dramatic changes that HCD has required the City of RSM make to the current RSM Master Plan which is a city that is already built out as well as located within an environmentally sensitive community. It is also concerning that these housing laws and regulations were changed by the legislature and HCD in the midst of the pandemic with unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when local governments are continuing to scramble to meet the needs of the communities during a national public health and safety crisis.

I continue to urge the city to reach out to the Orange County Council of Governments, California State Association of Counties as well as the League of California Cities regarding the State's pursuit to circumvent local government's key responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of the local population through the
responsible zoning and rezoning of property within the city and county. It is imperative that local governments ban together to fight overreach by State entities with debilitating and destructive regulations as well as oversight which silences public input and eliminates governance by residents in their communities.

Additionally, I also implore the City Council to support AB1154 The California Environmental Quality Act Exemption: Egress Fire Safety Route. This bill would better help protect residential communities located in fire prone areas with only one way in and out of their neighborhoods.

Your consideration on this vital issue is appreciated
Beth Heard

Name: Beth Heard

Address: 4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.

Email Address: bethannheard@cox.net

Phone Number: 9496971251

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 2/23/2022 2:55:30 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.96.79.169
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

16. Rhonda Lundberg
2/23/23

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 5:29:27 PM

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 4:35 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

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Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting	[X] City Council	[ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	02/23/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	Dove Canyon	
Position	[Support V]	
Comment*	I want to Thank the Mayor and the Members of City Council that opposed the last minute request from the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's that the Dove Canyon Plaza be added to the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Housing Element Site Inventory during the Public Hearing on February 9th, 2022. This request made at the City Council Meeting was both unreasonable and not in the best interest of the public. I also support what Josh Bastin, RSM Chamber of Commerce President stated in his public comment to the Council regarding his concerns with the Dove Canyon Owner's proposal. I agree with Mr. Bastin, when he voiced his concerns regarding the safety issues as well as the lack of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's effort to retain the great businesses currently in the Plaza or promote more businesses to situate at this location. The Dove Canyon Dentist moved his business to his new location on Tomas, after not knowing for over a year if his lease would be renewed by the owner and for how long. The same also happened with the Dove Canyon Courtyard owner. He now moved all his business to his facilities in Coto de Caza and Dana Point. Furthermore, I agree with many of the Council Members who spoke on their concern regarding the inappropriate lateness of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owners' bid to have their property included in the RSM Housing Element Site Inventory and the disastrous impact that adding the Dove Canyon Plaza property to the Housing Element Site Inventory would have on the City's ability to comply with HCD's deadline requirement. In addition, I also concur with the Council Members' concerts related to suitability of a residential development at this location given issues related to safety, traffic and adequate evacuation routes for residents living in this area of RSM. I stated in my last E-Comment about how the State Legislature and HCD has used the Pandemic to change housing laws and regulations. They have used this health crisis to make unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when the local governments were scrambling and still are working to meet the needs of their communities. I asked the City Council and members of the public to support AB1154 The California Environmental Quality Act Exemption: Egress Fire Safety Route, this bill would better help protect residential communities located in fire prone areas with only one way in and out of their neighborhoods. Thank You, Rhonda Lundberg	

Name	Rhonda Lundberg
Address	18 Mountain Laurel
Email Address	lundbergfamily1@cox.net
Phone Number	9495101387
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=3198

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 02/23/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: Dove Canyon

Position: Support

Comment: I want to Thank the Mayor and the Members of City Council that opposed the last minute request from the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's that the Dove Canyon Plaza be added to the Rancho Santa Margarita (RSM) Housing Element Site Inventory during the Public Hearing on February 9th, 2022. This request made at the City Council Meeting was both unreasonable and not in the best interest of the public.

I also support what Josh Bastin, RSM Chamber of Commerce President stated in his public comment to the Council regarding his concerns with the Dove Canyon Owner's proposal. I agree with Mr. Bastin, when he voiced his concerns regarding the safety issues as well as the lack of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owner's effort to retain the great businesses currently in the Plaza or promote more businesses to situate at this location. The Dove Canyon Dentist moved his business to his new location on Tomas, after not knowing for over a year if his lease would be renewed by the owner and for how long. The same also happened with the Dove Canyon Courtyard owner. He now moved all his business to his facilities in Coto de Caza and Dana Point.

Furthermore, I agree with many of the Council Members who spoke on their concern regarding the inappropriate lateness of the Dove Canyon Plaza Owners' bid to have their property included in the RSM Housing Element Site Inventory and the disastrous impact that adding the Dove Canyon Plaza property to the Housing Element Site Inventory would have on the City's ability to comply with HCD's deadline requirement. In addition, I also concur with the Council Members' concerts related to suitability of a residential development at this location given issues related to safety, traffic and adequate evacuation routes for residents living in this area of RSM.

I stated in my last E-Comment about how the State Legislature and HCD has used the

Pandemic to change housing laws and regulations. They have used this health crisis to make unreasonable and rigid deadlines set to begin in January 2022, when the local governments were scrambling and still are working to meet the needs of their communities.

I asked the City Council and members of the public to support AB1154 The California Environmental Quality Act Exemption: Egress Fire Safety Route, this bill would better help protect residential communities located in fire prone areas with only one way in and out of their neighborhoods.

Thank You,
Rhonda Lundberg

Name: Rhonda Lundberg

Address: 18 Mountain Laurel

Email Address: lundbergfamily1@cox.net

Phone Number: 9495101387

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 2/23/2022 4:34:42 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.99.187.37
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

17. Cindy Gildersleeve
2/23/22

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 3:03:28 PM

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 2:59 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

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Select a Meeting	[X] City Council [ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	02/23/2022
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	3- Public Comments
Position	[Support V]
Comment*	I listened to the recording of the City Council meeting on February 9, 2022, and I was shocked to hear that the attorney for the owners of Dove Canyon Plaza made a last minute attempt to include that property into the RSM Housing Element Site Inventory, right before it was slated to be approved and submitted to the state. I truly appreciate that the City Council members rejected that request, and for all the reasons stated. As a homeowner in Dove Canyon, I am extremely concerned about the zoning of that parcel, as adding hundreds of housing units would infringe upon the ability of the residents of Dove Canyon to safely evacuate in an emergency. Just last week, I got a taste of what it would be like to evacuate Dove Canyon if an emergency would arise, when an accident blocked the intersection of the shopping center and Dove Canyon Drive. This caused gridlock to occur at the 3-way stop just before our gate, at a time in the morning when people were leaving for work and school. I could only shudder to imagine if it were all 1152 homes here trying to leave at once, along with any proposed residences for the plaza, in an attempt to reach Plano Trabuco Road and beyond to get out. I'm sure this will not be the end of it, as the owners of the Dove Canyon Plaza will certainly try to circumvent the City of RSM and campaign at the county and state levels for their proposed changes. I implore the City Council and Planning Commission to continue to fight for the plan they submitted, given the issues that Dove Canyon Plaza has relative to safety, traffic, and adequate evacuation. Thank you.
Name	Cindy Gildersleeve
Address	59 Bell Canyon Dr
Email Address	cindygildersleeve@gmail.com
Phone Number	9548174320
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=3197

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 02/23/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 3- Public Comments

Position: Support

Comment: I listened to the recording of the City Council meeting on February 9, 2022, and I was shocked to hear that the attorney for the owners of Dove Canyon Plaza made a last minute attempt to include that property into the RSM Housing Element Site Inventory, right before it was slated to be approved and submitted to the state.

I truly appreciate that the City Council members rejected that request, and for all the reasons stated. As a homeowner in Dove Canyon, I am extremely concerned about the zoning of that parcel, as adding hundreds of housing units would infringe upon the ability of the residents of Dove Canyon to safely evacuate in an emergency.

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I'm sure this will not be the end of it, as the owners of the Dove Canyon Plaza will certainly try to circumvent the City of RSM and campaign at the county and state levels for their proposed changes. I implore the City Council and Planning Commission to continue to fight for the plan they submitted, given the issues that Dove Canyon Plaza has relative to safety, traffic, and adequate evacuation.

Thank you.

Name: Cindy Gildersleeve

Address: 59 Bell Canyon Dr

Email Address: cindygildersleeve@gmail.com

Phone Number: 9548174320

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 2/23/2022 2:59:01 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 107.217.169.189
Referrer Page: No Referrer - Direct Link
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

18. Russ Khouri
2/23/22

From: Amy Diaz
To: Cheryl Kuta; Wendy Starks
Cc: Tony Belello
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 3:02:58 PM

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 1:22 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

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Select a Meeting	[X] City Council	[ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	02/09/2022	
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	Public Comment Session	
Position	[Support V]	
Comment*	I would just like to take a moment to say thank-you to the entire City Council and RSM Chamber of Commerce President Bastian for standing their ground with comments to the attorney for the owner's of the Dove Canyon Plaza. The audacity to show up at the eleventh hour stating it is "easy" to change the City's Housing element, to include the Plaza, is a testament as to what type of owner we are dealing with. One who is doing everything they can to have the center fail on purpose and wait for the state to pass SB6 or SB15 allowing them to build residential within a commercial zone. Please continue to preserve the integrity of our General Plan and the safety and well being for the residents of Dove Canyon, Rancho Cielo, Walden, and Robinson Ranch.	
Name	Russ Khouri	
Address	40 Wakonda	
Email Address	russk1@cox.net	
Phone Number	9492576506	
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)	

* indicates required fields.

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http://www.cityofrsm.org/Admin/FormHistory.aspx?SID=3195

The following form was submitted via your website: Submit an eComment

Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 02/09/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: Public Comment Session

Position: Support

Comment: I would just like to take a moment to say thank-you to the entire City Council and RSM Chamber of Commerce President Bastian for standing their ground with comments to the attorney for the owner's of the Dove Canyon Plaza. The audacity to show up at the eleventh hour stating it is "easy" to change the City's Housing element, to include the Plaza, is a testament as to what type of owner we are dealing with. One who is doing everything they can to have the center fail on purpose and wait for the state to pass SB6 or SB15 allowing them to build residential within a commercial zone. Please continue to preserve the integrity of our General Plan and the safety and well being for the residents of Dove Canyon, Rancho Cielo, Walden, and Robinson Ranch.

Name: Russ Khouri

Address: 40 Wakonda

Email Address: russk1@cox.net

Phone Number: 9492576506

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:
Form submitted on: 2/23/2022 1:21:32 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 12.247.87.18
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

19. Marian Russo
3/1/22

From: Wendy Starks
To: "Marian Russo"
Subject: RE: RSM Housing Element Updates
Date: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 12:51:38 PM

Hi Marian,

I have added you to the email interest list. The City has a dedicated webpage with all up-to-date information on the 6th Cycle Housing Element and the link is here:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

-----Original Message-----
From: Marian Russo <mjrrsm@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 12:41 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RSM Housing Element Updates

Please add my name/email address to the RSM Housing Element Updates list.

Thank you
Marian Russo
mjrrsm@hotmail.com

Sent from my iPhone

20. Rhonda Lundberg
3/7/22

From: Wendy Starks
To: "Rhonda Lundberg"
Subject: RE: Housing Element Update Final Redline
Date: Monday, March 7, 2022 4:00:22 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Hi Rhonda,

We resubmitted to HCD on February 10th, 2022 (the day after City Council adopted it on February 9th, 2022) and HCD has 60-days to respond to our resubmittal. I expect to hear back from them by April 10, 2022. They will either certify it or they will provide a review letter requesting additional revisions.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688



From: Rhonda Lundberg <lundbergfamily1@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 3:55 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Housing Element Update Final Redline

Good Afternoon Wendy,

I was wondering if the State has approved The City of Rancho Santa Margarita Housing Element Plan? If not do have a estimate on when the City of RSM will know?

Thank You,

Rhonda Lundberg

On Jan 27, 2022, at 4:06 PM, Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

You are receiving this email because you are on the City of Rancho Santa Margarita's

Housing Element Update list.

The Final Draft of the Rancho Santa Margarita 2021-2029 Housing Element is available on the website at the link below. This document incorporates and responds to all of the requests for revisions/additional information contained in the December 21, 2021 California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) letter that is also available at the link below, as well as comments received from the public. The document has been prepared in redline format to facilitate review by the City Council, the public, and HCD.

http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

The City Council will hold a public hearing for adoption of the Housing Element and Safety Element on February 9, 2022. Agenda materials will be available at this link on February 4, 2022.

https://www.cityofrsm.org/129/Agendas-Minutes

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

21. Dennis Shoji
3/22/22

Wendy Starks

From: Cheryl Kuta
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 9:49 AM
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: FW: I am sharing 'RHNA' with you
Attachments: RHNA.pdf

From: Dennis Shoji <dennisshoji@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 9:27 AM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: I am sharing 'RHNA' with you

Info.

Dennis Shoji

Regional Housing Needs Assessments
The Department of Housing and Community Development Must Improve Its Processes to Ensure That Communities Can Adequately Plan for Housing

March 17, 2022
2021-125

The Governor of California
President pro Tempore of the Senate
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor and Legislative Leaders:

As directed by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, my office evaluated the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (needs assessment) process that the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) uses to provide key housing guidance for the State's local governments. The availability of sufficient housing is of vital statewide importance, and HCD's needs assessments are what allow jurisdictions to plan for the development of that housing. Overall, our audit determined that HCD does not ensure that its needs assessments are accurate and adequately supported.

In reviewing the needs assessments for three regions, we identified multiple areas in which HCD must improve its process. For example, HCD does not satisfactorily review its needs assessments to ensure that staff accurately enter data when they calculate how much housing local governments must plan to build. As a result, HCD made errors that reduced its projected need for housing in two of the regions we reviewed. We also found that HCD could not demonstrate that it adequately considered all of the factors that state law requires, and it could not support its use of healthy housing vacancy rates. This insufficient oversight and lack of support for its considerations risks eroding public confidence that HCD is informing local governments of the appropriate amount of housing they will need.

HCD's needs assessments also rely on some projections that the Department of Finance (Finance) provides. While we found that most of Finance's projections were reasonably accurate, it has not adequately supported the rates its uses to project the number of future households that will require housing units in the State. Although these household projections are a key component in HCD's needs assessments, Finance has not conducted a proper study or obtained formal recommendations from experts it consulted to support its assumptions in this area. Finance intends to reevaluate its assumptions related to household growth as more detailed 2020 Census data becomes available later in the year, but without such efforts, Finance cannot ensure that it is providing the most appropriate information to HCD.

Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL S. TILDEN, CPA
Acting California State Auditor

SUMMARY

The Legislature recognizes that the availability of housing is of vital statewide importance and that the State and local governments have a responsibility to facilitate the development of adequate housing. State law requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to conduct assessments to determine the housing needs (needs assessments) throughout regions in the State. The needs assessments rely on projections of future population and households developed by the Department of Finance (Finance). HCD is required to consider certain factors identified in state law and then can adjust the needs assessments for any of the factors. For example, it makes an adjustment to achieve a healthy vacancy rate in the housing market and an adjustment to reduce the number of overcrowded households. Regions use the needs assessments to plan for additional housing to accommodate population growth and address future housing needs.

HCD's Housing Needs Assessment Process Lacks Sufficient Reviews and Support

HCD does not have a formal review process for the data it uses to determine its needs assessments. As a result, the needs assessments for two of three regions we reviewed included errors. One data error reduced a region's needs assessment by nearly 2,500 housing units. HCD also did not demonstrate that it adequately considered certain factors when creating the needs assessments of the three regions we reviewed. For one of those factors, the healthy vacancy rate, HCD did not perform a formal analysis to adequately support its assumptions. HCD's insufficient oversight of its process and the lack of adequate documentation supporting the healthy vacancy rate risks eroding public confidence in HCD's ability to address the State's housing needs.

Finance Provides Reasonable Population Projections, but It Has Not Provided Sufficient Support for Its Household Formation Projections

Finance's projections of the statewide future population are reasonably accurate, but it did not sufficiently support its projections of the number of future households. To calculate the household projections, Finance identifies rates at which it expects individuals in different age groups to form new households and applies those rates to its population projections. Although Finance worked with HCD to solicit some advice from experts when it established these rates, it did not conduct a formal study or receive clear recommendations to support them. As a result, Finance cannot ensure that it is providing the most appropriate information for HCD to include in its needs assessment process. Finance stated that it intends to reevaluate its assumptions related to household growth after it reviews 2020 Census data when those data become available later this year.

Summary of Recommendations

Legislature

To provide HCD additional clarity and guidance in conducting its vacancy rate adjustments, the Legislature should amend state law to clarify whether HCD should continue to use a healthy vacancy rate that includes both rental and owned housing or whether it should determine and use separate healthy vacancy rates for owned housing and rental housing.

HCD

To ensure that its needs assessments are accurate and do not contain unnecessary errors, by June 2022 HCD should institute a process to ensure that its staff performs multiple reviews of data in its assessments.

To demonstrate that its needs assessments are complete and address all relevant factors, by September 2022 HCD should establish a formal process to document its consideration of all factors required by state law in its needs assessments.

To ensure that it adequately supports the vacancy rate adjustments it makes to needs assessments, by February 2023 HCD should perform a formal analysis of healthy vacancy rates and historical trends to inform those adjustments.

Finance

To ensure that the household formation rates that it provides HCD are appropriate, Finance should, by February 2023, conduct a comprehensive review of its assumptions about the household formation rates it uses in projections, and it should document that review.

Agency Comments

HCD and Finance agreed with our recommendations and plan to implement them over the next year.

22. Rhonda Lundberg
3/24/22

From: Rhonda Lundberg
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: Report 2021-125
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2022 9:00:04 AM
Attachments: image001.png

Wendy, Thank you for the clarification.

Rhonda Lundberg

On Mar 24, 2022, at 8:21 AM, Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

Good morning Rhonda,

The report is an analysis of the process that was applied during the last RHNA allocation and is unlikely to impact the 6th Cycle Housing Element. We shall see if any of the recommendations will be considered and implemented for the next housing element cycle.

Thank you for your continued engagement.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Rhonda Lundberg <lundbergfamily1@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 6:36 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Fwd: Report 2021-125

Wendy,

Do you think this will impact the implementation of the RSM Housing Element or the approval of the RSM Housing Element? Do you think the recommendations of the State Auditor will affect the current RSM Housing Element that is being currently review by HCD?

Thank You,
Rhonda Lundberg

Subject: Report 2021-125

https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2021-125/index.html

Rhonda Lundberg

23. Beth Heard
4/14/22

From: Beth Heard
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: Re: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment
Date: Thursday, April 14, 2022 4:45:47 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Hi Wendy

Sorry I missed your call. Thank you for the information noted below.

Hope you have a great Weekend
Beth Heard

On April 13, 2022 at 12:40 PM Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

Good afternoon Beth,

1) The City received a letter from HCD on April 11th requesting more information before HCD will certify the City's 6th Cycle Housing Element. Staff and the consultant will be meeting later today to discuss the City's response to their letter.

2) The State Auditor's report is an analysis of the process that was applied during the last RHNA allocation and is unlikely to impact the 6th Cycle Housing Element. We shall see if any of the recommendations will be considered and implemented for the next housing element cycle.

3) Staff is tracking AB1154. It has been referred to the committee and no hearings have been scheduled yet and staff will continue to monitor it.

I tried to call you to discuss your comments. If you have questions or would like further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>

Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2022 10:30 AM
To: Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>; Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>; Tony Belello <TBelello@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: FW: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 6:31 PM
To: Amy Diaz <adiaz@cityofrsm.org>; Madeline Balsz <mbalsz@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Submit an eComment

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Select a Meeting	[X] City Council [ ] Planning Commission
Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy)*	04/13/2022
Agenda Item No. or Subject*	3
Position	[Support V]
Comment*	There are three items I am discussing in this e-comment: First, Question: Has the City received correspondence from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) regarding the status of the RSM Housing Element submitted to HCD around February 10, 2022? Second, I noticed on the California State Auditor's website that the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) was evaluated for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process. There appear to be extremely important findings in the State's Auditors Report Recommendations regarding "The Department of Housing and Community Development Must Improve Its Processes to Ensure That Communities Can Adequately Plan for Housing." There were several key findings and recommendations and in particular these recommendations noted in the California State Auditor Report list deadlines which must occur prior to October 2022. Those deadlines include: - "To ensure that its needs assessments are accurate and do not contain unnecessary errors, by June 2022 HCD should institute a process to ensure that its staff performs multiple reviews of data in its assessments, including data that staff members input and councils of governments submit." -" To demonstrate that its needs assessments are complete and address all relevant factors, by September 2022 HCD should establish a formal process to document its consideration of all factors required by state law in its needs assessments." -"To ensure that it does not reduce its needs assessments based on inappropriate information provided by councils of governments, by June 2022 HCD should develop a formal process to review the appropriateness of councils of governments' proposed comparable regions, including identifying the criteria it will consider when reviewing councils of governments proposals. HCD should use this formal process and criteria to consistently evaluate the appropriateness of the proposals

	to ensure that they identify regions with healthy housing markets." • Question: Could the Council talk about what possible impact the information in the State Auditor's Report could have on the RSM's Regional Housing Allocation (RHNA) numbers? • Question: Could the following State Auditor's recommendations with a deadline of February 2023 also impact the way in which the City develops and implements the RSM RHNA Housing Element? These recommendations are as follows: -"To ensure that the population projections it provides to inform HCD's needs assessments are as accurate as possible, by February 2023 Finance should review its projections for the counties with the most significant projection inaccuracies and adjust its methodology as necessary based on 2020 Census data and other information." -"To ensure that the household formation rates that it provides HCD are appropriate, Finance should, by February 2023, conduct a comprehensive review of its assumptions about the household formation rates it uses in projections, and it should document that review." -"To ensure that it adequately supports the vacancy rate adjustments it makes to needs assessments, by February 2023 HCD should perform a formal analysis of healthy vacancy rates and historical trends to inform those adjustments." • Question: Could the information in the Auditor's Report effect the approval of the Housing Elements proposed by RSM ? Third, I continue to urge the city to reach out to the Orange County Council of Governments, California State Association of Counties as well as the League of California Cities regarding the State's pursuit to circumvent local government's key responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of the local population through the responsible zoning and rezoning of property within the city and county. It is imperative that local governments ban together to fight overreach by State entities with debilitating and destructive regulations as well as oversight which silences public input and eliminates governance by residents in their communities. Additionally, I also implore the City Council to support AB1154 The California Environmental Quality Act Exemption: Egress Fire Safety Route. This bill would better help protect residential communities located in fire prone areas with only one way in and out of their neighborhoods. Your consideration on these subjects is appreciated Beth Heard
Name	Beth Heard
Address	4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.
Email Address	bethannheard@cox.net
Phone Number	9496971251
Attachment	[ ] Convert to PDF?[ ] (DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, TXT)

* indicates required fields.

View any uploaded files by signing in and then proceeding to the link below:
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Select a Meeting: City Council

Meeting Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 04/13/2022

Agenda Item No. or Subject: 3

Position: Support

Comment: There are three items I am discussing in this e-comment:

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Additionally, I also implore the City Council to support AB1154 The California Environmental Quality Act Exemption: Egress Fire Safety Route. This bill would better help protect residential communities located in fire prone areas with only one way in and out of their neighborhoods.

Your consideration on these subjects is appreciated
Beth Heard

Name: Beth Heard

Address: 4 Foxtail Lane, Dove Canyon, CA.

Email Address: bethannheard@cox.net

Phone Number: 9496971251

Attachment: No file was uploaded

Additional Information:

Form submitted on: 4/12/2022 6:31:06 PM
Submitted from IP Address: 68.5.48.220
Referrer Page: https://cityofrsm.granicus.com/
Form Address: http://www.cityofrsm.org/Forms.aspx?FID=102

24. Rhonda Lundberg
4/18/23

From: Wendy Starks
To: "Rhonda Lundberg"
Cc: Cheryl Kuta
Subject: RE: Report 2021-125
Date: Monday, April 18, 2022 7:58:10 AM
Attachments: image001.png

Good morning Rhonda,

The April 11, 2022 letter from HCD is posted on the website here:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Staff is working with the consultant on the response to HCD's comments.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Rhonda Lundberg <lundbergfamily1@cox.net>
Sent: Saturday, April 16, 2022 4:01 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Re: Report 2021-125

Hi Wendy,

In the City Council Meeting on April 13th, they mentioned during the comment section that RSM housing element was not approved. When will the City be posting the April 11th letter from HCD. Is it possible that you could email me a copy .

Thank You

Rhonda Lundberg

On Mar 24, 2022, at 8:59 AM, Rhonda Lundberg <Lundbergfamily1@cox.net> wrote:

Wendy, Thank you for the clarification.

Rhonda Lundberg

On Mar 24, 2022, at 8:21 AM, Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org> wrote:

Good morning Rhonda,

The report is an analysis of the process that was applied during the last RHNA allocation and is unlikely to impact the 6th Cycle Housing Element. We shall see if any of the recommendations will be considered and implemented for the next housing element cycle.

Thank you for your continued engagement.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

From: Rhonda Lundberg <lundbergfamily1@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 6:36 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>; Cheryl Kuta <ckuta@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: Fwd: Report 2021-125

Wendy,

Do you think this will impact the implementation of the RSM Housing Element or the approval of the RSM Housing Element? Do you think the recommendations of the State Auditor will affect the current RSM Housing Element that is being currently review by HCD?

Thank You,
Rhonda Lundberg

Subject: Report 2021-125

https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2021-125/index.html

Rhonda Lundberg

25. Rhonda Lundberg
4/21/22

From: Wendy Starks
To: "Rhonda Lundberg"
Subject: FW: RSM Housing Element Update
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2022 10:02:14 AM

Good morning Rhonda,

The City does not plan on amending the Sites Inventory in our response to HCD and is proceeding with the 15 sites that are included in Appendix A.

Staff and the consultant are working on a response to HCD's April 11, 2022. There is no set time or date the City is required to respond by.

I am happy to discuss further. Please give me a call at 949-635-1807 at your convenience.

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

-----Original Message-----
From: Rhonda Lundberg <lundbergfamily1@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2022 9:53 AM
To: Jennifer Cervantez <JCervantez@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RSM Housing Element Update

Good Morning Jennifer,

After reviewing the April 11th letter from HCD to the City of RSM, it looks like they want the City of RSM to add more sites to the site inventory list. Is Dove Canyon Plaza a property that will be added to the Site Inventory List? In addition, when does the City of RSM need to have their response back to HCD?

Thank You

Rhonda Lundberg
Lundbergfamily1@cox.net

26. Judy Olmayan
5/18/22

Wendy Starks

From: Judy <pifa@att.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2022 3:10 PM
To: Wendy Starks
Subject: QUESTION

Now that nonprofit First Street Foundation deemed the entire city a fire zone is it possible to tell the powers that be to go pound sand on building apartments here. Trust me extra bodies of the amount they expect us to house is going to trap some here and or kill them. It will be much harder to escape.

https://patch.com/california/ranchosantamargarita/100-properties-risk-wildfire-damage-rancho-santa-margarita?utm_term=article-slot-1&utm_source=newsletter-daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter

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100% Properties At Risk For Wildfire Damage In Rancho Santa Margarita

Another destructive wildfire season fueled by extreme drought looms in California. Here's what it means for your area.



Miranda Ceja, Patch Staff

Posted Tue, May 17, 2022 at 9:05 am PT

Reply

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Orange County residents had their fire season start particularly early after the Coastal Fire chewed through roughly 200 acres of land and destroyed at least 20 homes. (Paula Chance Photography)

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CA — Last year, 8,835 wildfires in the Golden State leveled 3,629 structures. As California anticipated a dry summer, authorities geared up to defend houses and businesses around the state from potential fires.

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Some 80 million properties in the U.S. are at risk of exposure to wildfire, according to a new model and report from the nonprofit First Street Foundation. About 16 percent of the nation's population lives in areas prone to wildfire damage, according to The Washington Post's analysis of the group's data.

California was identified as one of the states with the highest wildfire risk.

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In Rancho Santa Margarita, 10,763 properties were at risk for wildfire damage over the next 30 years, representing 100 percent of all properties in Rancho Santa Margarita.

Overall, Rancho Santa Margarita has a major risk of wildfire over the next few decades, according to First Street's Risk Factor website.

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This comes as no surprise to Orange County residents, who had their fire season start particularly early after the Coastal Fire chewed through roughly 200 acres of land and destroyed at least 20 homes in May.

The fire erupted in Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park on May 11, prompting emergency officials to issue wide-scale mandatory and voluntary evacuations in Laguna Niguel and Laguna Beach.

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Hot conditions and windy weather moved the fire up the steep canyon, fueled by dense shrubs ravaged by years of drought.

Extreme drought conditions and rising temperatures contribute to longer and more destructive wildfire seasons in the Golden State. This year, 1,734 wildfires have already scorched 7,464 acres, according to Cal Fire.

January's extended dry spell was expected to continue into the spring with little precipitation, leaving most of the state in moderate to extreme drought conditions before summer. Dry conditions with above-normal temperatures through spring will leave fuel moisture levels lower than normal, increasing the potential for wildland fires, according to CalFire.

The 2022 fire season officially kicked into high gear when a wildfire in Orange

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experts said that fire season is more likely a year-round event nowadays.

"Summer in California no longer means the beginning of fire season. Rather, it means we are about to enter the roughest six or so months of a fire season that never ends," said Bill Deverell, director of the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West and head of The West on Fire research project, according to USC News.

"Drought and the increasing effects of climate change come together in creating the likelihood — even the certainty — of bigger, hotter and more catastrophic fires year to year," he said.

A significant lack of rain in recent months will likely set the stage for a dangerous fire season, meteorologists at AccuWeather predicted earlier this month.

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"Unfortunately, in a nutshell, it looks like it's going to be another busy season," he said. "We're seeing a lot of drought. Almost half of the country is experiencing drought and the bulk of that is to the west," AccuWeather Senior Meteorologist Dave Samuhel said, adding that AccuWeather forecasters "are expecting an above-average fire season."

Samuhel said he expects the 2022 season to burn 9.5 million acres of land across the western U.S. — 130 percent of the five-year average and 140 percent of the 10-year average.

♡ Thank Reply Share

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27. Joan Jones.
6/6/22

From: Wendy Starks
To: "Joan Jones"
Subject: RE: RSM Housing Element plan
Date: Monday, June 6, 2022 7:28:28 AM

Good morning Joan -

I have added you to the email interest list for updates.

The City has a dedicated webpage of all of the City's efforts to-date. Here is the link:

http://www.cityofrsm.org/622/Housing-Element-Update-2021

Wendy Starks, AICP
Principal Planner
949-635-1807
City of Rancho Santa Margarita
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

-----Original Message-----
From: Joan Jones <thejones5@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, June 1, 2022 7:53 PM
To: Wendy Starks <wstarks@cityofrsm.org>
Subject: RSM Housing Element plan

Please add me to the list for regular updates?

Sent from my iPad