



Linda Budge
Mayor

Dan Skoglund
Vice Mayor

Ken Cooley
Councilmember

Robert McGarvey
Councilmember

David Sander
Councilmember

November 17, 2008

Greg Chew, Senior Planner
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Regional Housing Needs Assessment for Rancho Cordova SOI

Dear Mr. Chew:

The City of Rancho Cordova is providing the following comments in response to your letter dated November 13, 2008. Specifically, you have requested the City provide any additional evidence, maps or documentation relevant to SACOG's determination of a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) transfer share for the City's sphere of influence (SOI). The City has no such additional information beyond our previous response dated October 10, 2008. Additionally you requested responses on two specific issues discussed below.

RELEVANT INFORMATION WITHIN THE CITY'S DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

Given that the City's SOI is not within the incorporated limits of the City, our Housing Element does not provide information specifically relevant to SACOG's determination. However, the process of preparing the Element and our interaction with staff of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has revealed a high standard of review by HCD for potential available housing sites. While Draft Housing Elements could provide valuable information, proposals for a RHNA transfer share based on uncertified Draft Housing Elements should be carefully reviewed for consistency with the standard of review HCD has demonstrated in the current round of housing element reviews.

Additionally, the City urges careful consideration before determining a RHNA transfer share based upon proposed development applications or proposed specific plans that have not been adopted and for which CEQA review has not been completed. Such projects appear speculative and may not be supported by HCD in its evaluation of available housing sites.

Effect of Assembly Bill 242

Assembly Bill 242 will not take effect until January 2009 and SACOG has scheduled its determination on the RHNA division for December 18, 2008. Therefore, the provisions of this new law do not appear to be directly relevant to SACOG's determination.

While not currently in effect, Assembly Bill 242 does clarify important standards of review for COG's that are requested to determine RHNA transfer shares between a city and a county. Specifically, this new law establishes the following procedures:

Section 65584.07(a)(3)

The county's share of low-income and very low income housing shall be reduced in proportion to the amount by which the county's share of moderate- and above moderate-income housing is reduced.

This provision is consistent with the City's position noted in our letter of October 10, 2008.

Section 65584.07(d)(2)(a)

... If the council of governments allocated the county share, the transfer share shall be based on the methodology adopted pursuant to Section 65584.04 or 65584.08.

The relevant section is 65584.04 (65584.08 addresses the Southern California Council of Governments). Section 65584.04 describes the process that SACOG undertook in developing its original RHNA methodology. While the City recognizes that SACOG may consider additional information and could choose to apply a substantially different methodology in determining the RHNA transfer share, any such alternate methodology should consider carefully the original RHNA methodology. Further, if a substantially different methodology is applied to the RHNA transfer share, then the City would very much like to understand the technical basis for such an alternate strategy.

Within our letter of October 10, 2008, the City proposed seven specific criteria that appear appropriate should SACOG undertake substantial new analysis of the RHNA transfer share. We again request consideration of the evaluation criteria previously provided.

SUMMARY

It appears that the original SACOG RHNA methodology was a technically valid approach. Therefore, the City believes the original methodology would be the most appropriate and defensible course of action for SACOG at this time. At issue is not whether the SOI will ever accommodate residential development, but rather the ability of the County or the City to meet its 2006-2013 RHNA obligations within the SOI. Given current conditions and HCD review practices, the City believes the 2006-2013 RHNA capacity within the SOI is quite limited.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the City's comments.

Sincerely,

City of Rancho Cordova



Paul Junker
Planning Director

C: Ted Gaebler, City of Rancho Cordova
Joe Chinn, City of Rancho Cordova
Reed Flory, City of Rancho Cordova