HOUSING BLUEPRINT

August 2024

HOUSING BLUEPRINT
AUGUST 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The San Diego region is confronting a severe housing crisis. In response, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a Draft Housing Blueprint in 2022, anchored in the "5 Ps" Solutions Framework, outlined below, to steer the County's efforts in tackling this pressing issue. In this Final Housing Blueprint, the County has expanded upon this framework through research and deep community engagement to articulate a vision and plan for achieving equitable housing for all, establishing the 5 Ps as goals of the Housing Blueprint. The 5 Ps Solutions Framework envisions a housing system that addresses the region's housing crisis at its root: solving for decades of underproduction as well as practices of inequitable access, challenges of housing stability for various vulnerable populations, and more.

The 5 Ps are summarized below:

Promote
equity, inclusion, and sustainability

Produce
housing for all

Preserve
vulnerable housing

Protect
tenants

Prevent
displacement

1. Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability

Implement housing solutions that address the historic patterns of exclusionary housing practices, segregation, and other inequities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities are available to everyone. Housing solutions should promote climate-resilient communities, the preservation of open space, and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

2. Produce Housing for All

Support and implement policies to increase housing production of all kinds of housing. Housing development should be located in urbanized areas with access to transit, jobs, and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents.

3. Preserve Vulnerable Housing

Support proactive strategies to preserve restricted and unrestricted naturally occurring affordable housing by tracking expiration dates of affordable housing deed restrictions, keeping tenants informed of their rights, and investing in rehabilitation of housing to preserve affordability.

4. Protect Tenants

Support renters by providing information on tenant rights and creating protections to minimize economic eviction or unsustainable rent increases.

5. Prevent Displacement

Implement policies that prevent vulnerable communities and residents from the harmful outcomes of displacement resulting from neighborhood revitalization or gentrification pressures. Strategies include studying existing and potential displacement pressures and monitoring the effectiveness of housing retention strategies in relation to planned infrastructure investments.

By nature, each of the 5 Ps supports and relates to other Ps and thus no single goal is prioritized ahead of another. The recommended Strategies, summarized below and described in further detail in this Housing Blueprint, each support multiple Ps, and in some cases spanning all 5 Ps.

Through stakeholder engagement and research of best practices, several common themes emerged to form guiding principles for the County's Blueprint priorities:

Regional role – While the County has responsibility for the unincorporated areas of San Diego County, it also manages federal funding for several smaller cities, oversees a Housing Authority that has wider geographic responsibilities, and provides housing services and support to residents outside of the unincorporated area. Additionally, the County provides loans to facilitate housing developments throughout the region. As the San Diego region shares the same geographic boundary as its county government, the County can be a champion in leading regional solutions while working towards its own housing goals in the unincorporated area. When implementing the Blueprint, the County should determine where its role is most appropriately limited to the unincorporated areas of the County and when it should engage more regionally.

VALLEY SENIOR VILLAGE

Expansion and responsible investment of resources – As detailed above, the County should take steps to expand resources to successfully achieve the housing goals and actions included in the Blueprint. Additionally, the County should secure long-term affordability commitments in exchange for any investment of County resources (i.e., land, tax exemption, or direct funding).

Innovation and staying nimble – The County should remain aware and adaptable as the housing landscape evolves and pursue innovation responsibly to further the Blueprint goals.

Equitable prioritization of highest need – The County's funding should be prioritized towards populations and housing solutions where it is needed most: extremely low-income and very low-income housing production, including Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). The County has made significant progress in addressing its RHNA goals for households with low-, moderate- and above moderate-incomes. Additional actions, from policy and programmatic support to targeted funding, must be implemented in order to achieve the RHNA goals for Very Low Income (VLI) (<50% of Area Median Income) and Extremely Low Income (ELI) (<30% of Area Median Income). Additionally, focusing resources on the development of more ELI and PSH units will address the needs outlined in the County's Framework for Ending Homelessness.

LEVANT SENIOR COTTAGES

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR THE HOUSING BLUEPRINT

The Housing Blueprint identifies eight Strategies as priority areas of focus over the next five years. The Strategies are organized in two categories: Systems Change and Programmatic/Policy Changes. Systems Change Strategies cut across the 5 Ps and are essential to the initial and ongoing implementation of all aspects of the Blueprint, while the Programmatic/Policy Change Strategies are more policy-specific and find greater success within the context of the Systems Change actions.

The Blueprint's eight Strategies are intended to form a set of policy priorities for the County of San Diego. Each Strategy is composed of numerous Actions that could implemented in the immediate term and medium term, as well as other potential steps that could be considered with further study, beyond the scope of the Blueprint. The Blueprint's Actions are ambitious and scalable; while existing resources are not available to implement each component of this plan in the short term, the Actions can be scaled to available resources.

A significant finding of the Blueprint's program and policy assessment and community engagement is the need for substantial, sustained financial resources. As with most jurisdictions, additional funding is central to meeting the County's affordable housing production needs, its efforts to address the lack of permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness, and the numerous aims of the 5 Ps. To this end, Strategy 2: Create New Sources of Funding for Housing, is essential to creating ongoing financial resources for affordable housing production and programs. Securing additional resources will require the County to invest in its own leadership through Strategy 1: Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing, starting with the creation of a Housing Strategy Office. This new role can spearhead and align the County's efforts across the enterprise and region, implement the Blueprint, and track its progress.

AMANECER

Specifically for the County's goal to Produce Housing for All (one of the 5Ps), the Blueprint identifies a 5-year affordable housing unit production target based on the County's RHNA goals for homes affordable to lower-income households, the County's current practice of funding affordable housing development regionally, and the County's vision of providing more permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness. The Blueprint's affordable housing production target is to support and fund the production of approximately 4,100 new affordable homes over the next five years, which would require an investment of $383 million over five years. The Blueprint's Strategies and Actions, summarized below, outline how the County can achieve this scale of housing production as well as meet the other Ps of Promote, Preserve, Protect, and Prevent.

RENDERING VALLEY SENIOR VILLAGE

SYSTEMS CHANGE

STRATEGY	SUMMARY	PROMOTE	PRODUCE	PRESERVE	PROTECT	PREVENT
1. Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing	As a regional entity, the County has a unique role in supporting housing needs across localities by collaborating with other agencies. In addition, the County can more strongly align its efforts internally across the enterprise to address the housing crisis.	●	●	●	●	●
2. Create New Funding Sources for Housing	The County can work with regional partners to create permanent revenue sources to help build new affordable housing, provide rental assistance, and help maintain existing affordable homes.	●	●	●	●	●
3. Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access	As the County works to address the housing crisis, the County can engage with the general public on housing planning and policy, track Blueprint progress, and help improve public access to existing data and resources.	●	●	●	●	●

PROGRAMMATIC/POLICY ACTIONS

STRATEGY	SUMMARY	PROMOTE	PRODUCE	PRESERVE	PROTECT	PREVENT
4. Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact	As the County accesses new affordable housing funding sources, it will have a unique opportunity to mobilize a substantial increase in subsidy to help meet the region's housing needs. These funds can be prioritized for new supportive housing and homes affordable to extremely low-income households, and the County can leverage other new and existing resources to expand the number of homes available to the region's most vulnerable households.	●	●	●	●	●
5. Unlock Land for Sustainable and Resilient Development Opportunities	To support sustainable and resilient development strategies, the County can pursue actions concerning how land is used to support housing affordability. This includes strategies to create more homes in areas near transit, jobs, parks and other resources. This also includes providing resources for affordable housing development on land owned by the County and other public and private entities helping to solve the housing crisis.	●	●	●		
6. Provide Solutions for Missing Middle-Income Housing Production and Programs	The Blueprint will help middle-income households have more opportunities to access affordable housing, including through increasing the availability of rental housing for middle-income households and helping more households to become first-time homebuyers.	●	●			●
7. Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies	The County can increase its role in helping prevent the region's limited stock of both restricted and unrestricted affordable housing from diminishing, by closely tracking loss of affordability this trend and providing resources where most productive.	●		●		
8. Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts	By protecting renter households and providing additional financial, legal and other resources, the County can prevent households from falling into homelessness and stabilize neighborhoods experiencing displacement pressures. This includes actions to build on recent State expansions of tenant's rights.	●			●	●

The Blueprint is a policy document that can guide the County's efforts to address the region's housing crisis. The Blueprint's targets are bold, and its steps are ambitious. The reality is that the County may not currently have the needed resources to achieve all of these aims in the short term. Therefore, this plan's Actions can be scaled to available funding, staffing, and other resources while the County works to bring on the needed resources. The Blueprint provides some additional considerations to prioritize its Actions. A key step early in the Blueprint's implementation is for the County to prioritize these Strategies and Actions, and to translate them into its workplan and budget process.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

ORIGIN OF THE HOUSING BLUEPRINT

Housing affordability has challenged California for generations and snowballed into an acute crisis in the 21st century. While this housing crisis has expanded significantly across much of the United States, it continues to peak in coastal California, including San Diego County. In December 2022, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) catalyzed a new commitment to addressing the crisis with a "Let's Talk Housing" workshop. This workshop presented data on how the cost of housing was increasingly out of reach for an expanding segment of San Diego County's residents beyond low-income households, how homeownership had become unattainable for most, how seniors were making up a growing proportion of the region's homeless population, and how the explosion in homelessness itself was primarily an outcome of the housing crisis. County of San Diego (County) staff then presented a proposed draft Blueprint that balanced priorities and existing resources into actions for a near-term focus and actions for a long-term focus. Within this context, the Board discussed the steps the County is taking to accelerate housing production and the County's role in producing housing in the future, defining its future goals and priorities.

Among the context examined in the workshop were the following points, which reference data available in December 2022:

- Housing production rates in San Diego County have not kept pace with population growth and demand, resulting in disproportionately high purchase and rental prices.

- The median home price in San Diego County is approximately $893,500, requiring an annual income of $268,000, while the median household income is just under $107,000.[1] (Since the 2022 workshop, the median home price has risen to $921,100[2] and the median household income to $119,500.[3])

- The homelessness crisis in the region continues to grow, with 8,427 individuals identified a living on the streets or in shelters.[4] (Since the 2022 workshop, the number of unhoused people has risen to 10,605.[5])

- Of the unsheltered population, 25% were aged 55 or older, and 47% were experiencing homelessness for the first time [6]

- The number of adults aged 55 or older in San Diego County is projected to increase to over 1.1 million by 2030.[7]

- The lack of affordable housing threatens the success of programs like CARE Court, which integrates housing into court-ordered treatment models.

[1] Reported in Board Minute Order No. 10, Dec. 13, 2022. Data current as of that time.
[2] Realtor.com, May 24, 2024
[3] California Department of Housing and Community Development, April 17, 2024
[4] 2022 Point-in-Time Count, Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH)
[5] 2024 Point-in-Time Count, Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH)
[6] 2022 Point-in-Time Count, Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH)
[7] Reported in Board Minute Order No. 10, Dec. 13, 2022. Data current as of that time.

The Board had already stated that the region is experiencing a housing crisis and adopted over 20 Board letters between 2019 and 2022 intended to stimulate housing production. These Board actions directed staff to use existing resources to support various priorities but were not guided by a broader strategic vision. It is in that context that the Board held this workshop in 2022 that sought to align, focus, and consolidate a strategic approach to addressing the housing crisis through what would be termed the County's **Housing Blueprint**. The Board adopted the following objectives for the draft Blueprint, that primarily reflect a focus on increasing housing production, one of the 5 Ps:

- As mandated by the State (Housing Element Law) and allocated to the County by SANDAG, plan for and facilitate construction of 6,700 units by 2029 across the income categories (very low, low, moderate, above moderate) assigned in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the unincorporated area

  - Finance and incentivize the creation of 2,800 Low- and Very Low-Income units (2,800 is the combined number of Low and Very Low-Income units mandated by the State and allocated to the County by SANDAG)

- As reflected in the Joint City and County of San Diego Housing Resolution, support the production of 10,000 affordable units regionally by 2030 on publicly owned property

- Create more available affordable units each year

- As directed by the Board, implement sustainability criteria for affordable housing developments funded by the County or developed on County property

- Identify and leverage alternative funding sources and cultivate partnerships

- Advance sustainable housing production by accelerating sustainable housing in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) efficient or infill areas near jobs and transit, in alignment with County's Transportation Study Guide (TSG), Net Zero Carbon Commitment, Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF), and State mandates such as California Air Resources Board (CARB) plans

- As mandated by the State (AB 686) advance equity and fair housing by focusing affordable housing production in high opportunity areas, in alignment with State Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) criteria

- Advance housing across the region of San Diego County, including within areas of incorporated cities that are near jobs, amenities, transit, and/ or otherwise meet our equity, community, and sustainability objectives

The workshop also established the *Draft Housing Blueprint* as the starting point for a consolidated response to the crisis and called for the County to engage a consultant to "analyze, formulate, and provide recommendations on the organizational structure to meet the Blueprint and Board policies related to housing," thereby precipitating this effort and report.

5 PS HOUSING SOLUTIONS FRAMEWORK

The Draft Housing Blueprint adopted by the Board in 2022 establishes guidance on the County's response to the housing crisis based on the "5 Ps" framework previously adopted by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) as its regional Housing Acceleration Program Strategy. The overarching goal of the 5 Ps Solutions Framework represents a vision of equitable housing for all. The 5 Ps Framework envisions a housing system that addresses the region's housing crisis at its root: solving for decades of underproduction as well as practices of inequitable access, challenges of housing stability for various vulnerable populations, and more. By nature, each of the 5 Ps supports and relates to other Ps and thus no single goal area is prioritized ahead of another.

Origins of the 5 Ps Framework

In 2017, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) convened experts from throughout the nine-county Bay Area to explore the many causes and consequences of the region's housing crisis and to explore solutions for action. Coined CASA—the Committee to House the Bay Area, CASA Co-Chairs led an intensive process to develop a compact of actionable steps to respond to the region's housing needs. Central to this work were three principal outcomes, or 'Three Ps' as they became known in CASA process:

1. **Increasing** housing production at all levels of affordability

2. **Preserving** affordable housing that already exists whether subsidized or naturally occurring

3. **Protecting** vulnerable households from housing instability and displacement where neighborhoods are changing rapidly.

Critical to all three outcomes was the understanding that they be grounded in equity and inclusion. The CASA Committee members represented a broad spectrum of the housing world, with differing perspectives and constituencies. While not easy, all agreed to compromise and push forward with a comprehensive plan, the Casa Compact, establishing an effective way to address a complex crisis. Since CASA completed its work in early 2019, dozens of state laws have been enacted to implement the 3 Ps framework. The 3 Ps are now widely used by policymakers to reflect the reality that solving the housing crisis is about more than production and supply, and thus are continuously moving forward housing friendly 3 Ps policies, programs, and laws.

In 2020, LeSar Development Consultants expanded upon the 3 Ps to create the 5 Ps Solutions Framework, that balances a focus on physical housing strategies and people-centric social strategies.

The LeSar framework added the following 2 Ps to create the 5 Ps Framework:

• *Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability* to address to affirm that these lenses are essential to bring to all housing policy and planning work, with acknowledgment that they cut across all areas of housing need and policymaking.

• *Prevent Displacement* to address the need to avoid the displacement of the resident populations and the cultural fabric of specific communities. Examples of this across US cities and often found in San Diego County as well include historically-population specific communities of Latinos and Latin American immigrants, African Americans, Filipinos, African immigrant communities, Chinatowns and Japantowns, LGBT communities, and other communities with strong cultural identities. Often these communities start as lower-income and become threatened over the decades by gentrification. This additional P focuses on place-based strategies that concern the need for policies to help maintain cultural communities and neighborhoods, and enable the cultural fabric of businesses, residents and community spaces to remain in place.

3 Ps that address the **physical environment:**

• Produce Housing for All
• Preserve Vulnerable Housing
• Prevent Displacement

2 Ps that are **people centric** address social well-being:

• Protect Tenants
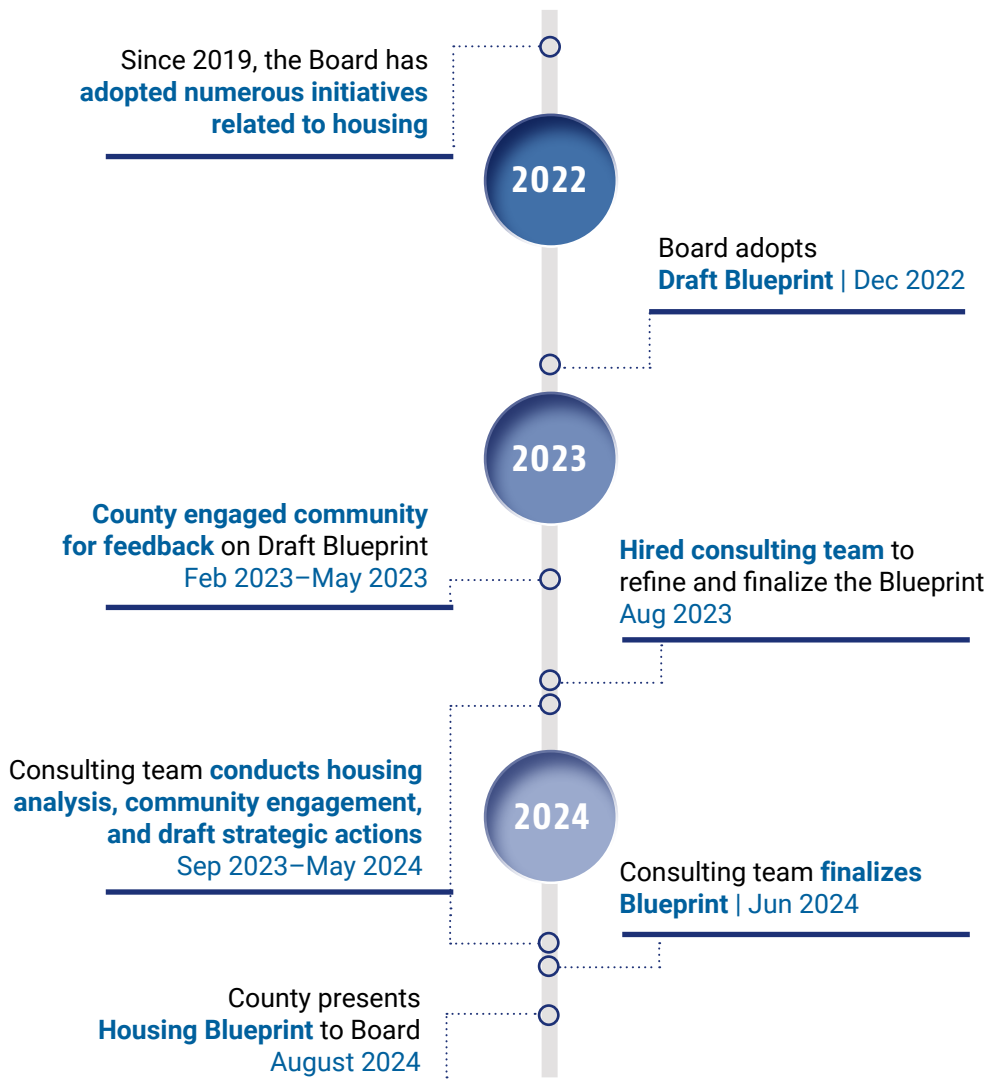• Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability

HOUSING BLUEPRINT METHODOLOGY

To address a crisis that is broad, complex, and touches numerous County agencies and constituencies, the County has undertaken the creation of the Housing Blueprint, the scope of which is expansive and ambitious. The Blueprint approach combines extensive stakeholder engagement with professional assessment of the County's current strategies, barriers, and opportunities and best practices, resulting in recommendations for a comprehensive approach to tackling the County's housing needs.

The development of the Housing Blueprint involved a multi-pronged communications and engagement strategy to connect with the community, as well as professional consultant assessment of the County's housing system, described in the sections below. Following the adoption of the Draft Housing Blueprint in December 2022, the County conducted Phase I of community engagement that included a variety of community engagement activities to raise awareness for San Diego's housing affordability crisis, communicate the purpose and need of the Blueprint, and gather feedback on its draft goals and objectives. Building off Phase I of the community engagement, the Housing Blueprint project team used an extensive approach to inform and evolve the draft document through two parallel processes: a second phase of more targeted engagement and the professional consultant assessment. The expanded engagement included focus groups with specifically identified populations and stakeholders, County staff interviews, review of key County policies and plans, analysis of data, and a review of housing best practice case studies. These steps informed the development of recommendations included in this final Housing Blueprint.

TIMELINE

Since 2019, the Board has adopted numerous initiatives related to housing

2022

Board adopts **Draft Blueprint** | Dec 2022

2023

County engaged community for feedback on Draft Blueprint Feb 2023–May 2023

Hired consulting team to refine and finalize the Blueprint Aug 2023

Consulting team **conducts housing analysis, community engagement, and draft strategic actions** Sep 2023–May 2024

2024

Consulting team **finalizes Blueprint** | Jun 2024

County presents **Housing Blueprint** to Board August 2024

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EARLY 2023 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In February 2023, after the adoption of the Draft Housing Blueprint and prior to engaging a consultant, the County's engagement strategy centered on leveraging existing opportunities across multiple County departments to reach a wide cross-section of community members. Engagement activities included establishing a project page on the Engage San Diego County site, which is the County's online engagement platform, deploying community surveys, presenting at County stakeholder meetings, providing County departments with a communications toolkit, releasing County News Center articles, and hosting a virtual community meeting to gather stakeholder feedback. There were 381 respondents to the community surveys, reflecting over 2,600 comments. An additional 167 pieces of feedback were received from the other engagement activities. Community members identified what they liked about the goals and objectives, what was missing from them as well as implementation opportunities and barriers. This feedback is summarized in the Community Feedback Findings report included in Appendix G. This initial round of community feedback formed the basis of the consultant team's initial work and was the launching point for expanded stakeholder-specific engagement.

Concurrent with the County-led community engagement, the County solicited proposals from consultants to carry forth the direction from the Board to undertake the comprehensive creation of the Housing Blueprint born from the adoption of the 5 Ps framework. A consultant team led by LeSar Development Consultants was selected in July 2023 and work commenced in August 2023, embarking on the scope that now concludes with the creation of this Blueprint document.

To address a crisis that is broad, complex, and touches numerous County agencies and constituencies, the scope of the Blueprint is expansive and ambitious. The Blueprint approach combines extensive stakeholder engagement with professional assessment of the County's current strategies, barriers, and opportunities and best practices, resulting in recommendations for a comprehensive approach to tackling the County's housing needs.

The Blueprint approach combines extensive stakeholder engagement with professional assessment of the County's current strategies, barriers, and opportunities and best practices, resulting in recommendations for a comprehensive approach to tackling the County's housing needs.

FOCUS GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

From November 2023 to May 2024, the consultant team hosted 17 focus groups, described extensively in Appendix G. In November 2023, eight focus groups were held with individuals and organizations representing priority populations. Topics included housing needs, opportunities, and constraints for people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness, immigrants and refugees, current and former foster youth, justice-involved individuals, seniors, students, educational leaders, faith-based organizations, and individuals with disabilities. These focus groups provided input on the unique needs of these populations and potential ways the County can address them.

In December 2023, another set of focus groups was held with community planning groups, developers, private capital lenders, local and regional government stakeholders, and philanthropic organizations. These groups focused on identifying barriers and opportunities for the County to meet housing needs.

In February 2024, the project team delivered presentations at two key tribal leadership gatherings to help identify barriers and opportunities: the Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) meeting and the SANDAG Interagency Technical Working Group on Tribal Transportation Issues (Tribal TWG) meeting, which included representatives from the 17 sovereign tribal nations of San Diego County. The project team provided an overview of the Housing Blueprint and collected feedback on needs, barriers, and opportunities specific to tribal and rural areas.

In April and May 2024, three focus groups with individuals who have lived experience of housing instability and homelessness were conducted to gather feedback on the Blueprint's recommended strategies. A local lived experience advocacy and leadership network helped identify diverse participants, ensuring demographic and countywide geographic representation. Translation services and compensation were provided. Participants offered valuable insights based on their lived experiences to inform the recommended strategies.

COUNTY INTERVIEWS

From August 2023 to January 2024, the consultant team conducted 24 interviews with County staff, including Department Directors and other staff, the Chief Administrative Office, and staff from Board Member Offices. The interviews focused on questions that helped to define how each department or staff role plays in the larger picture of the County's enterprise-wide approach to housing. The interviews also assisted in the gathering of information on programs, policies, and processes, and to understand the populations that the Departments serve. These interviews informed the assessment and recommendations of the Blueprint.

PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape

The consultant team also prepared an assessment of the County's existing housing infrastructure and responsibilities, as well as the local housing landscape, summarized in Appendix C. This involved reviewing the County's housing actions, programs and policies, as well as the institutions and agencies focused on housing outside the County government. Further, the assessment work also included meetings and interviews (discussed above) with staff of more than a dozen County agencies, departments, and offices to discuss their work and the County organizational system. Lastly, focus groups were held with approximately 50 stakeholders to solicit input on housing needs and County programs and policies.

Housing Best Practices Case Study Review

Based on the initial assessment of the County's housing infrastructure, responsibilities, and landscape in Fall 2023, the consultant team identified eight best practice case studies to inform the Blueprint's recommended Strategies. These case studies, detailed in Appendix F, cover the following topics: regional housing production collaboration, creation of funding sources through a regional housing finance agency, regional public/private affordable housing funding, housing-focused citizens'

commissions, centralized housing application systems, land use tools and incentives for affordable and middle-income housing production, and landlord engagement.

Analysis of Barriers and Opportunities

Building on the earlier assessment of the County's housing infrastructure and responsibilities and the local housing landscape, the consultant team conducted a deeper analysis of barriers and opportunities for implementing the 5 Ps, summarized in Appendix D. This analysis identified several opportunities where the County could take action to address the goals of the 5 Ps.

Convening a Middle-Income Housing Finance Working Group

The Blueprint team convened a Middle-Income Housing Financing Working Group ("Working Group") to identify approaches to increase the affordability and production of and reduce the cost of for-sale housing for middle-income households. This group included 31 housing professionals, including market-rate and affordable housing developers, lenders, housing advocates, labor organizations, and other key stakeholders. Working Group member invitees were selected from a range of housing interests and finance expertise to build a diverse group that reflected the richness of perspectives and experiences within the San Diego region. Over the course of three sessions, the Working Group identified several recommendations, which were further prioritized and integrated into the Blueprint. The Working Group's efforts are described in Appendix E.

Creation of Recommended Strategies

With the 5 Ps established as the Blueprint's overall goals, the consultant team sought to identify how the County could achieve these outcomes. Based on a continuously iterative process that relied on input from both community engagement and assessment, as well as collaboration with key County staff from several departments, the consultant team developed a set of eight broad Strategies and a series of more specific recommended actions, organized by timeframe. These recommended Strategies are detailed in Section 5 of the Blueprint.
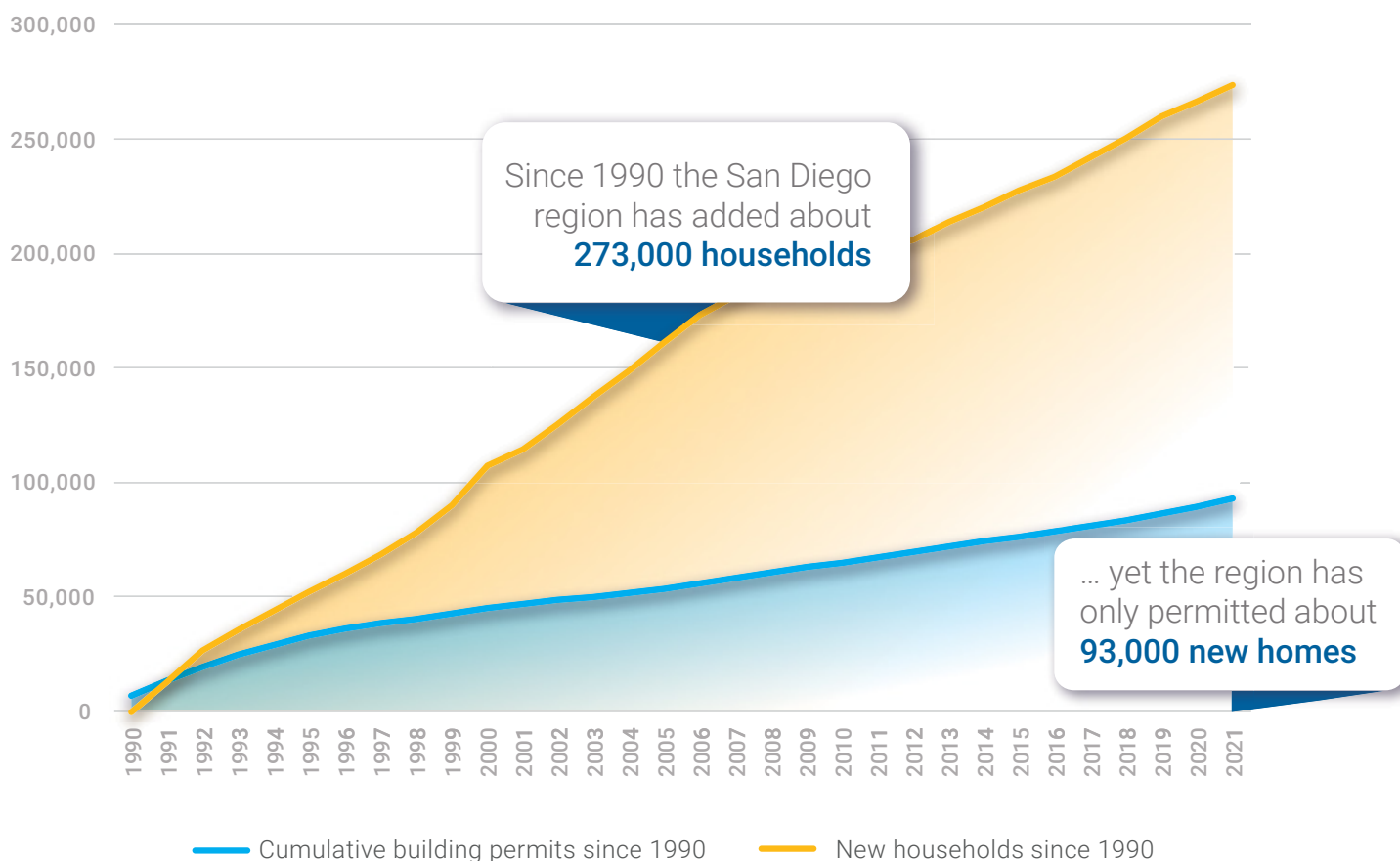
THE HOUSING CRISIS

The San Diego region, with its idyllic weather and coastal charm, has long been a coveted place to live. However, the dream of homeownership and affordable rent have become increasingly out of reach for many residents. California, and San Diego County in particular, faces a severe affordable housing crisis, with several factors contributing to this complex issue.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND IMBALANCE

The most fundamental cause of the crisis is a stark imbalance between housing supply and demand, as demonstrated in the most recent Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The RHNA process, mandated by state law, quantifies the need for housing across a region and in its individual localities across all income levels. The quantitative need then informs land use planning efforts to identify existing and future housing needs resulting from the growth in population, jobs, and the size of households. In the San Diego region, localities prepared housing plans to accommodate need over the 8-year period of 2021 to 2029. SANDAG, as the region's council of governments, is responsible for determining the individual RHNA allocations of all 19 localities in the San Diego region, including the County's. Regionally, San Diego County, like much of California, hasn't built enough of all types of housing to keep pace with population growth, particularly

housing affordable to lower-income households. From 1990 to 2021, the region's population grew by about 273,000 households; during that same time period, only 93,000 homes were permitted. As such, the most recent RHNA for all 19 of the region's localities is 171,685 homes, about 99,000 of which need to be affordable to low- and moderate-income households. The County's share of that total need is 6,700 homes for the unincorporated area, where it has land use authority and is separate from the RHNA allocation of the cities in the region. This shortage creates a hyper-competitive market, driving up prices for both renters and buyers. The cost burdens are primarily born according to household incomes and by historically underserved communities and populations (people of color, people with disabilities [physical and mental], tribal communities, transition aged youth, justice-involved populations and others).

San Diego region is not adding enough homes to keep up with household growth

Since 1990 the San Diego region has added about **273,000 households**

… yet the region has only permitted about **93,000 new homes**

— Cumulative building permits since 1990   — New households since 1990

LACK OF SUFFICIENT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Factors contributing to a lack of adequate housing production throughout California include the following:

Strict regulations and permitting processes: zoning laws and permitting procedures can be lengthy and complex, deterring developers and increasing development costs. Community resistance to new developments, specifically concerns about traffic, density, and character changes, further slows or sometimes derails the process.

High construction costs: the cost of land, labor, and materials has risen significantly in California. Development fees also are high. And recently, the cost of insurance has skyrocketed. This makes it difficult to build housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households, as developers often struggle to make projects financially viable.

Limited resources for affordable housing: creating housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households requires public interventions and subsidy. For several generations, California hasn't allocated sufficient resources to meet the housing needs of its lower-income residents, and the scarce funding that does exist has become highly competitive and difficult to secure.

WHAT DO INCOME LEVELS MEAN?

Throughout the Blueprint and in other housing policy documents, the following terms are used to classify income levels: extremely low-income, very low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and above moderate-income. These categories are based on a household's size and income, as a share of the regionwide Area Median Income (AMI). The definitions below provide the annual income ranges of a 4-person household in San Diego County, by way of example:

- **Extremely low-income:** Households that earn up to 30% of AMI for their household size, up to $45,450

- **Very low-income:** Households that earn more than 30% and up to 50% of AMI for their household size, between $45,451 and $75,750

- **Low-income:** Households that earn more than 50% and up to 80% of AMI for their household size, between $75,751 and $121,250

- **Moderate-income:** Households that earn more than 80% and up to 120% of AMI for their household size, between $121,251 and $143,400

- **Above moderate-income:** Households that earn more than 120% of AMI for their household size, more than $143,400

In this environment of scarcity, what little housing that is built tends to be affordable only to higher income households. Without public policy interventions and government subsidy, the private market is not building homes that are affordable to low- and moderate-income households. This is seen in the trend statewide, that localities are often on track to meet their above moderate income RHNA needs but are behind on lower- and moderate-income needs. The County is on pace to meet not only its above moderate-income RHNA, but also its moderate- and low-income (LI) needs; however, the County is falling short in meeting its very low-income (VLI) and extremely low-income (ELI) needs, as shown in the table below:

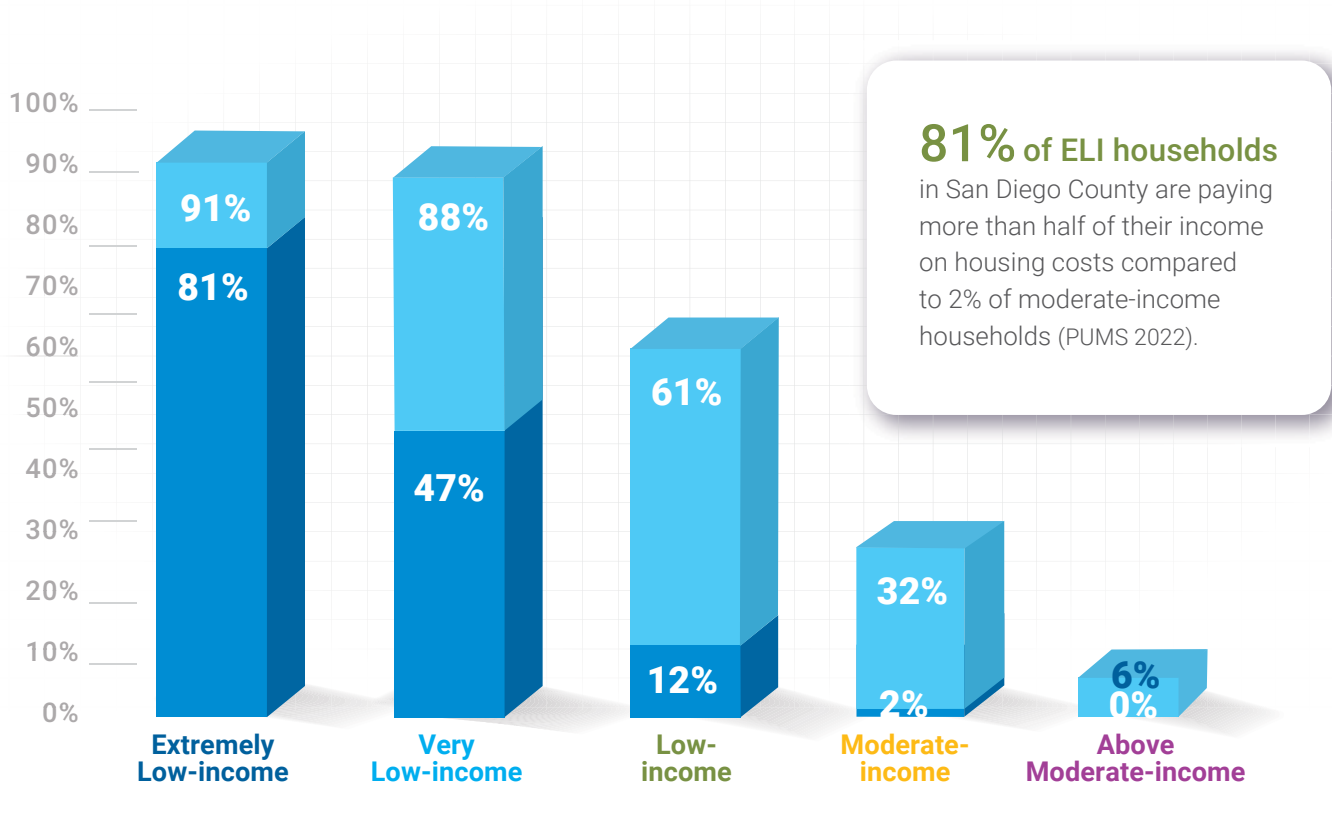|	ELI/VLI	LI	Mod	Above mod	Total
RHNA	1,834	992	1,165	2,709	**6,700**
Units permitted from July 2020 to March 2023	190	526	802	1,819	**3,337**
Percent of RHNA met from July 2020 to March 2023	10%	53%	69%	67%	**50%**
Status	Behind Pace	Ahead of pace	Ahead of pace	Ahead of pace	

Source: Quarterly Housing Report (1st Quarter 2023)

LOW VACANCIES AND HIGH COST BURDENS

Adding to the problem is the extremely low vacancy rate for rental units in San Diego County. A healthy vacancy rate is typically considered to be 5%. In San Diego County, the rental vacancy rate consistently falls below 1%, indicating a market with extremely diminished housing options. With very few available units, market demand drives up the cost of housing. This impact is most apparent in data illustrating cost burden, defined as when households spend more than 30% of income on housing costs. More than 43% of households in San Diego are considered cost burdened,[8] the chart below goes further to break out rent burden by the RHNA income categories. What the data reveals is that cost burden is most severe for lower-income renters, with 91% of extremely low-income renter households being cost burdened, and 81% of those households being severely cost burdened, spending more than 50% of their income on housing costs.

[8] American Community Survey, 2018-2022

Cost burdened renter households by income: All households

81% of ELI households in San Diego County are paying more than half of their income on housing costs compared to 2% of moderate-income households (PUMS 2022).

Income Category	Cost burdened households	Severely cost burdened households
Extremely Low-income	91%	81%
Very Low-income	88%	47%
Low-income	61%	12%
Moderate-income	32%	2%
Above Moderate-income	6%	0%

Cost burdened households
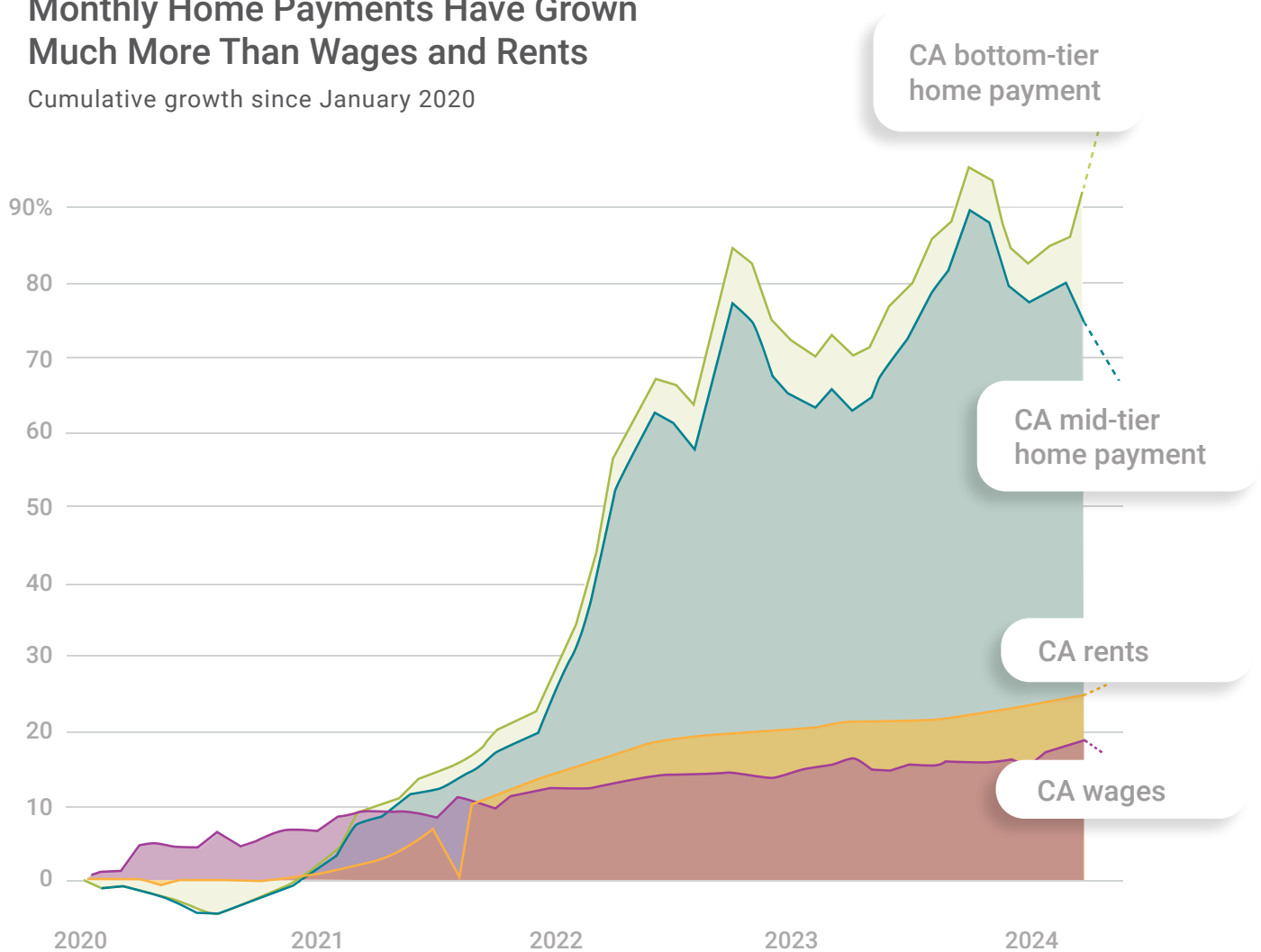(spending more than 30% of income on housing costs)

Severely cost burdened households
(spending more than 50% of income on housing costs)

ECONOMIC DISPARITY AND WAGE STAGNATION

While housing costs have skyrocketed, wages haven't kept pace, particularly for lower- and middle-income earners. As a result, a growing segment of the population simply cannot afford the rent or mortgage payments for even the most modest housing options. As shown in the graph below, since 2020, monthly home payments for mid-priced and lower-priced homes have grown by about 75% to 90%, while incomes have grown by only 20%. Their choices are to pay a high share of their income towards housing and potentially forgo other critical needs (including medical needs and healthy foods), move out of the region away from family and friends to more affordable locations, or overcrowd and live in places that are not safe or secure. As a result, many people and families find themselves at risk of falling into homelessness.

Monthly Home Payments Have Grown Much More Than Wages and Rents

Cumulative growth since January 2020

Legend within chart: CA bottom-tier home payment; CA mid-tier home payment; CA rents; CA wages

Chart y-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90%
Chart x-axis: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024

Mid-tier: Home values in the 35th to 65th percentile range.

Bottom-tier: Home values in the 5th to 35th percentile range.

Rents and home value data from Zillow, based on LAO calculations; wages are average hourly earnings for private employees in California (Current Employment Statistics, Moody's adjusted) Chart: LAO • Source: Zillow, Bureau of Labor Statistics
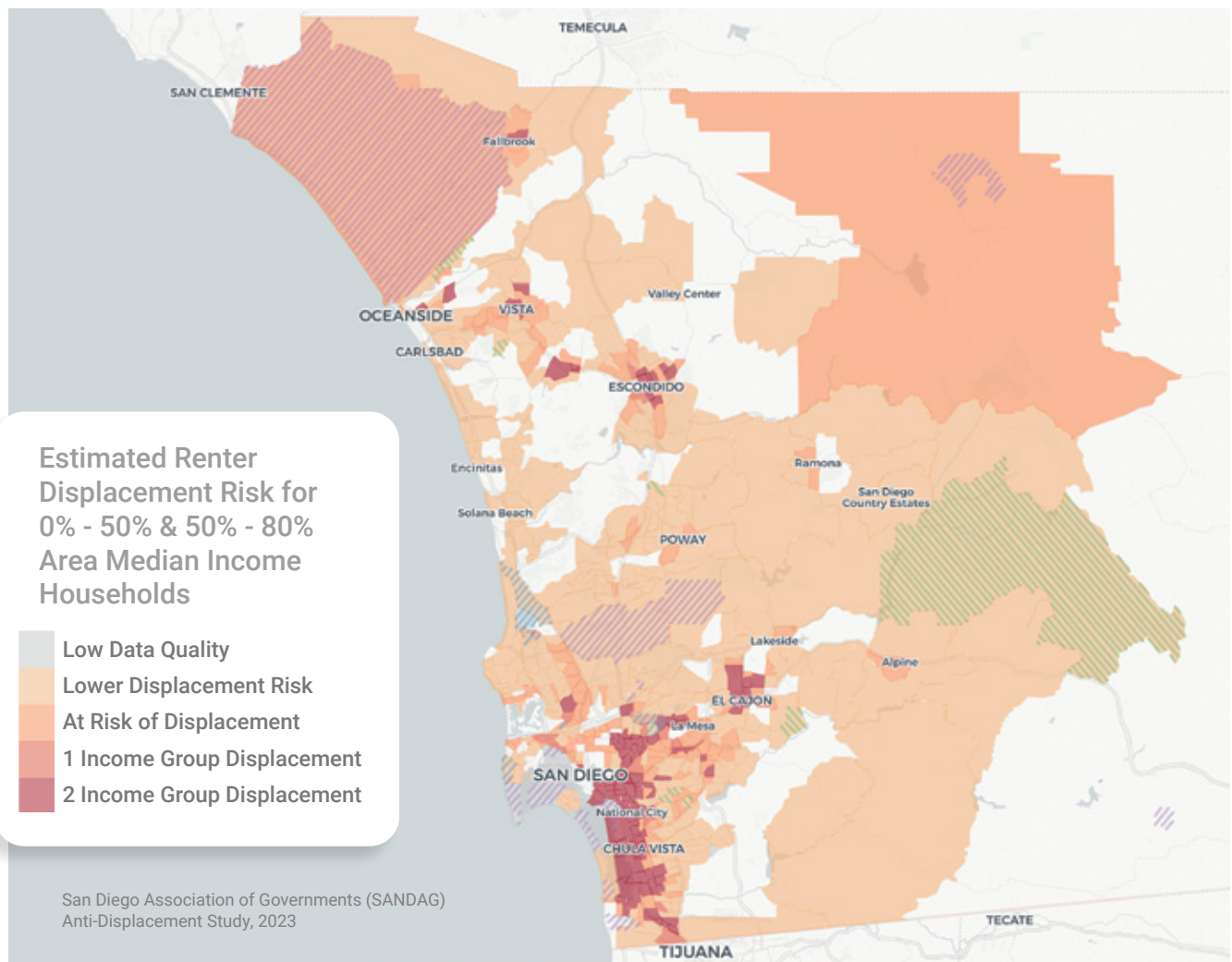
IMPACT OF A STRONG ECONOMY

California's booming economy emerging from the financial crisis of 2008 has been a double-edged sword for housing affordability. While the state has experienced job and economic growth since that time, such opportunity attracts high-wage earners who can afford to pay more for housing, driving up market prices. This exacerbates income disparity and disadvantages residents on fixed incomes or those in lower- or even moderate-paying jobs.

FUTURE TRENDS AND DISPLACEMENT

Without significant policy interventions at all levels (local, regional, State, and national), trends indicate that the housing crisis will continue and potentially worsen in San Diego County. Population growth is projected to keep rising, further straining the limited housing stock. Climate change also plays a role – as San Diego County continues to attract new residents, including climate refugees from areas impacted by disasters and extreme weather in other regions. Within these pressures of supply and demand, the region's most vulnerable populations are the most susceptible to residential displacement, the risk of which is shown to be significant throughout San Diego County. Economic pressures are further compounded by other factors noted in the 2023 SANDAG Anti-Displacement Study Existing Conditions Report as driving residential displacement: rising costs of living beyond housing, widespread harassment and abuse by landlords, lack of enforcement of limited renter protections, and limited knowledge of renter protections and rights.

Residential displacement risk in San Diego County is widespread

Estimated Renter Displacement Risk for 0% - 50% & 50% - 80% Area Median Income Households

- Low Data Quality
- Lower Displacement Risk
- At Risk of Displacement
- 1 Income Group Displacement
- 2 Income Group Displacement

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
Anti-Displacement Study, 2023

INSIGHTS ON HOUSING BARRIERS FROM SPECIAL POPULATIONS

As described above, the consultant team held focus groups with people representing several special populations, who were identified based on feedback from County-led engagement in early 2023, Board direction, and assessment of population segments with a higher likelihood of interacting with County programs. Some of the groups engaged include organizations that work with people with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity; people who recently immigrated to the United States, including refugees; people with justice system involvement, among other groups.

These focus groups identified housing barriers faced by special populations, who identified the following housing needs:

1. There are not enough resources to meet housing needs. Available funding resources should be more flexible and innovative. Current programs, resources and services that exist should be consolidated and better coordinated. Existing housing options do not reflect the full range of needs of the county's diverse population.

2. Housing and services should be located in the same building or nearby.

3. The housing system's workforce needs better pay and working conditions.[9]

4. There is a need for greater tenant protections.

[9] This very important issue is broader than the scope of the Housing Blueprint, but it has been highlighted here for the County to consider in future discussions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Beyond the discussion of housing needs, community members who participated in the Housing Blueprint engagement activities provided a wide range of feedback, summarized in more detail in Appendix G. Broadly, the feedback touched on each of the 5 Ps in the following ways:

PROMOTE EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND SUSTAINABILITY: need for more affordable housing in higher resource communities, greater support for vulnerable populations struggling to access housing and services, and more.

PREVENT DISPLACEMENT: need for safeguards, especially where previously affordable neighborhoods are experiencing revitalization or gentrification pressures, and protecting various income groups.

PRODUCE AND PRESERVE HOUSING FOR ALL: need for streamlining the housing development approval process, using more innovative and flexible housing funding sources, prioritizing the lowest income groups for affordable housing development, and more.

PROTECT TENANTS: need for expanded tenant protections and enforcement of existing laws.

Building upon this input, and all of the other input and research summarized, the intent of the Housing Blueprint is to present a comprehensive package of policy interventions that the County can adopt and enact. The 5 Ps provide the framework for a strategic response to the housing crisis as follows:

PROMOTE EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND SUSTAINABILITY:

This goal acknowledges the historic patterns of exclusionary housing practices, segregation, and other inequities and implements housing solutions that ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities are available to everyone. Housing solutions should also promote climate-resilient communities, the preservation of open space, and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

PRODUCTION:

Essential to overcoming the housing supply imbalance, this goal necessitates policies to increase housing production of all kinds. Housing development should be sited in urbanized areas with access to transit, jobs, and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents. Interventions may include financial tools, land use policy, and administrative process enhancements that expand and accelerate housing production, with a priority on housing for low-income households.

GENESIS

PRESERVATION:

Strategies to achieve this goal include proactive policies to preserve existing restricted and unrestricted affordable housing, including Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH). Preservation is widely considered one of the most effective, efficient, and essential interventions to addressing housing affordability. Like a bucket with holes in it, the County cannot overcome its challenges through production if it loses its existing affordable housing stock.

PROTECT TENANTS:

This goal aims to support vulnerable renters directly by providing information on tenant rights and creating protections to minimize economic eviction or unsustainable rent increases and prevent homelessness. It recognizes that real-time interventions with households at risk of displacement are effective and a priority.

PREVENT DISPLACEMENT:

Strategies to achieve this goal include policies that address the causes of displacement, preventing vulnerable communities and residents from its harmful outcomes. Strategies include studying existing and potential displacement pressures and monitoring the effectiveness of housing retention strategies in relation to planned investments or escalating market areas.

PROJECTING 5-YEAR AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING NEEDS

Based on the needs determined through community engagement and the assessment process, the Blueprint identifies 5-year affordable housing unit production targets to meet the County's needs and to project the funding needed to meet those targets. These needs are for affordable housing the County can help fund, and are in addition to the Board's commitment to contribute publicly-owned land for affordable housing development.

There are several important factors that were considered in arriving at these 5-year production targets:

1. **RHNA Goals**—As described earlier in the Blueprint, the County is required by the State of California to plan for meeting its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The County's RHNA for lower-income units (those affordable to extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households) is 2,826 homes from 2021 to 2029. When accounting for the numbers of units permitted through 2023 as well as additional affordable units planned for the unincorporated area and funded by the County, there is a remaining need for approximately 1,600 affordable homes (for households earning at or below 80% AMI) in the unincorporated area. This is estimated to require approximately $151 million in County subsidy.

2. **Funding Affordable Housing Regionally**—The County typically funds the development of hundreds of affordable homes throughout the region, including in incorporated cities, each year. While the County is required to plan for affordable housing production within the unincorporated areas only, projects in the unincorporated areas of the County may not present the most immediate or best opportunities to leverage additional public subsidy. Often projects in the incorporated cities offer strong alignment to the County's housing priorities outside of RHNA, such as proximity to transit and amenities, competitiveness and readiness for state or federal dollars, economies of scale through higher density, and lower subsidy need per unit with shared gap funding with the incorporated city. Further, nearly all of the County-owned sites that could be considered for affordable housing are located outside of the unincorporated areas – meaning that leveraging

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA VILLA

these valuable sites would be outside of the County's RHNA activity. For these many reasons, the County will likely need additional funds to continue playing its vital role in supporting affordable housing production regionally. Based on the recent average amount of affordable housing units the County has been able to fund within incorporated cities through the Innovative Housing Trust Fund and other sources, continuing this trend would require funding approximately 2,000 affordable homes within the region's incorporated cities. This is estimated to require approximately $182 million in County subsidy.

3. Reducing Homelessness—The County's Framework for Ending Homelessness identifies the lack of affordable housing inventory as the greatest barrier preventing the movement of people from homelessness to stability. The Framework sets a target of increasing the amount of PSH by 20%. Based on the past trend of how much PSH the County has funded, this would mean supporting the development of approximately 500 units additional of PSH region-wide. This is estimated to require approximately $50 million in County subsidy, not counting the cost of operating subsidy.

Taken together, these factors lead to the following target number of affordable homes that the County can consider funding over the next five years:

The County should plan to fund the development of approximately 4,100 new affordable homes, which would require an investment of **$383 million over five year** . This commitment would ensure the County has the financial resources to continue supporting housing needs at the level described above.

As the region continues coordinating housing efforts, the County also has the opportunity to expand its commitment to supporting The County also has the opportunity to expand its commitment to supporting affordable housing development. Staff can estimate the appropriate level of funding to meet any higher, more ambitious development targets.

Lastly, these figures are for meeting affordable housing production needs only, and do not account for funding necessary for meeting the other goals of the 5 Ps and the related Strategies and Actions in the Blueprint. To fund all the Strategies in the Blueprint, additional funding will be needed, as indicated in Section 5.

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA VILLA

COUNTYWIDE HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE

In the face of a worsening housing crisis, the County is actively working to address the housing needs of its residents, both those inadequately housed and those without housing. The Board of Supervisors and County staff are proactively enacting new policies and taking action to increase the region's supply of deed restricted affordable housing, address barriers to accessing housing, and provide resources to prevent and end homelessness.

THE GROVE

COUNTY HOUSING ACHIEVEMENTS

Some of the County's most impactful accomplishments in addressing the housing crisis include:

Creation of the Innovative Housing Trust Fund (IHTF)

–The IHTF was created by Board action in 2017 with a cumulative investment of $105.6 million from the County's general fund. These funds, leveraging other state, federal and local dollars have been critical in providing essential gap funding for more than 2,100 affordable homes that have opened to date. More than 3,200 new affordable homes are in the pipeline in various stages of planning and construction across the county, many with the support of IHTF.

Adoption of the Transformative Housing Solutions (THS) package

–This set of initiatives directs the actions of several departments to assess seven key strategies: 1) assess opportunities to acquire land along key corridors to support future transit-oriented development; 2) capture upzoning land value windfalls through an inclusionary housing program; 3) complete a comprehensive new construction cost study; 4) reduce the cost of green affordable housing; 5) reduce VMT and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for housing projects that include a significant affordable housing component; 6) expand preservation of existing affordable housing including naturally occurring affordable housing; and 7) investigate opportunities to create a regional perennial affordable housing trust fund.

Partnership with the City of San Diego to Produce 10,000 New Affordable Homes

—In October 2022, the City and County held a summit where they agreed to work together to create 10,000 new affordable homes on public lands by 2030. Since then, in addition to the efforts on County surplus property described below, the County has partnered with The San Diego Foundation who is serving as a regional convener on this effort and has created a Housing Impact Fund to leverage philanthropic dollars for affordable housing. The County has also provided funding for the upcoming Imperial Beach Neighborhood Center Apartments which will be built on a property owned by a faith-based organization, and upcoming Skyline development located on San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) owned property.

Proactive Efforts to Create Affordable Homes on Surplus County Property

–Over the last few years, the County identified eleven County-owned sites that can be repurposed for affordable housing. Several agreements with developers have already been made, and the County has facilitated and accelerated development by demolishing existing structures and performing CEQA review. The first affordable housing development on County surplus property, Levant Senior Cottages, opened with 127 units for low-income seniors in 2024. Construction is underway on two additional surplus County sites.

Successful Application to Become a Prohousing Jurisdiction

–The County leveraged its existing land use and housing programs to secure the Prohousing designation from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), opening up opportunities for more State housing funding. This designation allowed the County to be awarded $2.4 million in funding under the Prohousing Incentive Pilot Program (PIP). The County will also receive priority processing or funding points when applying under various State housing programs.

Increased Role in Homelessness Policies, Programs, and Services

—In April 2021, to respond to the challenge of homelessness, the Board of Supervisors created the Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) and its Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS), which coordinates with the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH), other public agencies, city jurisdictions, and service providers. Since HSEC began its work in July 2021, the department has worked across the County enterprise to create the Framework for Ending Homelessness. Led by HSEC, the County also finalized its Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan in February 2024.

Implementation of 6th Cycle Housing Element

—Since successfully adopting its Housing Element in 2021, the County has implemented many key activities, including the 2023 Housing Zoning Ordinance Update to align the County's zoning regulations with new state

housing laws intended to make housing more affordable and accessible. Work on many other key actions is underway, and the County is currently progressing on the following: development of an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, exploration of options for potential programs to facilitate the development of affordable and attainable housing including a Small Lot Subdivision Program, and a senior and assisted living housing, a program to provide resources and assistance for lot consolidation, and an updated Accessory Dwelling Unity (ADU) handbook, and more.

Undertaking Development Feasibility Analysis—The County's initiated a Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) or parcel-by-parcel analysis to identify barriers to housing development, potential solutions, and ways the County can support housing and other improvements in its VMT Efficient and Infill areas. The DFA is focused on four unincorporated communities: Buena Creek, Casa De Oro, North El Cajon/Lakeside, and Spring Valley.

Actions to Remove Barriers to Housing Production—The Board adopted 22 actions in May 2023 that remove various barriers to housing production, including those that impact the development process, regulations, and more. The Board funded this package of short -, medium - and long-term actions with $15 million in resources.

Expansion of Project-Based Housing Choice Vouchers (PBVs) – Since 2019, the Housing Authority of the County of San Diego (HACSD) has dramatically expanded its use of PBVs to support affordable housing development. PBVs allow Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance to be attached to specific units within an affordable housing development. In 2019, there were 60 PBVs in operation. As of July 2024, there are 239 PBVs in operation with another 445 PBVs allocated to developments that are in progress throughout the HACSD jurisdiction. A goal of the FY24-25 HACSD Annual Agency Plan is to continue to expand use of PBVs.

Housing investments made through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – The County has allocated over $60 million of the $650 million received in American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to support housing programs including funds for affordable housing construction, tenant legal services, eviction prevention programs, and support of small landlords. Approximately $100 million more in ARPA funding is being invested in emergency housing and homelessness prevention to address the broader continuum of housing and homelessness needs.

In addition to these initiatives, the County implements myriad programs and policies, which are overseen by talented and capable staff and have a strong impact in the region.

The County's Housing Blueprint fits in the context of several key planning documents that guide County policy in related fields, such as land use planning, homelessness services, the use of federal entitlement funding, and more. The aim of the Blueprint is not to overlap or be redundant with these efforts, but rather acknowledge their roles, timelines, and commitments. Therefore, the Blueprint aims to complement and build on the following plans:

County Strategic Plan (January 2022): The County's overall strategic plan identifies five Strategic Initiatives, which span the entire organization: Sustainability, Equity, Empower, Community, and Justice. The Blueprint helps further the outcomes of these five areas.

The General Plan (August 2011), including its 6th Cycle **Housing Element** (July 2021): These plans guide the County's land use planning, specifically in the unincorporated areas. The Housing Element plans for the unincorporated area's capacity to include 6,700 new homes, at various income levels, as well as other strategies to more equitably house people in the region. Rather than replicate the Housing Element's existing

land use planning commitments, the Blueprint aims to build on these through its Strategies.

County of San Diego Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan (February 2024): This document guides the County's efforts to implement its Framework for Ending Homelessness which has five Strategic Domains: Root cause and upstream prevention strategies; diversion and mitigation; services, treatment and outreach; emergency/interim housing and resources; permanent housing and supportive services. The Blueprint most significantly builds on the first and last domains to identify Strategies to help create more household stability and more permanent housing.

County of San Diego Consortium 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan (July 2020) and **Annual Plans** (FY 24-25 Plan approved by the Board): These plans guide the County's use of federal entitlement funds, which largely support affordable housing production. The Blueprint seeks to supplement these funds with additional permanent sources and guide the County's prioritization of how those funds are used.

Housing Authority of the County of San Diego Public Housing Agency Plan (July 2024): This plan includes a comprehensive review of public housing authority policies, programs, operations, and strategies that will be implemented to meet local housing needs and goals. Each Housing Authority submits a 5-Year Plan and annual action plans. The Blueprint recognizes the critical role the County's Housing Authority holds in providing affordable housing for the county's residents.

HOW THE COUNTY IS WORKING ON HOUSING

The County government has an important and unique role as a regional entity to provide leadership in addressing housing needs beyond the unincorporated county in the entirety of San Diego County. While the County's responsibility and powers vary across the region, the County's authority has clear limitations in the following areas that relate to housing:

Zoning and land use: State law grants the County direct land use authority, which includes whether or not to allow housing development, only outside the region's incorporated cities. Much of the unincorporated county, moreover, cannot support a high volume of housing development due to factors that include wildfire risk and higher vehicle miles traveled due to low proximity to jobs and limited mobility infrastructure. Despite these limiting factors, only homes permitted in the unincorporated area count toward its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) obligation. This means if the County funds or provides land for housing within an incorporated city, the County does not receive RHNA credit for those units.

Affordable housing funding: while the County has the ability to use its general funds anywhere in the region—including for projects within any incorporated city—some of the State and Federal funds that the County receives for housing must be used in a specific part of the region. This includes Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds, as well as Housing Choice Vouchers, which can be used in specific cities and the unincorporated county.

Tenant protections: while the County has created temporary countywide tenant protections that extended beyond unincorporated areas during emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic and flooding events in early 2024, County governments in California generally can only create permanent renter protections in unincorporated areas.

Within these jurisdictional constraints, the County undertakes a broad range of actions related to housing in numerous departments. The actions of nine key departments with housing-related functions are summarized below. The departments are organized by County group:

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY (HHSA):

Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS): The County's main affordable housing department coordinates and deploys the County's housing development funds and manages the **Housing Authority of the County of San Diego (HACSD)**. While HCDS generally can fund projects throughout the County, including within incorporated cities, some funding sources are more geographically limited, as described above. HCDS also with many external and internal agencies and departments, including but not limited to working with Planning & Development Services (PDS) on development, with Homelessness Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC)-Office of Homeless Services (OHS) on homelessness needs, with the Department of General Services (DGS) on developments on County-owned land, and with Behavioral Health Services (BHS) on Permanent Supportive Housing.

Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities (HSEC) – Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS) HSEC was created by Board action in April 2021 and formed in July 2021 with three offices, including OHS. OHS focuses on County-led homelessness programs and services, including collaboration with the regional Continuum of Care (CoC) lead, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness and other regional cities and stakeholders. OHS administers emergency housing programs for the unincorporated communities and collaborates with DGS on the development and implementation of emergency housing solutions to expand options for the unincorporated communities, such as safe parking sites. OHS leads outreach, case management and housing navigation in the unincorporated communities. OHS also works with multi-disciplinary teams in City jurisdictions to support city-led homelessness efforts.

Behavioral Health Services (BHS): BHS serves over 100,000 people of all ages annually with an array of mental health and substance use prevention, treatment services, and housing through a network of community-based providers. BHS's role in housing includes coordinating on-site services for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), including No Place Like Home

and other developments in partnership with HCDS and the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC). Through its network of providers, BHS also supports services and connections to an array of other types of housing, including transitional and bridge housing.

Other HHSA departments: Recognizing the critical role that housing plays in health and self-sufficiency, nearly all HHSA departments leverage their expertise to connect specific populations to housing services or support housing-related programs. Examples include, but are not limited to: **Aging & Independence Services** in partnership with the HSEC Office of Homeless Solutions administers the Home Safe program, which provides short-term case management, housing stabilization, and/or short-term financial intervention services for older and dependent adults referred by Adult Protective Services to prevent and address homelessness. **Child and Family Well-Being** administers transitional housing programs which provide subsidized transitional housing and supportive services for current and former foster youth ages 18-25. **Self Sufficiency Se vices'** CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP) provides short and long-term housing assistance to CalWORKs families experiencing barriers to self-sufficiency due to homelessness or housing instability.

LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT GROUP (LUEG):

Planning and Development Services (PDS): The County's planning department, administers its land use authority in the unincorporated area and tracks progress toward its SANDAG-determined 6,700-unit RHNA production goal. While the department does not fund or directly develop housing, its responsibility for entitling new residential development gives PDS a central role in housing development. The department is working to implement a host of Board directed and Housing Element implementation actions that will reduce barriers and incentivize housing development in the unincorporated area.

FINANCE AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT GROUP (FG3):

Department of General Services (DGS): Manages the County's real estate assets, except for Department of Public Works Airports leases. DGS's role in supporting affordable housing has grown significantly in recent years as the Board has prioritized using County surplus land for housing development and temporary shelters. DGS disposes of County-identified surplus land and identifies land that will be vacated by the occupying County program in coming years, known as excess property, and prioritizing sites for housing development, where possible. When sites are declared surplus via the Surplus Land Act process, DGS may support affordable housing development on County land by demolishing existing buildings and makes the sites available through an RFP process. Several sites have been awarded to developers in recent years through this process.

PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP (PSG):

Probation, District Attorney, Public Defender and Sheriff: These departments administer housing-related programs and services. These programs primarily focus on providing funding for short-term housing support for justice-involved people or survivors of violence or abuse. The departments also have programs to engage people who are unhoused or unstably housed and connect them to existing resources in order to avoid incarceration or other contact with the criminal justice system.

EXTERNAL AGENCIES WORKING ON HOUSING

Beyond the internal departments and entities of the County of San Diego, the broader region has a wealth of public and private organizations focused on solving the housing crisis. There are about 37 local government departments within the region's 18 cities, a large number of nonprofit organizations (including community-based organizations and faith-based institutions), developers (including both market rate and affordable housing developers), financial institutions (including banks and Community Development Financial Institutions), and many others that all come together to form the housing ecosystem in the San Diego region and support the 5 Ps to some degree. Many of these organizations were engaged in focus groups through the Housing Blueprint stakeholder engagement process.

These organizations contribute to solving the housing crisis through one or more of the 5 Ps, offering opportunities for the County to support existing initiatives and partner with other organizations rather than requiring new or duplicative programs. An example of an existing partnership is the established relationship and track record of successful collaboration with the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), the public housing agency for the City of San Diego. HCDS and SDHC collaborate on funding affordable housing within the City of San Diego. An example of this collaboration is the joint application to the State of California's Homekey Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the PATH Villas El Cerrito Phase 1 development which will provide 41 units of affordable housing and services for formerly homeless individuals. The County's BHS Department also works closely with SDHC to coordinate on-site services for PSH. The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH), the region's homelessness services and coordination lead agency, is another major regional partner that the County partners with on housing response. The County provides some funding to RTFH, which staffs the Continuum of Care (CoC); the CoC board also includes several County staff and one member of the Board of Supervisors.

There are also "housing adjacent" sponsors, especially from the transit, faith-based, and educational sectors that are leaning into being good partners on housing and homelessness solutions. It will take many actors to solve the housing and homelessness crises, and tapping into this ecosystem of sponsors will continue to be critical for the County's efforts. The Blueprint identifies actions for the County to take to refine its organizational approach to Housing, including in how it works with external government and nonprofit partners.

BLUEPRINT STRATEGIES

As highlighted above, the County currently implements a wide range of programs and policies that respond to the housing needs of residents. Based on the information laid out in sections 1-4, the Blueprint identifies a set of strategies and actions that incorporate the goals of the 5 Ps and enhance and expand upon the County's current efforts, drawing from innovative and best practices efforts throughout the State and nation.

Promote
equity, inclusion, and sustainability

Produce
housing for all

Preserve
vulnerable housing

Protect
tenants

Prevent
displacement

Three of the eight strategies highlighted below propose what are categorized as "Systems" changes, while five focus on programmatic and policy change. Each strategy has a series of recommendations, which are described in more detail in the following pages. The Systems Change recommendations touch on all five of the Ps and represent high level, overarching strategies that are foundational to the success of the Blueprint. These recommendations address fundamental challenges to program success and are key to ensuring that the County has the capacity to address its housing and homelessness goals, including Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) goals and the goals and objectives included in the County's Homeless Strategy Plan. The Programmatic and Policy Change recommendations dive into more specific areas of the County's housing programs, such as housing production and preservation, and tenant protections.

SYSTEMS CHANGES	PROMOTE	PRODUCE	PRESERVE	PROTECT	PREVENT
1. Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing	●	●	●	●	●
2. Create New Funding Sources for Housing	●	●	●	●	●
3. Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access	●	●	●	●	●

PROGRAMMATIC / POLICY CHANGES	PROMOTE	PRODUCE	PRESERVE	PROTECT	PREVENT
4. Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact	●	●	●	●	●
5. Unlock land for sustainable and resilient development opportunities (land use and public/nonprofit land)	●	●	●		
6. Provide Solutions for Missing Middle-Income Housing Production and Programs	●	●			●
7. Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies	●		●		
8. Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts	●			●	●

It is important to stress that the first two Strategies—which focus on the organizational response to housing and homeless issues and the need for substantial, sustained financial resources—should be the highest priority for the County in the short term. Both are foundational to the implementation of the Blueprint, its Strategies, and its recommended actions.

A significant finding of the Blueprint's program and policy assessment and community engagement is the need for robust and consistent financial resources. Responding to the 5 Ps, achieving the County's affordable housing production goals, addressing the lack of permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness, and implementing other important outcomes requires significant resources beyond what is currently available to the County. Strategy 2 outlines the complexity of local and regional initiatives to create ongoing financial resources for affordable housing production and programs. An important step to creating these additional financial resources is the commitment by public agencies and their leadership to prioritize the creation of such resources. The Blueprint acknowledges that complexity and affirms the County's committed prioritization.

Through the Blueprint's development, a set of common themes emerged that form guiding principles that the County can use as it implements the Blueprint Strategies and Actions:

Regional role – While the County has responsibility for the unincorporated areas of San Diego County, it also manages federal funding for several smaller cities, oversees a Housing Authority that has wider geographic responsibilities, and provides housing services and support to residents outside of the unincorporated area. Additionally, the County provides loans to facilitate housing developments throughout the region. As the San Diego region shares the same geographic boundary as its county government, the County can be a champion in leading regional solutions while working towards its own housing goals in the unincorporated area. When implementing the Blueprint, the County should determine where its role is most appropriately limited to the unincorporated areas of the County and when it should engage more regionally.

Expansion and responsible investment of resources – As detailed above, the County should take steps to expand resources to successfully achieve the housing goals and actions included in the Blueprint. Additionally, the County should secure long-term affordability commitments in exchange for any investment of County resources (i.e., land, tax exemption, or direct funding).

Equitable prioritization of highest need – The County's funding should be prioritized towards populations and housing solutions where it is needed most: extremely low-income and very low-income housing production, including Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). The County has made significant progress in addressing its RHNA goals for households with low-, moderate- and above moderate-incomes. Additional actions, from policy and programmatic

support to targeted funding must be implemented in order to achieve the RHNA goals for VLI and ELI households. Additionally, focusing resources on the development of more PSH units will address the needs outlined in the County's Framework for Ending Homelessness.

Innovation and staying nimble – the County should remain aware and adaptable as the housing landscape evolves and pursue innovation responsibly to further the Blueprint goals.

The Blueprint's eight Strategies and the associated implementing actions align with the five Strategic Initiatives included in the County's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan—Sustainability, Equity, Empower, Community, and Justice.

The table below summarizes the alignment of each Blueprint Strategy with the County's Strategic Initiatives:

Blueprint Strategy	Sustainability	Equity	Empower	Community	Justice
1. Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing	●	●	●	●	●
2. Create New Funding Sources for Housing	●	●	●	●	●
3. Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access	●	●	●	●	●
4. Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact	●	●	●	●	
5. Unlock land for sustainable and resilient development opportunities (land use and public/nonprofit land)	●	●	●	●	
6. Provide Solutions for Middle-Income Housing Production and Programs	●	●	●	●	
7. Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies	●	●	●	●	●
8. Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts	●	●	●	●	

The Strategies can assist the County in implementing the Blueprint by providing guidance on priority Actions, while also allowing for flexibility to adapt strategies within a dynamic housing policy environment. Within the Strategies, the Blueprint categorizes Actions into immediate, medium-term, and areas needing further study. However, these Actions are intended to provide the County with enough flexibility to maneuver future needs and implement emergent tools as they become available, staying true to the values of staying nimble and pursuing innovation responsibility.

This section provides details for each of the eight Strategies, each of which includes a set of four to ten Actions. (Appendix A includes the entirety of the Blueprint's Strategies and Actions.) The Actions are organized into two implementation timeframes, either immediate (years 1-2) or medium-term (years 3-5), with additional potential actions identified for further study (no timeframe).

STRATEGY

Immediate Actions	Medium-term Actions	Actions for Further Study

Each Action is designated with an order of magnitude estimate of staff and funding resources that would be required to implement the action. These estimates would require further research by staff to examine these Actions in the context of current workloads and funding. The estimates rely on the following options:

STAFFING:

Estimated levels of additional staffing are provided, based on the potential number of additional full-time County staff an Action may require:

- None: No new staff; potential use of external/ consulting support
- 1-2 new FTEs
- A small team of 3-5 new FTE
- A new team/department/office with significant staffing needs (6 or more FTE)

FUNDING:

Estimated levels of additional budget are provided, based on expected funding to implement an Action. These amounts do not include staffing costs. Potential funding needs include consulting assistance and financial resources to distribute through a program.

- None: No cost to the County
- A one-time cost, less than $1 million
- A $1 million or more one-time cost, or an ongoing cost of less than $1 million per year
- A multi-million dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

Strategy **1** Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing

SYSTEMS CHANGE

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

The County plays a significant role in housing and homelessness, administering a robust set of programs and policies and tens of millions of dollars annually in loans and grants that seek to address the complex housing needs of residents. The County's efforts extend well beyond the unincorporated areas to the wider San Diego region, administering entitlement funding across multiple jurisdictions, collaborating with five local housing authorities, and providing services and financial assistance to residents of all 18 of the County's cities. In addition, the County works with nonprofit organizations, developers, financial institutions, and many others to form the housing ecosystem in the San Diego region.

Currently, more than ten departments housed in all four County groups play a role in advancing the continuum of housing needs in the region, from shelter to deed restricted homes to market rate development. Even more County departments practice a person-centered approach and connect the people they serve to housing resources. While there are many formal and informal avenues of collaboration, there is not one point of contact or any one person who has an understanding and timely awareness of all of the housing activities underway in the County, nor is there someone who has the knowledge, authority, and capacity to craft new and innovative responses, resolve conflicts, and provide regular and detailed updates on overall progress.

For housing production, including affordable housing production, several departments have a role, typical for a jurisdiction of the County's size:

- Planning & Development Services
- Public Works
- Environmental Health and Quality
- Housing and Community Development Services
- General Services (for surplus County-owned land)

For temporary/interim housing options, tenant support, and housing resources and services for special populations, including unhoused persons, several departments have a role, including but not limited to:

- Housing and Community Development Services
- Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities - Office of Homeless Solutions
- Behavioral Health Services
- Aging & Independence Services
- Justice Departments (Probation, Sheriff, District Attorney, Public Defender)
- General Services (real estate support, capital construction)

During internal stakeholder outreach, many people expressed concerns that, while there were many great ideas proposed, particularly from the Board of Supervisors, there wasn't a system in place to review and evaluate these ideas to ensure that they were feasible or advisable. Related, some have expressed concerns that they are not certain of the status of the many housing efforts across the enterprise.

OPPORTUNITY: STRENGTHEN THE COUNTY'S LEADERSHIP AROUND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

This Strategy highlights steps the County can take to improve the organizational response to the complex and intertwined issues of housing and homelessness.

With the **creation of a new Housing Strategy Office (HSO) in the Chief Administrative Office** that is responsible for driving housing strategies across the County government, quarterbacking program collaboration, and interfacing with the Board of Supervisors and external partners and stakeholders, the County will have an enterprise-wide focus on housing with a direct line to County leadership. With the many departments, programs, staff, and stakeholders involved in the County's housing response, by housing the HSO in the office of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), it will create the perspective and reach necessary for successful oversight. Several department interviewees shared the need for this system-wide consistency of process and clear executive direction on priorities, which would allow departments to coordinate themselves better and more effectively address the housing crisis. To be

clear, this new office would not take on any of the existing functions of the County's agencies and will not change the management structure of the County. However, the new HSO, with direction by the CAO, would drive and coordinate implementation of the Blueprint's Strategies, connecting the myriads of programs into a coherent housing strategy and tracking their impacts and progress.

Currently, for the most part, collaboration is driven by individual projects or issues, with some standing check-in meetings across departments. **The creation of two multi-departmental catalyst teams**—one for Housing Production and one for Homelessness serves to create more formal avenues for internal communication and collaboration. Overseen and convened by the HSO, these teams should be comprised of decision makers (department heads or deputies) to ensure their success.

The **Housing Catalyst Team** would be charged with facilitating the production required to meet County goals, including the 6,700-unit Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) goal and the 10K unit goal established in partnership with the City of San Diego to create 10,000 new housing opportunities on publicly owned land by 2030.

The **Housing and Homelessness Solutions Team** would address the full continuum of housing and homelessness needs of various client groups served by the County, from prevention policies to interim interventions (including on County land) to PSH production and other exits from homelessness.

As a future Action, the County should evaluate the success of these catalyst teams and determine whether additional organizational actions are needed to increase interdepartmental coordination, including the potential for consolidation or realignment of departments responsible for housing production, preservation, and protection efforts. Given the County's existing cross-jurisdictional efforts on affordable housing funding and homelessness services, the County can **increase its regional leadership role around housing and homelessness** by providing a forum where all 18 cities and the County can work together to plan and implement housing policies and programs. Because San Diego County includes a large city, it may be that this would involve the leadership of the County, the City of San Diego, and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) in addition to the participation of the other cities. The benefit to the County and all its jurisdictions is the ability to learn from one another in an ongoing, collaborative way, to seek partnerships across jurisdictional boundaries, and to investigate opportunities to respond to housing and homelessness in ways that might not be possible without an ongoing dialogue. This can include jointly seeking new funding or participating in creating a new regional housing body to raise funds on a regional basis. As with the Catalyst Teams described above, this work can be managed and directed by the HSO.

CASE STUDY: 21 ELEMENTS, SAN MATEO COUNTY

21 Elements is a unique county-led effort that brings together all 21 jurisdictions in San Mateo County to cooperate on the development of housing elements, collaborate on housing policy, share what is working, respond to new laws or issues, and explore potential policies and programs. Originally created in 2008 by San Mateo County housing and planning staff, 21 Elements is co-sponsored by the San Mateo County Department of Housing (DOH) and the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C-CAG). Representatives from each of the cities, towns, and the County meet monthly to coordinate efforts and advance their work. This effort has recently expanded to all nine of the Bay Area's counties.

21 Elements provides a great example of how the County could provide regional leadership to coordinate planning for and the implementation of housing policies and programs. Similar to the 21 Elements program, all jurisdictions can contribute to the cost of this effort. The County could fund its portion from current housing funds or seek contributions from foundations or corporations.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Establish a Housing Strategy Office in the CAO's office. This office should focus on the following:

  a. Coordinate across departments to ensure Board of Supervisors direction is implemented, identify and resolve conflicts, and provide staff recommendations to the CAO to achieve greater clarity, cohesion, and impact to their direction

  b. Manage complex multi-agency issues

  c. Drive the execution of the Blueprint and reports/data to inform the CAO and the public

  d. Oversee the development and implementation of data and data dashboards to inform the public, track progress in meeting goals, make informed decisions about policies, programs, or unmet needs, and evaluate performance.

  e. When partnering and collaborating on housing strategy regionally, act as lead liaison with internal and external public and private agencies

  f. Ensure that the County aggressively pursues and takes advantage of funding and leveraging opportunities to further housing goals

Staffing needs:
1-2 new FTE

Funding needs:
A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

---

Action 2: Further formalize internal department coordination by creating two multi-departmental teams that are comprised of department directors and senior staff. These two teams will be convened by the Housing Strategy Office: A Housing Catalyst Team and a Housing and Homeless Solutions Catalyst Team.

Staffing needs: None
Funding needs: None

Action 3: In collaboration with jurisdictions throughout the county, as well as SANDAG and other partners and stakeholders, the HSO will establish a formal forum where housing leaders can learn and share resources, successful and innovative strategies, and best practices that support the development, adoption, and implementation of local housing programs and policies throughout the San Diego region.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs:
A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Action 1: Evaluate the success of the Catalyst Teams to determine whether additional organizational actions are needed to increase interdepartmental coordination, including the potential for consolidation or realignment of departments responsible for housing production, preservation, and protection efforts, including housing, homelessness, and planning, and other development-related departments/offices (e.g., Public Works) responsibilities.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs:
A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 2: Examine the potential for the County's Housing Authority to be designated a federal Moving to Work (MTW). Jurisdiction, a powerful designation that unlocks flexibility in how housing authority resources can be used for agency-specific needs and waives certain statutory and regulatory barriers.[14] This includes exploring options, such as advocating for expanding the number of authorized MTW agencies. Such a move may allow the County to maximize the flexibility of its Housing Authority and its assets.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs:
A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 3: The County has pursued, but not yet secured, a change in state law that would allow it to count affordable housing produced within an incorporated city when funding is provided by the County and/or built on County-owned properties and land toward the County's regional housing needs assessment contribution. This ambition is shared by other jurisdictions and the effort will continue to be part of the County's legislative program.

Staffing needs: None
Funding needs: None

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 1, which concerns the County's organizational approach to housing, aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Sustainability as it focuses on Economy. Actions around the refinement of the County's organizational approach to housing, including the establishment of a central office to coordinate housing strategy as well as engagement with other entities regionally, will help establish policies that create greater housing affordability and stability, which in turn helps reduce poverty for residents. These actions, therefore, support the goals of Economy.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY

Strategy 1 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Equity as it focuses on Housing. This action's creation of a new Housing Strategy Office will focus on increasing housing opportunities to meet the needs of the San Diego County community, which will help contribute to the goals of Housing.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER

Strategy 1 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Empower as it focuses on Innovation. By creating a new office and improving on existing initiatives within the County, this action will help implement new ideas and emerging practices in how local governments are responding to the housing crisis. In this way, this action helps achieve the goals of Innovation.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY

Strategy 1 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Community as it focuses on Communications. Actions around the Housing Strategy Office, particularly through its engagement with external entities and stakeholders, will create more proactive efforts to communicate transparently about the County's efforts on housing policy. Thus, this action contributes to the goal of Communications.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: JUSTICE

Strategy 1 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Justice as it focuses on Environmental. This action's organizational focus will elevate and refine the County's efforts to support environmental justice, particularly as it concerns the increase of affordable housing in ways that advance equal protection and support sustainability outcomes. Thus, this action supports the goals of Environmental.

---

[14] Moving to Work (MTW) is a demonstration program for public housing authorities (PHAs) that provides them the opportunity to design and test innovative, locally designed strategies that use Federal dollars more efficiently and increase housing choices for low-income families. MTW allows PHAs exemptions from many existing public housing rules and provides funding flexibility with how they use their Federal funds. At the time of this plan, there are 139 MTW PHAs nationwide out of approximately 4,000 PHAs total, with no immediate known opportunities to become one outside of [PIH 2023-08 (HA)].

Strategy **2** Create New Funding Sources for Housing

SYSTEMS CHANGE

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

Implementing the Blueprint's strategies, addressing the County's RHNA goals, and responding to the needs of unhoused residents will require a significant financial investment. While the County has successfully pieced together funding over the years to support the development and preservation of thousands of affordable homes, a more comprehensive funding strategy is needed to address the substantial and growing need for housing development, preservation, and tenant protections. Both internal and external stakeholders emphasized the need for a significant, reliable, and ongoing source of funding for affordable housing efforts.

Currently, the County's housing programs rely largely on federal and State funding sources and occasional appropriations from the General Fund. Federal entitlement funding is targeted and has rules and restrictions that determine how funds are directed; many of these sources do not directly result in the creation of new housing opportunities. With the exception of Low Income Housing Tax Credits (which are awarded to developers), the federal role in housing production and preservation is limited.

State funds are available to the County, but for the most part they are competitively awarded and there is no guarantee that funds will be received. The availability of local General Funds is impacted by economic conditions and other pressing priorities.

As detailed in Section 3 of the Blueprint, the County has a need to fund at least 4,100 new affordable homes over the five-year period. Based on current and anticipated subsidy levels, it is estimated that approximately $383 million in local gap funds[15] will be needed to meet these development targets. This estimate takes into account a baseline of existing ongoing funding; this baseline consists of state and federal funding received by San Diego County and does not anticipate any additional influxes of these funds. This does not pre-empt the County from pursuing any and all available State and Federal resources, which would serve to reduce the estimated demand for local gap funding. In addition to the need for development dollars, more funding would be needed to address other Strategies outlined in the Blueprint.

OPPORTUNITY: ACTIVELY EXPAND NEW SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Over the last seven years, the County has allocated nearly $110 million in General Funds to create 2,100 new affordable homes. Approximately $200 million more has been leveraged from other funding sources, such as the State's No Place Like Home (NPLH) program funds, State Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) program funds, federal HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program and HOME Investment Partnerships – American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) funds, federal Project Based Housing Vouchers (PBVs), and other sources. Altogether, these local, state and federal sources have supported more than 5,500 units, including those that are completed, under construction or in the pipeline.

---

[15] Like many localities, the County has a practice of helping fund affordable housing developments by providing a share of the project's cost to fill the gap in funding between the project's main capital investments and its cost; this is referred to as gap funding.

With the estimated need for at least $383 million in subsidy to meet the above production goals, the County has several paths to raise the needed dollars to implement the Blueprint strategies and meet its production goals:

1. **Commit Ongoing General Fund Dollars to Affordable Housing**—Local General Fund dollars have been a vital part of the County's efforts to address the need for additional lower-income homes, but to date these funds have not been reliable or ongoing and have been dependent on positive economic conditions. A consistent General Fund appropriation would provide needed revenue to fund new housing opportunities and give a level of certainty to the development community, helping them plan for future development.

2. **Create a Housing Trust Fund to Raise New Funding for Affordable Housing Programs**—A Housing Trust Fund could raise more than $10 million annually to fund housing programs. While the County has its Innovative Housing Trust Fund, this fund does not meet the California HCD guidelines for a Housing Trust Fund that is eligible to receive state funding. Recently, the County conducted a study of potential housing revenue sources that could be deposited in a Housing Trust Fund, including:

   a. Residual receipts payments on existing County affordable housing loans. This source has raised an estimated $5 million a year over a four-year period.

   b. Senate Bill 2 (SB 2) Permanent Local Housing Allocation. The County has received SB 2 funding, and has the potential to receive an estimate $2 million annually.

   c. State Local Housing Trust Fund Program. This is a competitive program that provides matching funds to qualified Housing Trust Funds that have a dedicated revenue source. The average amount awarded to applicants has been $3.4 million.

   d. Inclusionary In Lieu Fees—If the County adopts an inclusionary ordinance with an in-lieu fee option, these fees could be deposited in a Housing Trust Fund. It is unlikely that in lieu fees would be a significant source, and they would not generate a consistent amount of funding, but when combined with other sources they could be an important piece of the funding puzzle.

   e. Partnerships with private corporations and foundations. These relationships are important and can result in significant investment, though typically they are one-time in nature. Other Housing Trust Funds in the State have been jump started with assistance from corporate and foundation partners.

3. **Pursue a Ballot Measure**—Several jurisdictions in California have successfully gone to the voters in recent years to seek new affordable housing funding, including:

   • **General Obligation Bond—**
     o Santa Clara County (2016) $950 million
     o San Francisco County (2024) $300 million
     o San Francisco County (2019) $600 million
     o Alameda County (2016) $580 million
     o Oakland (2022) $350 million of a total $850 million housing/infrastructure bond

   • **Transfer Tax**—San Jose (2020), Emeryville (2022), Los Angeles County (2022)

   • **Sales Tax**— San Mateo County (2016)

   • **Transient Occupancy Tax —**Santa Monica (2022)

4. **Consider a Commercial Linkage Fee**—A commercial linkage fee could be adopted without voter approval, though this may not raise significant money and would be a challenging action to take. Some cities like San Jose have adopted commercial linkage fees for housing. San Jose has projected it will raise around $6 million a year.

In addition to these sources, **the County should also consider supporting regional funding efforts.** Several regions in the State have recently formed new regional entities or Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs) to band together to fund affordable housing activities. The Bay Area Housing Finance Authority, formed in 2019, is seeking a $20 billion General Obligation bond for the nine-county Bay Area. In Los Angeles County, an effort is underway to place a sales tax measure on the ballot to raise $1.2 billion annually through the new Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency. Several JPAs have been formed to raise money, including a recent JPA between the cities of Burbank, Glendale, and Pasadena. While BAHFA and LACAHSA were formed through legislation, it is possible that the County could form a similar body through its existing powers.

CASE STUDY: HOUSING TRUST OF SILICON VALLEY

The Housing Trust of Silicon Valley is an illustrative example of how a county government can seed a substantial housing fund that benefits an entire region and attracts greater private investment and philanthropy. The Housing Trust of Silicon Valley was formed in 2000, born out of a $2 million grant from the County of Santa Clara that was matched three-fold by six $1 million grants from Intel, Adobe, Cisco Systems, Applied Materials, Solectron, and KB Homes.

The Housing Trust of Silicon Valley has grown to be an important source of affordable housing funds, attracting private funds, especially from the technology industry. Over more than 20 years, the Housing Trust has invested more than $550 million to create about 50,000 homes for the region's workforce, families, seniors and special needs individuals. The San Diego region stands to benefit from a similar regional collaboration between public and private funders interested in supporting housing affordability. While the region does not have the same economic base as Silicon Valley, it does have a similar set of large anchor institutions, including philanthropic ones, with substantial financial holdings and potential to invest in affordable housing.

CASE STUDY: REGIONAL HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY—BAHFA (PART 1 OF 2)

Following a multi-year regional collaborative table, a 2019 state law established the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA), which has the authority to raise and distribute funds through a variety of methods for production, preservation, and protection efforts in the 9-County San Francisco Bay Area. Before BAHFA was established, the Bay Area's nine counties and 101 cities were on their own in tackling their housing needs, with no regional focus. BAHFA is an illustrative example for San Diego County of how a regional housing finance authority can provide the support needed to address housing issues, raise funds, and facilitate collaboration between jurisdictions in solving a problem that does not end at a city's or county's boundaries.

Establishing this type of regional body can benefit the region by increasing opportunities for funding, collaborating on housing solutions, and responding to issues that transcend jurisdictional boundaries. While SB 1105 to form a San Diego regional agency did not move forward in 2022, state Senator Nancy Skinner's SB 440, currently making its way through the legislative process, would enable the creation of regional housing finance agencies without new legislation. As well, there is some agreement that legislation is not necessary for a single-county entity like San Diego County; however, the legislative path would ensure the authority to raise money and fund systemic solutions.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Identify the potential for an ongoing appropriation of General Funds or other flexible dollars to support the implementation of the Blueprint and meet the County's housing goals, which would expand the County's ability to fund new housing opportunities as well as increase leverage of State and federal sources.

Staffing needs None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

Action 2: Create a formal Housing Trust Fund that aligns with state HCD requirements to enable the County to access new funding sources and capture existing sources. (The County's IHTF could potentially be adapted to meet these requirements.) Analyze the County's 2020 Affordable Housing Trust Fund Study to determine the best potential source or sources of affordable housing funding, in terms of scale of impact and ease of implementation.

Staffing needs 1-2 new FTEs

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 3: In alignment with the Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan, develop a regional funding strategy, in partnership with the RTFH and city jurisdictions, to strategically increase funding for and support the expansion of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and housing for extremely low-income residents across San Diego County.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

Action 4: Continue advocating for more funding at the State and federal levels and support other measures that would provide the County with needed dollars to leverage local sources.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS / 3-5 YEARS

Action 1: Evaluate opportunities to place a measure on the 2026 or 2028 ballot to fund affordable housing production, preservation, and tenant support. Size funding measure to ensure adequate funds are available to address RHNA goals, PSH needs, and other targets.

Staffing needs None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Action 1: Revisit with partners exploring the potential for the creation of a Regional Housing Finance Agency similar to the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority and the Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency to provide funding for the 5 Ps, including production, preservation, protection, and homeless prevention. Creating such an agency may require state legislation.

Staffing needs None

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 2, concerning the creation of new funding sources, aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Sustainability as it focuses on Economy and Resiliency. By seeking new funding to focus on support housing needs, the Blueprint reduces pressure on the County's General Fund to support affordable housing and help its fiscal stability, and supports the goals of Economy. By creating new funding that can be used for home improvements that improve response to climate change, the Blueprint supports the goals of Resiliency.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY

Strategy 2 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Equity as it focuses on Housing and Economic Opportunity. By aiming to create lasting funding for affordable housing, this plan supports of the goals of Housing, and by focusing on the pronounced need for housing for lower-income households, it supports the goals of Economic Opportunity.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER

Strategy 2 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Empower as it focuses on Innovation. This Strategy's aim of creating new and creative sources of funding for affordable housing draws on emerging and best practices, supporting the goal of Innovation.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY

Strategy 2 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Community as it focuses on Quality of Life. This Strategy can help fund new affordable housing, an essential part of community well-being that helps achieve the goals of Quality of Life.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: JUSTICE

Strategy 2 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Justice as it focuses on Environmental. By focusing new affordable housing on developments that are located in communities with existing resources, transportation, and more, this Strategy meets sustainability outcomes and thus supports the goals of Environmental.

....

LEVANT SENIOR COTTAGES

Strategy **3** Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access

SYSTEMS CHANGE

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

The County collects data on its housing efforts and provides periodic reports, including memorandums to the Board, the General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Report, PDS Quarterly Housing Reports, the Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan, the Housing Authority Annual Agency Plan. While these reports provide data that measures progress in meeting goals, they are not readily accessible or understandable to the general public. Additionally, even for staff and elected leaders, because the data is included in longer detailed reports, it is more challenging to find and comprehend.

In conversations with internal and external stakeholders, several themes were identified. First, the need to create more frequent, easy-to-read and understand reports to display progress in meeting goals. Second, the need for more interactive tools that can improve access to housing, assist the development community, and guide the staff and Board in making informed decisions. And last, the need for an ongoing and formal opportunity for citizens to provide feedback on the County's housing policies and programs.

This Strategy includes a series of Actions that the County can implement to improve engagement with the community, as well as data systems and tools for decision making and measuring results.

OPPORTUNITY: ENHANCE DATA AND TOOLS TO SUPPORT HOUSING EFFORTS

The County provides public-facing data through several means: the County website, the County's open data portal, and *Live Well San Diego*, Enhancements to these tools can be made to provide clear and transparent information to the public about housing needs as well as the County's progress in addressing those needs. Similarly, the County can enhance its internal data reporting to provide helpful data in measuring progress, particularly in monitoring implementation of the Housing Blueprint. In addition to providing useful data, the data collected can help the County evaluate the success of program efforts and make needed course changes.

There are exciting new tools that have recently been developed that the County should consider adopting. These include interactive platforms that enable staff and elected officials to understand the impact of policy action on housing production, as well as interactive tools that help prospective renters seeking affordable housing to locate and apply for housing online (Case Study: DAHLIA/Doorway Online Housing Portal). To enhance engagement and transparency around housing policy and programs, the County can consider forming a new Commission/Advisory Board to provide input on the implementation of the Blueprint, as well as the policies and programs included in the County's housing and homelessness plans. The Board-appointed Commission/Advisory Board can be organized in a similar way as other County boards, committees, commissions and task forces (Case Study: Housing-Related Committees).

CASE STUDY: HOUSING-RELATED COMMITTEES

Many localities have special committees, task forces, commissions and other appointed bodies of residents who provide feedback on housing-related decisions. Two such bodies highlighted in this case study are in City of Los Angeles: Affordable Housing Commission (AHC) and its Measure ULA Citizen's Oversight Committee (COC). Both are appointed bodies of residents who provide deep and sustained community engagement on important housing policy issues.

The AHC was created in 1990 and serves an important advisory role to advocate, advise, review, respond, and recommend strategies that advance the City's affordable housing priorities. The seven-member AHC was created as an outcome of a Blue Ribbon Commission on Housing, which made recommendations about how the City could address its growing affordable housing shortage. The Committee meets every other month to discuss important housing priorities, including providing comments on the Housing Element, the Consolidated Plan, the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Plan, and the Los Angeles Housing Department workplan and related budget. Key policy areas that it has recently covered include: Measure ULA implementation and priorities, Housing Element Rezoning, Inclusionary Zoning, Rent Stabilization, and the mayor's Executive Order to streamline housing development that includes a percentage of affordable homes. A key role of the AHC is to communicate key information about the City's housing policies and programs to community stakeholders and to share feedback with the Housing Department, the Mayor, and the City Council.

Measure ULA, approved by Los Angeles voters in 2022, funds affordable housing and homelessness solutions through a transfer tax on real estate sales over $5 million. Funds from the program are invested in affordable housing production, permanent supportive housing, legal aid to renters, emergency assistance to low-income seniors, and emerging and innovative housing strategies. The COC strengthens ULA's implementation by providing a diverse, engaged, and informed group of housing and finance professionals to oversee the implementation of the funds, including monitoring the measure's administration and implementation by reviewing and providing substantive feedback on revenue flow, program design, and program performance.

These two bodies serve as examples of how San Diego County can create different types of appointed advisory boards to assist with housing activities. The first example is a general advisory body that examines various actions, while the second is specific to a funding measure and its implementation. Such boards could deepen engagement on housing by having a regularly engaged body of community members providing feedback and input, as opposed an open-ended solicitation of feedback in occasional public meetings. For San Diego County, the AHC approach is recommended to provide the comprehensive guidance to match the span of the Blueprint.

CASE STUDY: DAHLIA/DOORWAY ONLINE HOUSING PORTALS

In 2016, the City and County of San Francisco launched DAHLIA, a portal that guides apartment seekers through the process of searching for and applying for housing, with filters and a map-based interface to narrow down available options. DAHLIA was built to be open source so that other jurisdictions could use the portal's user interface and features to create their own unique affordable housing processes. In 2023, the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) launched Doorway, which centralizes housing listings for the remaining eight Bay Area counties.

Searching for and applying for affordable housing is a daunting experience for renters, who must research available properties and find contact information to check availability. The DAHLIA and Doorway portals only include verified opportunities for active housing vacancies and waitlists, significantly reducing the time a prospective renter must spend to identify potential units that match their needs. The application allows renters to narrow their search by bedroom size, location, price, and other features. The online application process reduced application times from several days to just 15-20 minutes. This is a best practice that San Diego County could implement to improve affordable housing process for the County's lower-income residents. It is anticipated that the startup costs would be significantly lower as a result of the work already completed for Doorway.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Create and maintain a public-facing housing data dashboard that provides information to elected leaders and the community about progress in achieving housing goals and performance measurements that includes information from a variety of existing sources, such as the PDS Quarterly Housing Reports and General Plan Annual Progress Report, as well as new sources.

Staffing needs 1-2 new FTE

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

Action 2: Create a new internal system that collects and centralizes access to data to chart progress in meeting Blueprint Strategies and other goals, evaluate success of programs and policies, and identify gaps and needs.

Staffing needs: 1-2 new FTE

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 3: Create data-centric tools for housing and land use modeling to help the County make informed decisions about housing policies and programs.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 4: To encourage housing developers to create more housing in the unincorporated areas, improve the Housing Production and Capacity Portal or other interactive online resources to include parcel-specific information on housing development opportunities to meet the County's housing needs. This can include information on sites from the 6th Cycle Housing Element's Residential Sites Inventory and the Development Feasibility Analysis, in alignment with Housing Element Program 3.1.1.G: Residential Sites Inventory Monitoring.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 5: Create an official County Commission for Housing and Homelessness (or Advisory Board) to review and evaluate the community's housing and homelessness needs, services, programs, and policies to advise the Board of Supervisors.

Staffing needs: 1-2 new FTE

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS / 3-5 YEARS

Action 1: Create a web-based centralized affordable housing application system that enables renters to view current listings of affordable housing throughout the county (working with other jurisdictions) and that includes filters and a map-based interface to narrow down options. The affordable housing application system can also allow applicants to immediately determine eligibility and to access a common application. (See case study on DAHLIA/Doorway)

Staffing needs: A small team of 3-5 new FTE

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

Action 1: Make improvements to the County's websites for the Housing and Community Development Services Department and Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities Department to provide more data and information about the programs offered, and to list and map projects that have received County funding. Include access to dashboards.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 3, concerning engagement, transparency, and access, aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Sustainability as it focuses on Economy. It does so by providing greater access to resources that help reduce poverty, such as affordable housing applications, which help achieve the goals of Economy.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY

Strategy 3 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Equity as it focuses on Housing. By identifying steps to providing greater housing opportunity, particularly through improved access to affordable housing and information on housing needs and progress in the region, this Strategy helps achieve the aims of Housing.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER

Strategy 3 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Empower as it focuses on Innovation. This Strategy includes steps to foster new ideas as well as proven best practices around how the County engages the community on housing policy as well as how community members access information related to affordable housing; in this way, this Strategy achieves the goals of Innovation.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY

Strategy 3 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Community as it focuses on Engagement and Communications. By aiming to create a citizen commission to engage on housing policies undertaken by the County, this Strategy achieves the goal of Engagement. This Strategy also supports the goals of Communications by creating new tools for proactively providing information on housing needs and progress.

....

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: JUSTICE

Strategy 3 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Justice as it focuses on Environmental. This Strategy's creation of a citizen's commission helps ensure more people are engaged in the decision-making process on housing policy, including how more homes are created in health environments, supporting the aims of Environmental.

....

Strategy **4** Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact

PROGRAMMATIC AND POLICY CHANGE

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

When examining the shortage of affordable housing in the San Diego region, the needs are numerous and varied. The shortage of homes affordable to very low- and extremely low-income households for the entire county is about 135,000; the regionwide RHNA for homes affordable to low -, very low -, and extremely low- income households is more than 56,000. And while the need is significant, permanent housing options for those moving from homelessness to stable housing are limited. As established earlier, the Blueprint production targets knit the County's housing (RHNA) and homelessness (PSH) production goals together to have a more coherent, coordinated set of targets.

During community engagement, participants simultaneously expressed the need for larger homes for families and smaller homes for special populations that experience more pronounced barriers to accessing housing, such as immigration status, lack of credit, having involvement with the justice system, and others. Additionally, community members called out the need for funds to support climate-resilient rehabilitation. Engagement and data showed the need for additional

rental subsidies – both short-term to help a household in need of a few months housing cost to stabilize, and long-term for those whose incomes are the lowest and those transitioning from unstable housing situations. And, as outlined in the County's Annual Framework for Ending Homelessness, the need for permanent supportive housing (PSH) and tenant-based vouchers is critical to responding to unhoused residents in the County.

Investment of housing capital resources is essential to meeting the RHNA production targets, especially at the lowest end of the income spectrum. Intentionally and strategically directing its allocation of capital and land is the most accessible tool the County has to address its RHNA targets. While the County already prioritizes Innovative Housing Trust Fund capital toward developments that create affordable housing in the unincorporated areas, these significant needs are not being met through existing resources. In a constrained affordable housing funding environment, the County, along with other entities in the region that deploy housing subsidies, are forced to make difficult decisions about how to allocate their resources amongst competing priorities.

OPPORTUNITY: RE-ALIGNING EXISTING RESOURCES

As the County works to increase its funding resources through Strategy 2, there is an opportunity to enhance how funding is administered to ensure targeted, timely, and impactful investment. To do this, the County should focus its existing funding toward the creation of units affordable to the lowest-income households (extremely low- and very low-income) as well as Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), priorities identified through the Blueprint process. Separately from need to support housing at deeper affordability levels (extremely low- and very low-income), housing development on County-owned land should also be prioritized for funding. As the County implements the Blueprint, it can continually refine its stated priority housing needs and allocate resources appropriately. For example, feedback during the Blueprint process focused on engaging vulnerable populations and identifying housing needs unique to these populations, such as people who are formerly incarcerated, people with disabilities, seniors, and others. It will be important to identify future resources to support the unique needs of these populations, as well.

In parallel, the County should build on current practice to actively track, pursue, secure, and braid existing and new funding sources together toward its housing goals. Supporting the development of more affordable Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) stands out in this regard. ADUs account for about a quarter of all new housing permitted in the unincorporated county, and a similar share countywide, and offer one of the most efficient pathways to increasing housing supply in desirable single-family zoned areas. They also tend to be more affordable by design, as they do not require new land acquisition and rely on low-cost wood-frame construction. Providing a modestly sized subsidy to build affordable ADUs can be a cost-efficient way to continue supporting this important housing type while guaranteeing affordability.

To this end, the Blueprint identifies Strategy 4, which includes a set of specific Actions related to the County's use of housing funding to maximize its impact. This includes Actions that aim to do the following:

- Prioritize County funds for the most in need households (ELI and VLI households and those needing PSH)

- Refine how existing funds are used, monitor new and expanding sources, and deploy funds innovatively

- Deploy funds for renovations to improve environmental resilience and protect vulnerable households from climate change-induced displacement

CASE STUDY: REGIONAL HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY—BAHFA (PART 2 OF 2)

The Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) is also an illustrative example for the San Diego region of how a regional funding entity deploys a new resource. As noted earlier, BAHFA has the authority to raise and distribute funds through a variety of methods for production, preservation, and protection efforts in the 9-County San Francisco Bay Area. BAHFA received an allocation of $20 million from the Legislature to begin operations and implement several small housing pilots, and the agency is planning for a $20 billion regional housing General Obligation bond on the November 2024 ballot, that would require an estimated property tax of $20.52 per $100,000 in assessed value. The initial plan for the bond is to allocate roughly 50% to new production of affordable housing, 15% to affordable housing preservation, and the remainder to flexible uses such as homebuyer assistance or to augment production or preservation.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Make PSH and ELI a top priority for housing production and acquisition/conversion, and create a funding policy that gives preference to projects with a minimum set-aside of PSH and ELI units. As part of this prioritization, the County can anticipate greater demand for Project Based Vouchers, which it can continue leveraging to support PSH and ELI unit creation. To help implement this priority, the County can also determine a share of the regional PSH need, as quantified by RTFH, for which it will aim to provide gap funding and Project Based Vouchers.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

Action 2: Continually reassess the additional gap funding needed to meet County housing targets, including RHNA, PSH, other affordable housing, and more.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

Action 3: Continue to determine how new funds for housing development that will be made available through the Behavioral Health Services Fund (Proposition 1, approved by the voters in March 2024) can most efficiently be administered and invested into production of ELI and PSH units.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS / 3-5 YEARS

Action 1: Annually evaluate the County's use of funding for housing solutions to align efforts on housing and preventing/ending homelessness. This includes holistically reviewing resources allocated for the spectrum of housing solutions, from temporary to permanent, and setting priorities for future funding.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

Action 2: When significant ongoing funding sources are established, provide regular expanded gap funds through an over-the-counter process, allowing affordable housing developers to access County gap funds when needed. The County should continue to use NOFAs in a coordinated manner for one-time funds or funding sources that require competitive solicitation, such as for administering Project Based Vouchers.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

Action 3: Pursue opportunities to work with an external agency, such as a community-based nonprofit or community development financial institution (CDFI), to create an affordable ADU forgivable loan program, with aim of encouraging the production and affordability of countywide ADUs. The County can provide a forgivable loan in exchange for five years of affordability, sizing the loan to the effective reduction in rent. This program can be available countywide. The County can consider using existing funds for this program or new sources. This Action is in line with Housing Element Programs 3.1.4.C. Affordable Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and 3.1.4.D: Develop an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) subsidy program.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Action 1: As Medi-Cal Transformation (CalAIM) continues to evolve, collaborate with Managed Care Providers to expand housing supports and explore options to further regional supportive housing development goals.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 4, concerning the administration of existing and future affordable housing funding, aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Sustainability as it focuses on Economy. The Strategy's emphasis on most efficiently using existing County resources to leverage external funds ensures the County's resources are aligned with needs and are deployed to reduce poverty, which helps achieve the goals of Economy.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY

Strategy 4 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Equity as it focuses on Housing and Economic Opportunity. This Strategy uses affordable housing funding to expand the amount of housing opportunities in the community, especially for lower income households, which achieves the aims of Housing. This Strategy enables more households to reduce their housing costs in a way that allows for more of their income to be available for other economic needs, savings, and more, which helps support the goals of Economic Opportunity.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER

Strategy 4 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Empower as it focuses on Innovation. This Strategy includes steps to implement new ideas as well as emerging best practices in the area of affordable housing funding, which helps achieve the goal of Innovation.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY

Strategy 4 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Community as it focuses on Quality of Life. By efficiently using existing and future funding for affordable housing development, this action enhances well-being of communities by providing more places for people to live in affordably, achieving the goal of Quality of Life.

Strategy **5** Unlock land for sustainable and resilient development opportunities

PROGRAMMATIC AND POLICY CHANGE

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

An important step to increasing affordable housing development opportunities is to identify suitable land and take steps needed to put it into production. This includes land that can be made available to developers or can be acquired, land that has the legal permission to build a sufficient number of units on it, land that is in already urbanized areas close to daily needs, and land that is in communities of opportunity—in terms of educational, economic, and environmental factors. Affordable housing developers often struggle to find such suitable sites. This has led to a region where historic development patterns have located affordable housing in communities with less access to opportunities and essential resources to daily living. Moreover, historic patterns of housing development have led to sprawl, which has led to a host of environmental challenges, not least of which includes increasing greenhouse gas emissions as a result of long commutes and car reliance, as well as placing households at risk of natural disasters such as wildfires and flooding. Community engagement emphasized the need for more affordable housing in communities of opportunity, and building homes either near necessary infrastructure and amenities or to developing those alongside each other.

The County is already taking important steps to address these needs, and the Blueprint identifies additional steps. For example, the County has both a strong track record of making surplus County-owned land available for affordable housing and has identified clear steps to addressing land use barriers to housing development in the unincorporated area. However, more work is needed to unlock land for housing. This includes the following:

- Using more publicly-owned land and supporting organizations beyond the County, particularly faith-based and educational institutions, for housing development.

- Putting multiple sites out at a time for affordable housing development.

- Encouraging housing development in communities near existing infrastructure, jobs, mobility improvements, and more, which in turn support sustainable and resilient growth. This includes expanding incentives for developing more affordable Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), among other types of housing.

CASE STUDY: VIENNA, AUSTRIA, SOCIAL HOUSING (PART 1 OF 2)

The Vienna, Austria, social housing system stands as a vital case study of a region with a healthy housing system. Founded on the belief that everyone has a right to housing, Vienna has proactively developed high quality social housing for decades. In Vienna, social housing is comprised of both low- and moderate-income housing. While Vienna is not a housing utopia, today about 60% of Vienna's residents live in high quality, environmentally sustainable social housing, spending about 27% of their income on housing. The term Social Housing refers to government-owned or regulated permanently affordable housing. This type of housing offers stability through permanently rent-restricted homes and near-permanent tenure for occupants, tailored to local housing needs. The social housing sector in Vienna caters to the majority of residents, with 60% of its 1.9 million inhabitants residing in such accommodations.

One key driver of the Vienna Social Housing system being highlighted for the Housing Blueprint is its reliance on publicly-owned land. The Social Housing System relies on Wohnfonds Wien, a City-established independent nonprofit agency charged with acquiring a 15-year supply of land for housing and focusing on the rehabilitation of deteriorating housing stock. Wohnfonds Wien acquires sites for social housing and provides long-term, low-cost ground leases to developers in exchange for what is essentially a perpetual affordability commitment. The agency is able to act strategically by acquiring land for developments years into the future and identifying sites near existing or planned infrastructure.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Support faith-based and educational institutions in identifying and utilizing potential sites, building off opportunities created by recent legislation, by providing technical assistance, training, and other resources. This may include establishing and expanding relationships with such institutions and identifying opportunities to partner on development projects when such sites are adjacent to County-owned land.

Staffing needs: 1-2 new FTE

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 2: To better cultivate and incentivize new sites, ensure that public sites or projects that leverage land contributions from other entities (such as faith-based and educational institutions) are prioritized for NOFA funding or can tap into a separate set-aside of funds. A key way to encourage and perpetuate this model is to provide financing priority to reward such practices. Set-aside funds should be from new funding sources (which may require medium-term implementation).

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

Action 3: Formalize the emerging practice of building a pipeline of County-owned land to be made available for affordable housing development, in line with the BoS joint resolution to contribute to 10,000 affordable housing units on publicly-owned land. Actions could include identifying housing sites that can be made available within the next 3-5 years, along with estimated site capacity, completed environmental investigations (Phases I and II), and identification of County funding sources that may be allocated for those sites, etc.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

Action 4: Continue encouraging ADU development by expanding the ADU standard plan program to provide residents access to pre-approved ADU plans and providing a list of pre-approved ADU vendors with pre-reviewed plans. This would expand the County's current offering of plans to provide more options with architecturally unique features; additional plan options would undergo an initial review, but still require a homeowner to hire the designer to make the plan specific to their property. This strategy encourages designers to submit their plans to the County and offer their services at a reduced cost to homeowners building an ADU, giving greater flexibility and a wider array of options than the pre-approved plans currently offered. A later step can be to encourage other jurisdictions in the region to create a similar process, supporting greater efficiencies across the region. (Examples: Various jurisdictions in Napa and Sonoma counties, City of Los Angeles, City of San Jose).

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 5: Reconsider renewal of the County's ADU fee waiver for the unincorporated area. Financing the cost of building an ADU is one of the main barriers to increasing ADUs, especially for low-moderate-income homeowners. Renewing the County's ADU fee waiver can continue to encourage this valuable housing typology. To ensure fee waivers are going to more affordable ADUs, it can be included as an incentive for maintaining affordable rents for 5-10 years, with the expected reduction in rental income sized to value of the fee waiver. This Action could be implemented alongside the creation of an ADU forgivable loan program (see Strategy 4). This Action would be in line with Housing Element Program 3.1.4.B: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Construction.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS / 3-5 YEARS

Action 1: Build on current Development Feasibility Analysis to conduct analysis on additional communities in the unincorporated county. This will expand opportunities for climate resilient and sustainable housing development areas, including in areas outside of environmental threats (e.g. wildfire, flooding, and sea level rise) and in areas that reduce vehicle miles traveled (e.g. near transit, jobs, and other resources).

Staffing needs: 1-2 new FTE

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

Action 2: Support infill infrastructure improvements needed for development on government- and nonprofit-owned sites to support sustainability targets. This can include utility infrastructure, mobility improvements (e.g. streetscape, walkability, transit, etc.), parkland, etc.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Action 1: Study potential need for a soft-story construction retrofits program. Soft story construction refers to older, wood-frame multi-story buildings with an especially weak, flexible, or otherwise vulnerable ground floor. Given the San Diego region's potential for seismic events, it will be important to consider the need to preserve existing housing that, due to its construction type, is vulnerable at the time of a seismic event.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 2: Continue to improve expansion and streamlining of land pipelines. Explore partnerships in the region to better coordinate development pipelines. If a sufficient pipeline is identified, consider establishing a bench of pre-approved, qualified developers for sites on land owned by the County, cities, and other public and private institutions, to enable streamlined project(s) implementation.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

Action 3: Should a regional entity, such as SANDAG, initiate the creation of a regional, publicly-accessible mapping tool of parcels from local Housing Elements, the County could contribute to it. Further study is necessary for how information is collected, maintained, and coordinated, but can likely draw on local Housing Element Annual Progress Reports, to avoid duplicative efforts.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: None

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 5, which concerns the unlocking of land for housing development, aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Sustainability as it focuses on Economy. The Strategy includes actions by the County to best use its land resources and expand affordable housing production, supporting the goals of Economy.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY

Strategy 5 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Equity as it focuses on Housing and Economic Opportunity. This Strategy uses County real estate and other resources to expand the amount of housing opportunities in the community, especially for lower income households, which achieves the aims of Housing.

And, by helping to increase housing affordability, this Strategy enables more households to reduce their housing costs in a way that allows for more of their income to be available for other economic needs, savings, and more, which supports the goals of Economic Opportunity.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER

Strategy 5 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Empower as it focuses on Innovation. This Strategy takes steps to more creatively use and deploy County-owned land for affordable housing and to implement new ideas in support other organizing in using their land for affordable housing, which helps achieve the aim of Innovation.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY

Strategy 5 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Community as it focuses on Quality of Life. By taking steps to increase the amount of affordable housing, this Strategy helps provide an essential need in communities, achieving the goals of Quality of Life.

Strategy **6** Provide Solutions for
Middle-Income Housing Production
and Programs

**PROGRAMMATIC
AND POLICY CHANGE**

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

San Diego County seeks to address housing affordability challenges not only for low-income residents, but middle-income households that are also increasingly challenged find or stay in stable housing. The prospect of homeownership, an important means of economic stability and security for households and the County as a whole, is increasingly out of reach for middle-income households, including first responders and critical workers. Moreover, the region is far behind in meeting its housing needs for moderate-income households. This is in part because much of the housing being built in the San Diego region—detached single-family homes—is the most expensive form of housing to develop and therefore rarely is affordable to households earning moderate incomes. Community engagement also emphasized the need for more housing affordable to households who are over-income for typical deed-restricted affordable housing (which usually serves households earning up to 60% of Area Median Income (AMI), or $90,900 for a 4-person household, and in some cases up to 80% of AMI, or about $121,250 for a 4-person household), but cannot afford the typical rents or home prices in the region. These households often include teachers, first responders, as well as much of the general workforce. Middle-income households are typically thought of as those earning between 80% of AMI and 120% AMI, who are over-income for subsidized affordable housing and for whom few market-rate homes are available or being created. In high-cost regions such as the San Diego region, households earning as much 150% of AMI or more are also priced out of the housing market and can also be considered part of this middle-income group. As an important source of stability and wealth-building, homeownership was also emphasized in community engagement as a priority.

In early 2023, the County convened a two-session middle-income housing working group (not specifically focused on finance or homeownership) and solicited a study of a potential pilot "workforce" housing program authored by the consulting firm RSG. Building on this prior work, a Housing Finance Working Group, with a focus on expanding homeownership opportunities, convened as part of the Blueprint engagement to address both production and access challenges and barriers through capital, land use, and lending policies. Both the Working Group and the Blueprint's assessment identified several steps the County can take to support the need for more middle-income households, including opportunities for homeownership. These Actions will allow the County to reduce barriers to creating more of this housing, as well as creating sources of capital accessible to middle-income households, and include:

- Developer incentives that support the creation of more middle-income housing, particularly in the unincorporated county. This includes Actions such as deferring development fees and building on the County's existing place-based planning strategies for middle-income housing types.

- Financial solutions, including efforts to expand down payment and closing cost assistance programs for households, increase access to and awareness of such programs to underserved communities, and new strategies to finance developments affordable to middle-income households.

CASE STUDY: HOUSTON, TEXAS TOWNHOMES LAND USE INCENTIVES

The City of Houston has made land use changes to promote the construction of townhomes, enabling development of more homes that rely on a smaller amount of land per unit, reducing the overall price of homeownership. Over two decades, the City has reduced the minimum lot size for homes, effectively increasing density in single-family neighborhoods to about 31 units per acre. Thousands of townhomes are now built in Houston each year and the BIPOC homeownership rates are one of the highest in the nation. The townhomes built through this strategy sell for prices significantly lower than the conventional single-family home in Houston: the median-price townhome in Houston in 2020 was affordable to households earning 105% of local median family income, about two-thirds of the price of other single-family homes. The County of San Diego can continue to support efforts to allow more housing on smaller parcels of land, reducing significantly the cost of producing homes.

CASE STUDY: VIENNA, AUSTRIA, SOCIAL HOUSING (PART 2 OF 2)

Another relevant, key driver of the Vienna social housing system is its impact on middle-income households. As noted earlier, social housing in Vienna provides homes for 60% of the city's population, and accounts for about 40% of the housing stock. The housing system is accessible to households earning about double the median income and with households not required to recertify income to remain. This creates housing developments and neighborhoods with people of various income levels. This also means households can—and do—remain in social housing throughout their lives, even as their incomes increase.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Adopt targeted incentives to encourage the production of homeownership units for middle-income households:

    a. Defer development fees until project completion for developments meeting middle-income affordability target thresholds (to be established)

    b. Work within the current place-based streamlining changes and strategies to include expedited entitlement processing for development types and affordability levels serving middle income households

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 2: Partner with local and regional housing funds like Middlemarch and bond issuers like the California Municipal Finance Agency (CMFA), each of which can offer favorable capital resources to create new middle-income homes without local government subsidies.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 3: Seek ways to expand the scale of financial support for current downpayment and closing cost assistance programs that have garnered strong support from developers and consumers.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS / 3-5 YEARS

Action 1: Research, evaluate, and consider implementing additional financial or land use incentives to promote increased development of moderately priced homes in collaboration with developers and other jurisdictions and stakeholders within the region to encourage emergent models and policy best practices.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

Action 2: Identify funding to establish a revolving predevelopment/construction loan fund seeded by a repayable "top-loss" investment from the County and leveraging philanthropic, CDFI, and conventional capital to incentivize middle-income production.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

Action 3: Explore grant investments to create community-based homebuyer education efforts. These efforts can be focused in disadvantaged communities to overcome ongoing equity disparities in accessing homeownership programs.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Action 1: In conjunction with efforts like the Partnership to House San Diego, explore opportunities for employer-assisted housing programs, with a focus on essential workers.

Staffing needs: None
Funding needs: None

Action 2: Explore approaches to leverage popular downpayment assistance programs as affordable homeownership development incentives, such as by forward committing them to projects seeking to serve middle income households. This could be analogous to project-basing rental subsidy vouchers to facilitate development feasibility.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 3: Foster opportunities to encourage the emergence of a San Diego County-based modular construction company that can reduce construction costs and timeframes to provide housing affordable to middle-income households.

Staffing needs: None
Funding needs: None

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY

San Diego County's initiative to tackle housing affordability for middle-income households aligns with the County's Sustainability goals by promoting economic stability and long-term solvency through policies that support affordable housing and reduce poverty. Additionally, by incentivizing housing development that can integrate sustainable building practices, the initiative supports Climate objectives, contributing to a greener, more resilient community. It also fosters Resiliency by ensuring that critical workers and middle-income families have access to stable housing, enhancing the community's ability to respond to and recover from economic and social challenges.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY

Strategy 6 addressing housing affordability for middle-income households aligns with the County's Strategic Initiative Equity as it focuses on Housing by expanding affordable housing opportunities and supporting community needs through financial incentives and innovative policies. It also promotes Economic Opportunity by removing barriers to homeownership, enabling critical workers and underserved populations to achieve economic stability. Additionally, it advances Health goals by ensuring access to secure housing, a key determinant of well-being and health equity in the community.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER

Strategy 6 aligns with the County's Strategic Initiative Empower as it focuses on Innovation by creating programs and policies that foster new ideas and implementation of best practices. It does so through the use of funding and other incentives to support an important missing type of housing in the region, helping government agencies be responsive to this need by pursuing new areas of action.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY

Strategy 6 aligns with the County's Strategic Initiative Community as it focuses on Quality of Life by helping improve the well-being of county residents. It supports the well-being of residents by helping provide more housing that is affordable to middle-income households, which ensures such households can afford their basic needs and tend to other economic pursuits.

Strategy 7

Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies

PROGRAMMATIC AND POLICY CHANGE

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

When examining the housing crisis in the San Diego region, the focus rightly turns to the shortage of affordable housing and the consequent need to expand the supply of new affordable homes. But to make progress, the region also needs to focus on preserving the existing stock of affordable homes. This includes maintaining affordability restrictions of deed-restricted affordable housing, that typically have 30- to 55-year-long restrictions. It also includes maintaining the affordability of unrestricted affordable housing, sometimes called Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH). The affordability of such units can be lost because of condominium conversions, redevelopment of existing rental housing, inadequate maintenance, and neighborhood gentrification. Taken together, the number of homes lost to the affordable housing stock is significant. The California Housing Partnership Corporation (CHPC) estimates that San Diego County has lost nearly 19,000 unrestricted affordable homes from 2020 to 2023, with another 28,000 at risk of become unaffordable.[16] For deed restricted homes, the San Diego region has lost nearly 2,000 affordable homes in the past five years, and another 2,100 are at risk of losing their restrictions in the coming decade,[17] most

of which are outside the County's jurisdiction. Because Black and Latino residents are overrepresented among lower-income households, the loss of these homes is felt most strongly by people of color. As the region loses more affordable homes, fewer households can afford to remain in San Diego and are displaced from the region. Confirming the needs shown in the data, community engagement emphasized the importance of addressing the loss of affordability for both deed-restricted and unrestricted affordable housing.

Preservation, therefore, is an essential activity to prevent the leakage of the current stock of affordable housing. While the County's existing practices effectively prevent the loss of deed-restricted affordable housing within its jurisdiction, there is opportunity to maintain the stock of NOAH. This can be accomplished by more systematically tracking such housing and fostering capacity regionally to keep such units affordable long-term. Therefore, this Strategies provides for a series of Actions to first build knowledge on the region's stock of NOAH and then build capacity to maintain such homes as affordable long-term.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Building on existing resources tracking deed-restricted affordable housing and their pending expirations, create a countywide dataset of at-risk unrestricted affordable housing, relying on existing real estate data. This database can focus on small multifamily buildings, which have been shown to have lower average rents than larger buildings. Creating such a dataset is a first step of understanding the region's stock of at-risk NOAH.

Staffing needs: 1-2 new FTE

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

---

[16] California Housing Partnership Corp., Unsubsidized Affordable Homes At-Risk | 2024 Report

[17] California Housing Partnership Corp., Affordable Homes At-Risk | 2024 Report

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 2: To foster a robust culture, infrastructure and capacity around community-led affordable housing preservation for the acquisition and conversion of unrestricted affordable housing, work with regional organizations to establish a community-led preservation working group. Such a group can engage community-based organizations, nonprofit affordable housing developers, and others interested in supporting Community Land Trusts (CLT) and alternative ownership arrangements such as Tenant or Community Opportunity to Purchase Acts.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS / 3-5 YEARS

Action 1: Provide funding for affordable housing preservation that improves climate resilience and sustainability of the affordable housing stock, with focus on households in areas vulnerable to flooding, wildfires, and other climate disasters. Funding can be provided for home improvements that improve resiliency for households facing fire or flood risk, including soft-story construction retrofits. This can be separate from existing County programming that provides funds for accessibility and other repairs. Rather, additional housing funding sources can support a new program focused on resiliency improvements and aim to provide them for both low-moderate income homeowners and rental housing that is affordable to low-income households. This funding could be available to both deed restricted and unrestricted affordable rental housing properties, potentially with additional outreach and incentives provided to encourage the participation of owners of unrestricted affordable rental housing. Examples of programs that provide funding for climate resilience/sustainability include several administered by Neighborhood Partnership Housing Services (NPHS) in the Inland Empire, providing grants/loans for home repairs.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Action 1: As a next step for the preservation working group, consider creating a Community Land Trust Acquisition-Rehabilitation Working Group to focus on creating County policies to support CLT and other Community Based Organizations (CBO) to do acquisition-rehabilitation of existing unrestricted affordable housing. As part of this work, the County and the Working Group can consider crafting incentives for property owners of existing unrestricted affordable housing to sell to non-profits. The group can also aim acquisition and conversion funding toward propertiesin areas facing the highest risk of displacement. Working Group can also consider national examples of NOAH acquisition funds, e.g. NOAH Impact Fund (Minnesota), NYC Acquisition Fund (New York), Small Sites Program (SF).

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 7, concerning the preservation of housing affordability, aligns with the County Strategic Plan Initiative of Sustainability as it focuses on Economy and Resiliency. By ensuring ongoing affordability of both deed-restricted and unrestricted housing for the region's lower-income households, the Blueprint is helping to eliminate poverty and promote economic sustainability. And as the Blueprint supports programs that ensure households are able to afford their housing costs and have additional money for other needs, the County is support the Resiliency of households and ensuring people are able to respond to and recover from urgent financial needs.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY

Strategy 7 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Equity as it focuses on Housing and Economic Opportunity. The Action supports Housing by taking steps to ensure that ongoing affordability and its loss is monitored, especially among unrestricted affordable housing, and that community-based organizations continue to develop capacity to engage in affordable housing preservation. By ensuring that households who currently live in an affordable home can continue to see the economic benefits of modest housing costs, it also supports Economic Opportunity.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER

Strategy 7 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Empower as it focuses on Innovation. By fostering innovative efforts to support the preservation of affordability, including through the creation of Community Land Trusts and other emerging practices, the Blueprint is fostering new ideas and the implementation of best practices, advancing Innovation goals.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY

Strategy 7 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Community as it focuses on Engagement and Quality of Life. By creating ongoing engagement with organizations focused on the preservation of affordable housing in the region, the action supports the goals of Engagement. And by supporting policies that would preserve existing housing affordability, which would in turn help households economically, the action supports the goals of Quality of Life.

Strategy
Action

8 Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts

**PROGRAMMATIC
AND POLICY CHANGE**

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

The region's most vulnerable households experience the most severe impacts of the housing crisis. This includes households with the lowest incomes, who face the highest rates of cost burden and most often leave their homes, neighborhoods, and the region entirely for more affordable places to live. Helping such households, who are experiencing rising costs and at greater risk of having to leave their home, remain in place is essential to creating a healthier housing system. By increasing housing stability, especially for lower-income renters, the San Diego region can create a more equitable and healthy housing system and prevent more people from leaving the region or becoming homeless. While state law has expanded tenant protections and capped rent increases, households in San Diego continue to experience instability and displacement. Communities of color are at greater risk of displacement and are overrepresented among the region's unhoused population. Community engagement and the assessment of needs emphasized the need for greater renter protections as well as enforcement of existing laws. Community members also acknowledged the voice of rental property owners, especially small landlords, as an important part of the ecosystem of housing providers. It is important to ensure these property owners are motivated to continue providing safe, dignified housing in the region, while also acknowledging the existing set of favorable legal measures and historic practices that provide landlords with a strong set of property rights. According to community engagement, tenant protections and homelessness prevention programs meant to support vulnerable households are hard to navigate, as a result of being scattered throughout various departments and agencies.

The County has an opportunity to foster more housing stability and prevent homelessness. By creating more housing stability, without impacting the rights of property owners, the region will have fewer unhoused people and spend less money attending to the crises that come with high rates of homelessness. To foster this stability, the County can be more proactive in enforcing existing laws and establishing measures to provide households with greater stability and ultimately prevent households from falling into homelessness. While the County's land use authority and ability to create legal protections for renters is limited to the unincorporated, it has the ability to take other actions with a regional scope, such as providing information and resources. This includes taking actions such as:

• Increasing tenant protections as well as access to information and enforcement of existing laws

• Reviewing existing County programs for temporary housing assistance to increase impact

• Deploying new housing funds (described in Strategy 2) to provide greater support for households at greatest risk of instability

CASE STUDY: LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

Landlord engagement programs seek to provide resources and incentives to landlords to ensure they are aware of local, state, and federal laws and programs, and can effectively communicate vital information to tenants. The detailed case study in Appendix F provides several examples of local practices. Landlord engagement programs can improve access to quality rental units by provides incentives to landlords to rent their units to tenants experiencing housing instability, homelessness, or using housing choice vouchers. Local programs can also help the locality understand the rental market landscape. Since landlords have unique and specific needs based on their target population, it is important to engage a variety of landlord groups, including small landlords and BIPOC landlords. Landlord engagement programs not only protect tenants and landlords from costly eviction proceedings, but they also help prevent displacement in the short-term by enhancing housing navigation services to reduce housing instability.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS / 1-2 YEARS

Action 1: Centralize tenant protections and assistance by providing a public renter liaison to support renters experiencing housing challenges. This liaison function would centralize protections by having a countywide point of contact through whom renters can access information and resources related to their rights. This liaison function can provide education on legal protections and direct households to access resources such as legal assistance and short-term financial assistance. The staff would compile resources across jurisdictions in the county, meaning staff need to be able to help households understand what jurisdiction they are in, what tenant protections and financial resources exist, and so on. This work may also entail routing callers to the appropriate locality, should there be specific protections or resources for that caller. This staff can also help connect households to additional legal assistance when it appears their rights are being violated. This function would likely be best performed by an external agency or CBO, supported by County (and other government) funding.

Staffing needs: A small team of 3-5 new FTE

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

Action 2: Create additional tenant protections for residents in the unincorporated county, in alignment with other local jurisdictions in the San Diego region, such as the cities of San Diego and Chula Vista. This includes

a. considering ways to track and enhance existing protections required by state law (AB 1482), including through the creation of a rental unit registry and/or proactive landlord education to ensure up-to-date information is provided on legal rent increases, just-cause eviction rules, etc.,

b. adopting just-cause eviction protection and, higher relocation assistance requirements in line with other jurisdictions in the region,

c. adopting a local rent stabilization ordinance that sets a lower rent increase cap than AB 1482.

Staffing needs: A small team of 3-5 new FTE

Funding needs: A $1 million or more one-time cost, or a smaller ongoing cost

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS / 3-5 YEARS

Action 1: Expand tenant education and legal services with an eye to codified, permanently funded Right to Counsel countywide. To ensure adequate funding, such an expansion of existing programming would require additional funding sources and collaboration among local jurisdictions in addition to the County. While this Action would require substantial funding, this commitment can be scaled where resources are available.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

Action 2: Review administration of short-term housing assistance programs (including homelessness prevention) for opportunities to restructure and combine public funds for greater impact, including number of households.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

Action 3: Seek and invest expanded affordable housing funding (see Strategy 2) that can flexibly provide more short-term and long-term rental subsidy, sized to the County's need for operating subsidy to meet the production and homelessness/displacement prevention goals.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A multimillion dollar cost, including ongoing and one-time

POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Action 1: Consider conducting a study to identify barriers to housing for vulnerable populations (i.e. those with criminal records, unstable rental histories) – for example, providing alternatives to credit checks, appeals processes to challenge denials to housing. Study should focus on barriers to accessing both private market housing as well as affordable housing, and can identify recommendations for County actions to overcome these barriers.

Staffing needs: None

Funding needs: A one-time cost, less than $1 million

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: SUSTAINABILITY
Strategy 8, concerning the creation of tenant protections and homelessness prevention, aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Sustainability as it focuses on Economy. By creating policies to help households remain housed and avoid becoming unhoused, the Blueprint is helping reduce poverty and promoting economic sustainability for all, supporting the goal of Economy.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EMPOWER
Strategy 8 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Empower as it focuses on Innovation. This action includes steps to create innovative government programs, including greater and more simplified access to tenant protections and information and considering how to streamline existing County programs that support renters and prevent homelessness, which helps achieve the goals of Innovation.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: EQUITY
Strategy 8 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Equity as it focuses on Housing and Economic Opportunity. By supporting policies that ensure households are able to remain in their homes through resources including financial support, this action is achieving the goals of Housing. This action is also supporting the goals of Economic Opportunity by ensuring households are not charged unfair rent increases and thus have money available to spend on other household needs or desires.

COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: COMMUNITY
Strategy 8 aligns with County Strategic Plan Initiative of Community as it focuses on Quality of Life and Communications. By helping renters households have more stability in their homes through the creation of increased tenant protections, resources, and rental support, this action is improving the well-being of households, achieving the goals of Quality of Life. In addition, this action helps proactively provide access to clear and vital information about laws protecting renter households, which achieves the goals of Communications.

NEXT STEPS

The County of San Diego Housing Blueprint sets forth an ambitious and scalable set of policy priorities and actions to help the County address the region's housing crisis and achieve the goals of the 5 Ps. The 5 Ps provide an overall frame for achieving the County's vision of an equitable housing system:

Promote
equity, inclusion, and sustainability

Produce
housing for all

Preserve
vulnerable housing

Protect
tenants

Prevent
displacement

As a policy document, the Blueprint is intended to guide the County's prioritization of future actions. This plan has bold targets, but the reality is that the County does not currently have the needed resources to achieve all of these aims in the short term. The Blueprint's Actions can be scaled to available funding, staffing, and other resources while the County works to bring on the needed resources. An important step for the County, therefore, is to prioritize these Strategies and Actions, and to translate them into its workplan and budget process.

As noted earlier in the Blueprint, the County could address both its RHNA goals and the actions included in the Framework to End Homelessness by focusing its limited resources on deeply affordable units (those affordable to very low- and extremely low-income households), including PSH. These units require a more comprehensive and focused effort because they simply won't be built by the market if the County doesn't step in with its resources and leadership.

As the County considers its current funding resources, it will be important to create clear priorities for the distribution of available funds. Various considerations to which County staff and leadership are attuned will change priorities over time. However, the Blueprint's Strategies 1 and 2 identify top priorities for existing funding, including the creation of homes affordable to very low- and extremely-low income households as well as Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), and affordable homes built on County-owned land.

There are several ways that the staff can consider and implement these priorities through its existing NOFA process:

1. Scoring Criteria—Decisions on whether to focus funding in incorporated areas versus unincorporated areas or in specific neighborhoods, on p ojects on County-owned, on projects that include a significant pe centage of deeply affordable units, as well as other priorities can be addressed through the NOFA process. Additional points can be provided to projects that meet identified priorities. Making the scoring transparent will provide development partners with clear direction on how to structure their projects to meet County priorities.

2. Set-Asides and Targets--NOFAs that set-aside funding for specific housing types or populations will signal the County's focus on these outcomes. Alternatively, the County can adopt policies that ensure that priorities are met, such as creating an eligibility requirement that projects include a percentage of their units for a particular income group or population (including PSH). Additionally, the Housing Authority of the County of San Diego (HACSD) can intentionally focus its Project Based Vouchers on a particular population subset (i.e., unhoused residents).

3. Other Considerations—Priority also might be given to projects that require lower subsidy/leverage more dollars, are more competitive for outside funding, and/or promise faster delivery.

As organized in Section 5, the Blueprint prioritizes the Systems Change Strategies to create the momentum for the Programmatic and Policy Change Strategies that follow. Within the Strategies, immediate-term Actions are identified that help provide a pathway to later implementation of offer the medium-term Actions and those for future study.

APPENDICES

a. San Diego County Housing Blueprint Strategies

b. Data Approach for the Housing Blueprint

c. Infrastructure, Program, and Data Assessments

d. Barriers and Opportunities Assessment

e. Housing Finance Working Group Memorandum

f. Housing Blueprint Case Studies

g. Community Engagement Report

APPENDIX A

SAN DIEGO COUNTY HOUSING BLUEPRINT STRATEGIES

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Appendix A_County of San Diego Housing Blueprint Strategies

Introduction

The San Diego region is confronting a severe housing crisis. In response, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board of Supervisors) has adopted a Housing Blueprint (Blueprint), anchored in the 5 Ps Solutions Framework, outlined below, to steer the County of San Diego's (County) efforts in tackling this pressing issue. This document summarizes the Blueprint's eight Strategies.

The 5 Ps are summarized below:

Promote equity, inclusion, and sustainability

Produce housing for all

Preserve vulnerable housing

Protect tenants

Prevent displacement

1. **Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability:** Implement housing solutions that address the historic patterns of exclusionary housing practices, segregation, and other inequities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities are available to everyone. Housing solutions should promote climate-resilient communities, the preservation of open space, and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
2. **Produce Housing for All:** Support and implement policies to increase housing production of all kinds. Housing development should be located in urbanized areas with access to transit, jobs, and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents.
3. **Preserve Vulnerable Housing:** Support proactive strategies to preserve restricted and unrestricted affordable housing such as tracking expiration dates of affordable housing deed restrictions, keeping tenants informed of their rights, and investing in rehabilitation of housing to preserve affordability.
4. **Protect Tenants:** Support renters by providing information on tenant rights and creating protections to minimize economic eviction or unsustainable rent increases.
5. **Prevent Displacement:** Implement policies that prevent vulnerable residents from the harmful outcomes of displacement resulting from neighborhood revitalization or gentrification pressures. Strategies include studying existing and potential displacement pressures and monitoring the effectiveness of housing retention strategies in relation to planned infrastructure investments.

Taken together, these goals represent a vision of equitable housing for all. The 5 Ps envision a housing system that addresses the region's housing crisis at its root: solving for decades of underproduction as well as practices of inequitable access, challenges of housing stability for various vulnerable populations, and more. By nature, each of the 5 Ps supports and relates to other Ps and thus no single goal area is prioritized ahead of another. Moreover, each Strategy aligns with multiple Ps, in some cases supporting the goals of all 5 Ps.

Through the Blueprint's development, a set of common themes emerged that form guiding principles for the County's Blueprint priorities. These principles ultimately led to the Strategies described in this document. The guiding principles are:

- **Regional role**– While the County has responsibility for the unincorporated areas of San Diego County, it also manages federal funding for several smaller cities, oversees a Housing Authority that has wider geographic responsibilities, and provides housing services and support to residents outside of the unincorporated area. Additionally, the County provides loans to facilitate housing developments throughout the region. As the San Diego region shares the same geographic boundary as its county government, the County can be a champion in leading regional solutions while working towards its own housing goals in the unincorporated area. When implementing the Blueprint, the County should determine where its role is most appropriately limited to the unincorporated areas of the County and when it should engage more regionally.
- **Expansion and responsible investment of resources** – As detailed above, the County should take steps to expand resources to successfully achieve the housing goals and actions included in the Blueprint. Additionally, the County should secure long-term affordability commitments in exchange for any investment of County resources (i.e., land, tax exemption, or direct funding).
- **Equitable prioritization of highest need** – the County's funding should be prioritized towards populations and housing solutions where it is needed most: extremely low-income and very low-income housing production, including Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). The County has made significant progress in addressing its RHNA goals for households with low-, moderate- and above moderate-incomes. Additional actions, from policy and programmatic support to targeted funding must be implemented in order to achieve the RHNA goals for VLI and ELI households. Additionally, focusing resources on the development of more PSH units will address the needs outlined in the County's Framework for Ending Homelessness.
- **Innovation and staying nimble** – the County should remain aware and adaptable as the housing landscape evolves and pursue innovation responsibly to further the Blueprint goals.

Housing Blueprint Strategies

The tables below provide an overview of the Housing Blueprint's set of eight Strategies and their corresponding ambitious and scalable Actions. The first three actions are categorized as Systems Changes and the last five as Programmatic/Policy Changes. Each Strategy is composed of a number of Actions, which are organized into two implementation timeframes, immediate (years 1-2) and medium-term (years 3-5), with more potential actions identified for further study (no timeframe) that are beyond the scope of the Blueprint. The first two strategies should be the highest priority for the County in the short-term. Both are foundational to the implementation of the Blueprint and its strategies. Actions will need to be refined and assessed in light of available resources.

In addition, the Blueprint identifies 5-year affordable housing unit production target, based on the County's RHNA goals for homes affordable to lower-income households, its current practice of funding affordable housing development regionally, and its vision of providing more permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness. The Blueprint's 5-year affordable housing production target is to support and fund the production of approximately 4,100 new affordable homes, which would require an investment of $383 million over five years.

Systems Change Actions

5 Ps	Strategy	Immediate Actions (Years 1-2)	Medium-Term Actions (Years 3-5)	For Further Study
	1. Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing	Action 1: Establish a Housing Strategy Office in the CAO's office. This office should focus on the following: a. Coordinate across departments to ensure Board direction is implemented, identify and resolve conflicts, and provide staff recommendations to the CAO to achieve greater clarity, cohesion, and impact to their direction b. Manage complex multi-agency issues c. Drive the implementation of the Blueprint and reports/data to inform the CAO and the public d. Oversee the development and implementation of data and data dashboards to inform the public, track progress in meeting goals, make informed decisions about policies, programs, or unmet needs, and evaluate performance. e. When partnering and collaborating on housing strategy regionally, act as lead liaison with internal and external public and private agencies. f. Ensure that the County aggressively pursues and takes advantage of funding and leveraging opportunities to further housing goals. Action 2: Further formalize internal department coordination by creating two multi-departmental teams that are comprised of department directors and senior staff. These two teams will be convened by the Housing Strategy Office: A Housing Catalyst Team and a Housing and Homeless Solutions Catalyst Team. Action 3: In collaboration with jurisdictions throughout the county, as well as SANDAG and other partners and stakeholders, the HSO will establish a formal forum where housing leaders can learn and share resources, successful and innovative strategies, and best practices that support the development, adoption, and implementation of local housing programs and policies throughout the San Diego region.	None	Action 1: Evaluate the success of the Catalyst Teams to determine whether additional organizational actions are needed to increase interdepartmental coordination, including the potential for consolidation or realignment of departments responsible for housing production, preservation, and protection efforts, including housing, homelessness, and planning, and other development-related departments/offices (e.g., Public Works) responsibilities. Action 2: Examine the potential for the County's Housing Authority to be designated a federal Moving to Work Jurisdiction, a powerful designation that unlocks flexibility in how housing authority resources can be used for agency-specific needs and waives certain statutory and regulatory barriers. This includes exploring options, such as advocating for expanding the number of authorized MTW agencies . Such a move may allow the County to maximize the flexibility of its Housing Authority and its assets. Action 3: The County has pursued, but not yet secured, a change in state law in that would allow affordable housing produced within an incorporated city when funding is provided by the County and/or built on County-owned properties and land to count toward the County's regional housing needs assessment contribution. This ambition is shared by other jurisdictions and the effort will continue to be part of the County's legislative program.
	2. Create New Funding Sources for Housing	Action 1: Actively identify the potential for an ongoing appropriation of General Funds or other flexible dollars to support the implementation of the Blueprint and meet the County's housing goals, which would expand the County's ability to fund new housing opportunities as well as increase leverage of State and federal sources. Action 2: Create a formal Housing Trust Fund that aligns with state HCD requirements to enable the County to access new funding sources and capture existing sources. (The County's IHTF could potentially be adapted to meet these requirements.) Analyze the County's 2020 Affordable Housing Trust Fund Study to determine the best potential source or sources of	Action 1: Evaluate opportunities to place a measure on the 2026 or 2028 ballot to fund affordable housing production, preservation, and tenant support. Size funding measure to ensure adequate funds are available to address RHNA goals, PSH needs, and other targets.	Action 1: Revisit with partners exploring the potential for the creation of a Regional Housing Finance Agency similar to the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority and the Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency to provide funding for the 5 Ps, including production, preservation, protection, and homeless prevention. Creating such an agency may require state legislation.

5 Ps	Strategy	Immediate Actions (Years 1-2)	Medium-Term Actions (Years 3-5)	For Further Study
		affordable housing funding, in terms of scale of impact and ease of implementaXon. AcXon 3: In alignment with the Homelessness SoluXons and PrevenXon AcXon Plan, develop a regional funding strategy, in partnership with the RTFH and city jurisdicXons, to strategically increase funding for and support the expansion of Permanent SupporXve Housing (PSH) and housing for extremely-low-income residents across San Diego County. AcXon 4: ConXnue advocaXng for more funding at the State and federal levels and support other measures that would provide the County with needed dollars to leverage local sources.		
	3. Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access	AcXon 1: Create and maintain a public-facing housing data dashboard that provides informaXon to elected leaders and the community about progress in achieving housing goals and performance measurements that includes informaXon from a variety of exisXng sources, such as the PDS Quarterly Housing Reports and General Plan Annual Progress Report, as well as new sources. AcXon 2: Create a new internal system that collects and centralizes access to data to chart progress in meeXng Blueprint Strategies and other goals, evaluate success of programs and policies, and idenXfy gaps and needs. AcXon 3: Create data-centric tools for housing and land use modeling to help the County make informed decisions about housing policies and programs. AcXon 4: To encourage housing developers to create more housing in the unincorporated areas, improve the Housing ProducXon and Capacity Portal or other interacXve online resources to include parcel-specific informaXon on housing development opportuniXes to meet the County's housing needs. This can include informaXon on sites from the 6th Cycle Housing Element's ResidenXal Sites Inventory and the Development Feasibility Analysis. AcXon 5: Create an official County Commission for Housing and Homelessness (or Advisory Board) to review and evaluate the community's housing and homelessness needs, services, programs, and policies to advise the Board of Supervisors.	Action 1: Create a web-based centralized affordable housing application system that enables renters to view current listings of affordable housing throughout the county (working with other jurisdictions) and that includes filters and a map-based interface to narrow down options. The affordable housing application system can also allow applicants to immediately determine eligibility and to access a common application. (See case study on DAHLIA/Doorway) Action 2: Make improvements to the County's websites for the Housing and Community Development Services Department and Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities Department to provide more data and information about the programs offered, and to list and map projects that have received County funding. Include access to dashboards.	None

Programmatic/Policy Actions

5 Ps	Strategy	Immediate Actions (Years 1-2)	Medium-Term Actions (Years 3-5)	For Further Study
	4. Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding	AcXon 1: Make PSH and ELI a top priority for housing producXon and acquisiXon/conversion, and create a funding policy that gives preference to projects with a minimum set-aside of PSH and ELI units. As part of this prioriXzaXon, the County can anXcipate greater demand for Project Based	Action 1: Annually evaluate the County's use of funding for Housing solutions to align efforts on housing and preventing/ending homelessness. This includes holistically reviewing resources allocated for the spectrum of	Action 1: As Medi-Cal Transformation (CalAIM) continues to evolve, collaborate with Managed Care Providers to expand housing supports and explore

5 Ps	Strategy	Immediate Actions (Years 1-2)	Medium-Term Actions (Years 3-5)	For Further Study
	(Subsidy) to Maximize Impact	Vouchers, which it can conXnue leveraging to support PSH and ELI unit creaXon. To help implement this priority, the County can also determine a share of the regional PSH need, as quanXfied by RTFH, for which it will aim to provide gap funding and Project Based Vouchers. AcXon 2: ConXnually reassess the addiXonal gap funding needed to meet County housing targets, including RHNA, PSH, other affordable housing, and more. Action 3: Continue to determine how new funds for housing development that were made available through Proposition 1 (approved by the voters in March 2024) can most efficiently be administered and invested into production of ELI and PSH units.	housing solutions, from temporary to permanent, and setting priorities for future funding. Action 2: When significant ongoing funding sources are established, provide regular expanded gap funds through an over-the-counter process, allowing affordable housing developers to access County gap funds when needed. The County should continue to use NOFAs in a coordinated manner for one-time funds or funding sources that require competitive solicitation, such as for administering Project-Based Vouchers. Action 3: Pursue opportunities to work with an external agency, such as a community-based nonprofit or community development financial institution (CDFI), to create an affordable ADU forgivable loan program, with aim of encouraging the production and affordability of countywide ADUs: The County can provide a forgivable loan in exchange for five years of affordability, sizing the loan to the effective reduction in rent. This program can be available countywide. The County can consider using existing funds for this program or new sources.	options to further regional supportive housing development goals.
	5. Unlock land for sustainable and resilient development opportunities (land use and public/nonprofit land)	AcXon 1: Support faith-based and educaXonal insXtuXons in idenXfying and uXlizing potenXal sites, building off opportuniXes created by recent legislaXon, by providing technical assistance, training, and other resources. This may include establishing and expanding relaXonships with such insXtuXons and idenXfying opportuniXes to partner on development projects when such sites are adjacent to County-owned land. AcXon 2: To beYer culXvate and incenXvize new sites, ensure that public sites or projects that leverage land contribuXons from other enXXes (such as faith-based and educaXonal insXtuXons) are prioriXzed for NOFA funding or can tap into a separate set-aside of funds. A key way to encourage and perpetuate this model is to provide financing priority to reward such pracXces. Set-aside funds should be from new funding sources (which may require medium-term implementaXon). AcXon 3: ConXnue the pracXce of building a pipeline of County-owned land to be made available for affordable housing development, in line with the Board joint resoluXon to contribute to 10,000 affordable housing units on publicly-owned land. AcXons could include idenXfying housing sites that can be made available within the next 3-5 years, along with esXmated site capacity, completed environmental invesXgaXons (Phases I and II), and idenXficaXon of County funding sources that may be allocated for those sites, etc. AcXon 4: ConXnue encouraging ADU development by expanding the ADU standard plan program to provide residents access to pre-approved ADU plans and providing a list of pre-approved ADU vendors with pre-reviewed	Action 1: Build on current Development Feasibility Analysis to conduct analysis on additional communities in the unincorporated county. This will expand opportunities for climate resilient and sustainable housing development areas, including in areas outside of environmental threats (e.g. wildfire, flooding, and sea level rise) and in areas that reduce vehicle miles traveled (e.g. near transit, jobs, and other resources). Action 2: Support infill infrastructure improvements needed for development on government- and nonprofit-owned sites to support sustainability targets. This can include utility infrastructure, mobility improvements (e.g. streetscape, walkability, transit, etc.), parkland, etc.	Action 1: Study potential need for a soft-story construction retrofits program. Soft story construction refers to older, wood-frame multi-story buildings with an especially weak, flexible, or otherwise vulnerable ground floor. Given the San Diego region's potential for seismic events, it will be important to consider the need to preserve existing housing that, due to its construction type, is vulnerable at the time of a seismic event. Action 2: Continue to improve expansion and streamlining of land pipelines. Explore partnerships in the region to better coordinate development pipelines. If a sufficient pipeline is identified, consider establishing a bench of pre-approved, qualified developers for sites on land owned by the County, cities, and other public and private institutions, to enable streamlined project(s) implementation. Action 3: Should a regional entity, such as SANDAG, initiate the creation of a regional, publicly-accessible mapping tool of parcels from local Housing Elements, the County could contribute to it. Further study is necessary for how information is collected, maintained, and coordinated, but can likely draw on

5 Ps	Strategy	Immediate Actions (Years 1-2)	Medium-Term Actions (Years 3-5)	For Further Study
		plans. This would expand the County's current offering of plans to provide more options with architecturally unique features; additional plan options would undergo an initial review, but still require a homeowner to hire the designer to make the plan specific to their property. This strategy encourages designers to submit their plans to the County and offer their services at a reduced cost to homeowners building an ADU, giving greater flexibility and a wider array of options than the pre-approved plans currently offered. A later step can be to encourage other jurisdictions in the region to create a similar process, supporting greater efficiencies across the region. (Examples: Various jurisdictions in Napa and Sonoma counties, City of Los Angeles, City of San Jose) Action 5: Reconsider renewal of the County's ADU fee waiver for the unincorporated area. Financing the cost of building an ADU is one of the main barriers to increasing ADUs, especially for low-moderate-income homeowners. Renewing the County's ADU fee waiver can continue to encourage this valuable housing typology. To ensure fee waivers are going to more affordable ADUs, it can be included as an incentive for maintaining affordable rents for 5-10 years, with the expected reduction in rental income sized to value of the fee waiver. This action could be implemented alongside the creation of an ADU forgivable loan program (see Strategy 4).		local Housing Element Annual Progress Reports, to avoid duplicative efforts.
	6. Provide Solutions for Missing Middle-Income Housing Production and Programs	Action 1: Adopt targeted developer incentives to encourage the production of homeownership units for middle-income households: a. Defer development fees until project completion for developments meeting middle-income affordability target thresholds (to be established) b. Work within the current place-based streamlining changes and strategies to include expedited entitlement processing for development types and affordability levels serving middle income households Action 2: Partner with local and regional housing funds like Middlemarch and bond issuers like the California Municipal Finance Agency (CMFA), each of which can offer favorable capital resources to create new middle-income homes without local government subsidies. Action 3: Seek ways to expand the scale of financial support for current downpayment and closing cost assistance programs that have garnered strong support from developers and consumers.	Action 1: Research, evaluate, and consider implementing additional financial or land use incentives to promote increased development of moderately priced homes in collaboration with developers and other jurisdictions and stakeholders within the region to encourage emergent models and policy best practices. Action 2: Identify funding to establish a revolving predevelopment/construction loan fund seeded by a repayable "top-loss" investment from the County and leveraging philanthropic, CDFI, and conventional capital to incentivize middle-income production. Action 3: Explore grant investments to create community-based homebuyer education efforts. These efforts can be focused in disadvantaged communities to overcome ongoing equity disparities in accessing homeownership programs.	Action 1: In conjunction with efforts like the Partnership to House San Diego, explore opportunities for employer-assisted housing programs, with a focus on essential workers. Action 2: Explore approaches to leverage popular downpayment assistance programs as affordable homeownership development incentives, such as by forward committing them to projects seeking to serve middle income households. This could be analogous to project-basing rental subsidy vouchers to facilitate development feasibility. Action 3: Foster opportunities to encourage the emergence of a San Diego County-based modular construction company that can reduce construction costs and timeframes to provide housing affordable to middle-income households.
	7. Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies	Action 1: Building on existing resources tracking deed-restricted affordable housing and their pending expirations, create a countywide dataset of at-risk unrestricted affordable housing, relying on existing real estate data. This database can focus on small multifamily buildings, which have been shown to have lower average rents than larger buildings. Creating such a dataset is a first step of understanding the region's stock of at-risk NOAH.	Action 1: Provide funding for affordable housing preservation that improves climate resilience and sustainability of the affordable housing stock, with focus on households in areas vulnerable to flooding, wildfires, and other climate disasters. Funding can be provided for home improvements that improve resiliency for households facing fire or flood risk, including soft-story construction retrofits. This can be separate from existing County	Action 1: As a next step for the preservation working group, consider creating a Community Land Trust Acquisition-Rehabilitation Working Group to focus on creating County policies to support Community Land Trusts and other Community Based Organizations to lead acquisition-rehabilitation of

5 Ps	Strategy	Immediate Actions (Years 1-2)	Medium-Term Actions (Years 3-5)	For Further Study
		Action 2: To foster a robust culture, infrastructure and capacity around community-led affordable housing preservation for the acquisition and conversion of unrestricted affordable housing, work with regional organizations to establish a community-led preservation working group. Such a group can engage community-based organizations, nonprofit affordable housing developers, and others interested in supporting Community Land Trusts and alternative ownership arrangement such as Tenant or Community Opportunity to Purchase Acts.	programming that provides funds for accessibility and other repairs. Rather, additional housing funding sources can support a new program focused on resiliency improvements and aim to provide them for both low-moderate income homeowners and rental housing that is affordable to low-income households. This funding could be available to both deed restricted and unrestricted affordable rental housing properties, potentially with additional outreach and incentives provided to encourage the participation of owners of unrestricted affordable rental housing. Examples of programs that provide funding for climate resilience/sustainability include several administered by Neighborhood Partnership Housing Services (NPHS) in the Inland Empire, providing grants/loans for home repairs.	existing unrestricted affordable housing. As part of this work, the County and the Working Group can consider crafting incentives for property owners of existing unrestricted affordable housing to sell to non-profits. The group can also aim acquisition and conversion funding toward properties in areas facing the highest risk of displacement. Working Group can also consider national examples of NOAH acquisition funds, e.g. NOAH Impact Fund (Minnesota), NYC Acquisition Fund (New York), Small Sites Program (SF).
	8. Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts	Action 1: Centralize tenant protections and assistance by providing a public renter liaison to support renters experiencing housing challenges. This liaison function would centralize protections by having a countywide point of contact through whom renters can access information and resources related to their rights. This liaison function can provide education on legal protections and direct households to access resources such as legal assistance and short-term financial assistance. The staff would compile resources across jurisdictions in the county, meaning staff need to be able to help households understand what jurisdiction they are in, what tenant protections and financial resources exist, and so on. This work may also entail routing callers to the appropriate locality, should there be specific protections or resources for that caller. This staff can also help connect households to additional legal assistance when it appears their rights are being violated. This function would likely be best performed by an external agency or CBO, supported by County (and other government) funding. Action 2: Create additional tenant protections for residents in the unincorporated county, in alignment with other local jurisdictions in the San Diego region, such as the cities of San Diego and Chula Vista. This includes a. considering ways to track and enhance existing protections required by state law (AB 1482), including through the creation of a rental unit registry and/or proactive landlord education to ensure up-to-date information is provided on legal rent increases, just-cause eviction rules, etc., b. adopting just-cause eviction protection and, higher relocation assistance requirements in line with other jurisdictions in the region, c. adopting a local rent stabilization ordinance that sets a lower rent increase cap than AB 1482.	Action 1: Expand tenant education and legal services with an eye to codified, permanently funded Right to Counsel countywide. To ensure adequate funding, such an expansion of existing programming would require additional funding sources and collaboration among local jurisdictions in addition to the County. While this Action would require substantial funding, this commitment can be scaled where resources are available. Action 2: Review administration of short-term housing assistance programs (including homelessness prevention) for opportunities to restructure and combine public funds for greater impact, including number of households. Action 3: Seek and invest expanded affordable housing funding (see Strategy 2) that can flexibly provide more short-term and long-term rental subsidy, sized to the County's need for operating subsidy to meet the production and homelessness/displacement prevention goals.	Action 1: Consider conducting a study to identify barriers to housing for vulnerable populations (i.e. those with criminal records, unstable rental histories) -- for example, providing alternatives to credit checks, appeals processes to challenge denials to housing. Study can identify recommendations for County actions to overcome these barriers.

APPENDIX B

DATA APPROACH FOR THE HOUSING BLUEPRINT

Appendix B_Data Approach for the Housing Blueprint

The basis of any successful plan is the development of strong goals and measures. Data-driven policy requires that data is regularly analyzed, giving policymakers the data and analytics needed to make decisions about resource allocation and policy and program design. Key to performance evaluation is the development of specific targeted goals for each performance measure.

As the County moves towards implementing actions aligned with the Housing Blueprint, it can also consider and build off the following proposed indicators and performance measures to evaluate progress and measure progress towards goals and evaluate performance.

Indicators

Indicators can be used to provide an overall picture of the County's housing situation. Indicators primarily rely on data sources external to the County to provide general housing information.

Potential Indicator	Potential Source

1. Composition of Housing Stock
    - Total Number Housing Units
    - Number Housing Units by Type
    - Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
    - Multi-Family 2-4
    - Multi Family 5+
    - Single Family Detached
	Census Bureau/American Community Survey (ACS), except ADU data, which is from the County Planning & Development Services

2. Housing Units at Risk of Losing Affordability
    - Number of affordable units at risk of conversion
    - Number of unrestricted units (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) at risk of conversion
	County Housing and Community Development Services, California Housing Partnership Corp. (CHPC)
	CHPC/County analysis of real estate market data

3. Housing Affordability Over Time
    - Homeownership rate
    - Median home value
    - Median rent
	Census Bureau/ACS
	Census Bureau/Real Estate Market Data

4. Housing Insecurity Faced By Lowest Income County Residents	Census Bureau/ACS, HUD CHAS data

- Number of tenants paying more than 30 percent of income and 50 percent of income toward rent (i.e., rent burdened and severely rent burdened households) - Displacement risk areas - Eviction rate over time	SANDAG, Urban Displacement Project UCSD Homelessness HUB

Performance measures

Performance measures are intended to help County staff track the Blueprint's implementation over time and are specific to each Blueprint Strategy. As the County refines the actions that will be implemented, measures will need to be adapted.

Blueprint Strategy	Performance Measure
General Housing Picture – overview of overall housing progress	1. Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Goals - Units permiYed by unit type and income - Units permiYed by development stage
	2. Permix ng Xmes from applicaXon compleXon to building permit (by market rate and affordable)
	3. Number and percent of homes planned/constructed in priority areas
1. Refine the County's OrganizaKonal Approach to Housing	N/A
2. Create New Funding Sources for Housing	1. County-administered funding for affordable housing programs by source/over Xme
	2. Increase in funding available for affordable housing by group served (Permanent SupporXve Housing (PSH), lower income households, middle income households)
3. Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access	1. Number households accessing housing through a centralized portal
	2. Number of people accessing housing websites (with new reporXng/dashboard)
	3. Number of people engaged in housing through aYendance at public meeXngs (new commission)
4. Focus and Streamline AdministraKon of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact	1. Affordable units subsidized by County by type - Owner v Renter - PreservaXon - Rehab/Minor Repair - ADUs (if program adopted)

Blueprint Strategy	Performance Measure
	2. Number of Affordable units subsidized by County by income (including PSH and Extremely Low-Income (ELI)) by available, permiYed, under construcXon, in the development pipeline
	3. Number of dollars leveraged by County investment (by dollars and/or raXo), broken out by source
	4. Average per unit subsidy for County-assisted developments
	5. Number of Project Based Vouchers made available for PSH compared to total vouchers (over Xme)
5. Unlock land for sustainable and resilient development opportuniKes (land use and public/nonprofit land)	1. Number of units planned on underuXlized sites (County owned + others) to contribute to 10,000 unit City-County pledge
	2. Number of acres of land made available in the County on property owned by faith-based insXtuXons, nonprofit colleges, and commercial uses
6. Provide SoluKons for Middle-Income Housing ProducKon and Programs	1. Number of income-restricted mod and middle-income opportuniXes created by type (ownership or rental) and programmaXc source (e.g. funding, streamlining, zoning incenXves, etc.)
	2. Number of County home purchase loans originated by race/ethnicity
7. Implement Affordable Housing PreservaKon Strategies	1. Number of exisXng subsidized homes preserved by affordability level
	2. Number of unsubsidized (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)) homes converted to affordable housing by affordability level
	3. Number and percent of homes preserved or converted in targeted areas
8. Strengthen and Enforce Tenant ProtecKons and Homeless PrevenKon Efforts	1. Number of families stabilized with one-Xme rental assistance/other supports (rent stabilizaXon, just cause evicXon, right to legal counsel, anX-harassment policies, and landlord educaXon)
	2. Amount spent on tenant protecXons (one Xme rent to prevent evicXon/pay mortgage) and homeless prevenXon (rental assistance to stabilize)
	3. Percent of households placed in permanent housing/rapid rehousing who maintain their housing for 12 months

APPENDIX C

INFRASTRUCTURE, PROGRAM, AND DATA ASSESSMENTS

Appendix C_County of San Diego Housing Blueprint Infrastructure, Program, and Data Assessments

As an initial step to creating the final Housing Blueprint, LeSar Development Consultants prepared a memorandum providing an assessment of the County's existing housing and homelessness initiatives, and its strengths and opportunities. In completing this assessment, LeSar and its consultant team reviewed the County's housing actions, programs and policies; met with staff of more than a dozen County agencies, departments, and offices to discuss their work and the County organizational system; and discussed housing needs and County programs and policies with about 50 community stakeholders in focus groups.

This appendix provides a summary of that assessment, completed in January 2024 and relying on data current through then. This summary is organized into the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Overall Housing Needs
3. The 5 Ps Solutions Framework
4. Assessment of the County's Current Housing Actions, Programs, and Policies
5. Establishing the Blueprint's Framework and Goals

Introduction

The good news is that the County is already actively working to address the housing and homelessness needs of its residents, with the Board of Supervisors and County staff proactively enacting new policies and taking action to increase the region's supply of Affordable Housing, address barriers to accessing housing, and provide resources to prevent and end homelessness. The Blueprint will build upon a number of key steps already taken by the County in recent years to address the housing crisis:

- **Creation of the Innovative Housing Trust Fund (IHTF)** – The IHTF was created by Board action in 2017 with an initial investment of $25 million. Since its inception, the IHTF has made $105.6 million available for new affordable housing opportunities.
- **Adoption of the Transformative Housing Solutions (THS) package** – This set of initiatives directs the actions of several departments to assess and implement seven key strategies: 1) Assess opportunities to acquire land along key corridors to support future transit-oriented development; 2) Capture upzoning land value windfalls through an inclusionary housing program; 3) Complete a comprehensive new construction cost study; 4) Reduce the cost of green affordable housing; 5) Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) requirements for housing projects that include a significant affordable housing production; 6) Expand preservation of existing affordable housing including naturally occurring affordable housing; and 7) Investigate opportunities to create a regional perennial affordable housing trust fund.

- **Partnership with the City of San Diego to Produce 10,000 New Homes—** In October 2022, the City and County held a summit where they agreed to work together to create 10,000 new housing opportunities on public lands by 2030.
- **Successful Application to Become a Prohousing Jurisdiction** – The County leveraged its existing land use and housing programs to secure the Prohousing designation from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), opening up opportunities for more State housing funding. This designation allowed the County to win $2.4 million in funding under the Prohousing Incentive Pilot Program (PIP). The County will also receive priority processing or funding points when applying under various State housing programs.
- **Proactive Efforts to Create Affordable Homes on Surplus County Property** – Over the last few years, the County identified eleven County-owned sites that can be repurposed for affordable housing. Several agreements with developers have already been made, and the County has facilitated and accelerated development by demolishing existing structures and performing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review.
- **Increased Role in Homelessness Policies, Programs, and Services—**In April 2021, to respond to the challenge of homelessness, the County created the Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) and its Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS), which coordinates with the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH), other public agencies, and service providers. The County developed a Framework for Ending Homelessness and in February 2024, finalized the County Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan.
- **Implementation of 6th Cycle Housing Element—** Since successfully adopting its Housing Element in 2021, the County has implemented many key activities, including the significant 2023 update of the Housing Zoning Ordinance. Work on many other key actions are underway, and the County has made significant progress toward the following: Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) in four VMT efficient areas of the unincorporated county, adoption of an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, creation of a small lot subdivision ordinance, and more.
- **Actions to Remove Barriers to Housing Production—**The Board adopted 22 actions in May 2023 that remove various barriers to housing production, including those that impact the development process, regulations, and more. The Board funded this package of short-, medium- and long-term actions with $13 million in resources.

In addition to these initiatives, the County implements myriad programs and policies, which are overseen by talented and capable staff and have a strong impact in the region.

Overall Housing Needs

For decades, communities throughout California did not produce enough housing to keep up with population growth, resulting in skyrocketing rents and increased homelessness. In response to the growing crisis, California State leaders enacted new legislation aimed at

spurring housing growth by mandating zoning changes, loosening regulations, and increasing funding for Affordable Housing. In addition, the State increased accountability by imposing penalties on jurisdictions that fail to adequately plan for housing growth. These efforts have created a new sense of urgency and have catalyzed new and creative approaches to Affordable Housing development. Yet, despite these promising initiatives, too many families are housing insecure, spending too much of their income on housing, forcing them to leave the region where housing is more affordable, or finding themselves homeless.

While the following analysis highlights the significant challenges the County faces in meeting its housing needs, the County is not alone in this struggle. The County now has the opportunity to hone its strategy to address these housing needs, using the Blueprint as the roadmap to do so. Based on this analysis, the LeSar team have highlighted the areas where the County can focus its own resources and efforts to meet the greatest needs with the most impact.

San Diego County has a population of about 3.3 million. One city, San Diego, accounts for 42% of the county's population and has 63% of the county's housing needs. There are an additional 17 incorporated cities, each with its own distinct housing needs and approaches. While most of the population in San Diego County lives in the more urbanized areas near the Pacific coast, the mostly rural unincorporated area is home to about half a million people living in 175,000 homes. The unincorporated area of San Diego County has few areas that are ideal for housing development that are near jobs, schools, services, and other urban amenities. Thus, the need for new homes, as reflected in the unincorporated county's fair-share of the region's housing needs as designated by SANDAG, is relatively small; the unincorporated county has 15% of the county's population but only 4% of the housing needs, according to the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), determined by SANDAG. Therefore, the County has a significant role to support housing needs across the region that extends beyond its land use authority in the unincorporated area.

Lower-income San Diego County residents have high rates of housing cost burden, with the most severe impacts falling on Low-Income (LI), Very Low-Income (VLI), and Extremely Low-Income (ELI) households, defined below. The widespread cost burden in San Diego County points to the need to produce and preserve affordable housing of many different typologies to address the full spectrum of housing need experienced by San Diego County residents. Creating and implementing a full range of housing solutions will advance [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) goals](#), creating a county with more equitable housing access. It will also advance regional homelessness policy, which recognizes that high housing costs are a core driver of homelessness and calls for the production of more homes affordable to ELI residents, as well as Permanent Supportive Housing, Emergency Shelter, and Rapid Re-Housing Units.

Defining affordable housing

The term "affordable housing" is often used in different ways. For the sake of clarity, this report uses the following terms:

- "Housing affordability" refers to the affordability standard that total housing costs should be no more than 30% of household income. Households that spend more than 30% of

their income on rent or homeownership costs are considered "cost burdened," and those spending more than 50% are considered "severely cost burdened."

- "Affordable Housing," a capitalized term, refers to housing with formal income restrictions. These income restrictions typically come in the form of deed restrictions that require that homes be rented or sold to low- to moderate-income households. While the income restrictions ensure the home remains affordable and serves a household with the need for a lower price or rent, such income restrictions typically have an expiration date at which point the home's price or rent is no longer restricted. Affordable Housing where income restrictions are anticipated to expire within 10 years is considered to be "at risk."

- "Unrestricted affordable housing," an uncapitalized term, refers to housing without formal income restrictions that low- to moderate-income families can afford. These homes are sometimes called Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing, or NOAH. Because such homes do not have income restrictions, their residents often face displacement pressure when rents are increasing.

This report also uses various definitions for income levels, which primarily revolve around proportions of Area Median Income (AMI) by household size. The following terms align with State laws and funding programs, and reflect income limits that came into effect May 9th, 2024:

- Extremely low-income (ELI): Households earning less than 30% of AMI, or up to $45,450 for a household of four

- Very low-income (VLI): Households earning between 30% and 50% of AMI, or up to $75,750 for a household of four

- Low-income (LI): Households earning between 50% and 80% of AMI, or up to $121,250 for a household of four

- Moderate-income (Mod): Households earning 80%-120% of AMI, or up to $143,400 for a household of four

- Above moderate-income (Above mod): Households earning more than 120% of AMI, or more than $143,400 for a household of four

Lastly, another concept often used in housing is middle-income households. This term does not correspond with a specific income level but is at a minimum used to refer to moderate-income households. In some high-cost regions, such as San Diego County, market rate housing is unaffordable to households earning as high as 150% to 200% of AMI, and as such, middle-income households can include these higher income levels. The term "workforce housing" is sometimes used to refer to middle-income or moderate-income housing; this term may lead to confusion by suggesting that lower-income households are *not* part of the workforce, and thus will be avoided where possible in favor of a more precise income-based definition.

A spectrum of housing needs

San Diego County residents have a spectrum of housing needs. That spectrum includes interim housing and emergency shelter, permanent supportive housing, affordable housing (both deed-restricted and unrestricted, rental and ownership, special populations), and market-rate housing (rental and ownership). Special populations can include seniors, justice-involved, farmworkers,

and more. While interim housing and emergency shelter are a critical part of the housing spectrum, they are not a focus of the Housing Blueprint.

Spectrum of Housing Needs

Interim housing and emergency shelter	Permanent Supportive Housing	Affordable Housing (deed restricted and unrestricted, rental and ownership, special pops)	Market rate housing (rental and ownership)

There is a diversity of forms within each of these housing types. Market-rate housing can include many different structures, including single-family homes, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings, mid-rise apartments, and high-rise apartments. Each of these typologies varies in their affordability. Detached single-family homes, for example, are among the costliest type of housing to produce primarily because of the high cost of land; while high-rise buildings (eight stories or more) more efficiently use land, they require costly steel-frame construction; townhomes and small apartment buildings tend to be the most affordable, because of their more efficient use of land than single-family homes and their reliance on lower-cost wood frame construction. Affordable Housing can include all of these types of structures, as well as middle-income homes for households who earn too much to qualify for subsidized housing but not enough to afford market-rate homes.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

The 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) target for the San Diego region is 171,685 homes. Of the total allocation, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) allocated 6,700 units to unincorporated San Diego County, broken down into four income groups. As shown in the table below, the County is ahead of pace in meeting low-income, moderate-income, and above moderate-income housing needs, but is behind pace in meeting very low-income housing needs, which includes extremely low-income housing needs.

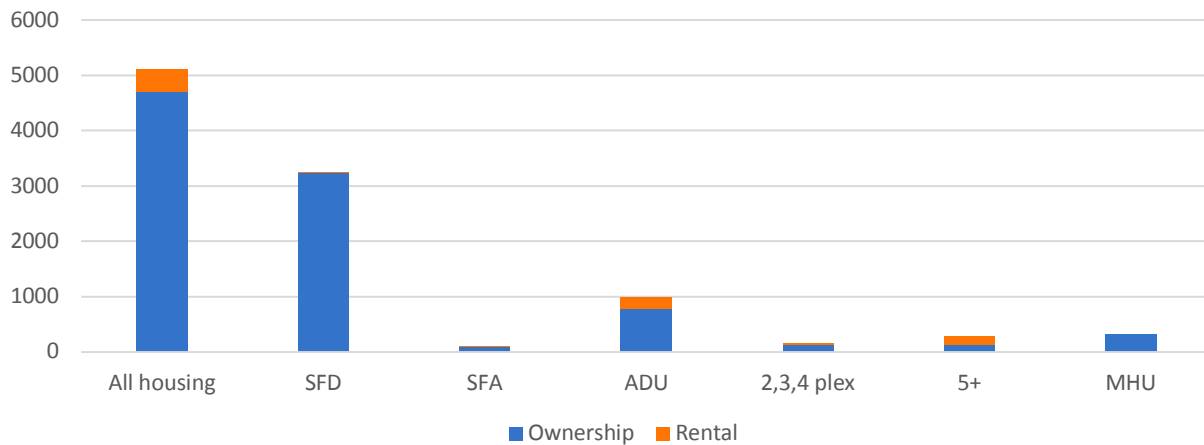|	ELI/VLI[18]	LI	Mod	Above mod	Total
RHNA	1,834	992	1,165	2,709	6,700
Units permitted through March 2023	190	526	802	1,819	3,337
Percent of RHNA met through March 2023	10%	53%	69%	67%	50%
Status	Behind pace	Ahead of pace	Ahead of pace	Ahead of pace	

Source: Quarterly Housing Report (1st Quarter 2023)

[18] ELI housing needs are tracked as a subset of very low-income housing needs and not tracked in the HCD APR Data Dashboard. Therefore, these numbers underreport the ELI permits.

Housing Typologies

As shown in the graph below,[19] unincorporated San Diego County housing stock is primarily made up of detached single-family homes. Present permitting data shows production of this housing typology continues to dominate unincorporated San Diego County. Other, more affordable typologies of housing such as townhomes or apartment buildings account for a smaller share of the unincorporated housing stock and recent building permits.

Building permits by type and tenure, 2018-2022

■ Ownership   ■ Rental

Source: LeSar analysis of HCD Annual Progress Report (APR) Data Dashboard. https://www.hcd.ca.gov/planning-and-community-development/housing-open-data-tools/housing-element-implementation-and-apr-dashboard

Cost Burdens

The lack of diverse, affordable housing options that meet the spectrum of housing need in unincorporated San Diego County causes high cost burdens. A household that is cost burdened is one that spends more than 30% of its gross income on housing costs. Research shows that households who spend more than this share on housing are more likely to fall into

---

[19] The housing typologies referenced in this memorandum draw on unit categories defined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) as follows:

- Single Family-Detached Unit (SFD)- a one-unit structure with open space on all four sides. The unit often possesses an attached garage.
- Single Family-Attached Unit (SFA)- a one-unit structure attached to another unit by a common wall, commonly referred to as a townhouse, half-plex, or row house. The shared wall or walls extend from the foundation to the roof with adjoining units to form a property line. Each unit has individual heating and plumbing systems.
- 2-, 3-, and 4-Plex Units per Structure (2-4 units)- a structure containing two, three, or four units and not classified as single-unit attached structure.
- 5 or More Units per Structure (5+ units)- a structure containing five or more housing units.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) - means a unit that is attached, detached or located within the living area of the existing dwelling or residential dwelling unit which provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel on which the single-family dwelling is situated.
- Mobilehome Unit/Manufactured Home (MHU) – a one-unit structure that was originally constructed to be towed on its own chassis.

homelessness. A household that spends more than 50% of its gross income on housing costs is considered to be severely cost burdened. Cost burden is a serious issue in unincorporated San Diego County.

- 57% of renter households in unincorporated San Diego County are cost burdened.
- 32% of homeowner households in unincorporated San Diego County are cost burdened.
- Nearly one-third of renters are severely cost burdened, spending more than half of their income on housing.
- Among VLI and ELI renters—those most susceptible to housing instability and homelessness—four out of every five households are cost burdened.

While the above numbers are specific to unincorporated San Diego County, the rates are similar Countywide.

The highest cost burden is felt by VLI and ELI households. While rates of cost burden for homeowners are lower than they are for renters, VLI and ELI homeowners face significant impacts. The series of graphics below show first the total number of households by tenure and income level; then, the second row of the graphic shows the rates of cost burden for each of these tenure-income groups. For example, in the first row, the top-right-box shows there are about 59,210 homeowner households who earn 100% of AMI or more in unincorporated San Diego County, with the height of the box scaled to show that number in proportion to the other tenure-income groups. In the second row, the top-left box shows that 73% of homeowners earning less than 30% AMI are cost burdened, again with the height of the box scaled to show the proportion of the total number of households in that tenure-income groups to the other groups.

Rates of homeowner and renter cost burden by income group

Legend

<30% AMI	30-50% AMI	50-80% AMI	80-100% AMI	>100% AMI

Total households by tenure and income group

Homeowners Total: 108,160 households (hh)

- 9,845 hh
- 10,300 hh
- 17,330 hh
- 11,475 hh
- 59,210 hh

Renters Total: 51,195 households (hh)

- 11,940 hh
- 11,270 hh
- 12,635 hh
- 5,820 hh
- 9,530 hh

Rates of cost burden by tenure and income group

Cost Burdened Homeowners

- 73%
- 58%
- 51%
- 38%
- 14%

Cost Burdened Renters

- 82%
- 84%
- 57%
- 29%
- 13%

Source: HUD CHAS 2015-2019

Note: Box height reflects number of households for each income/tenure group, and amount of solid fill reflects rate of cost burden by income/tenure group.

Homeownership

While homeownership provides greater housing stability and is correlated with lower rates of housing cost burden, the benefits of homeownership do not apply equitably across different races and ethnicities. Countywide, including in incorporated cities, 54% of San Diego County's households are homeowners, a lower rate than the Statewide share of 56% and the national rate of 65%. Latino and Black residents in San Diego County also tend to be younger than the

overall and non-Hispanic White populations, with more Latino and Black residents aging into the early years of prime homebuying age; thus, San Diego County will rely on communities of color for homeownership growth for the foreseeable future. Moreover, homeownership rates for Latino and Black households are lower than the rate for non-Hispanic White households, as shown in the table below:

Homeownership rate disproportionately high for Asian and non-Hispanic White households and low for Black and Latino households

Race or Ethnicity	San Diego County	CA	US
Overall	54.1%	55.5%	64.6%
Latino	41.4%	45.4%	49.4%
Black	30.0%	35.6%	42.7%
Asian	60.5%	60.4%	61.0%
Non-Hispanic White	61.5%	63.6%	72.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021

Homelessness

The 2023 Point-In-Time (PIT) Count shows roughly 10,000 people experiencing homelessness in San Diego County, including nearly 200 in unincorporated areas, as shown in the table below. While the PIT Count is known to significantly undercount the number of unhoused people, it is a useful snapshot of the number of people found to be experiencing homelessness on a single night and allows for annual comparisons to establish the dimensions of needs and track progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. Moreover, while the number of unhoused people in areas designated as unincorporated regions by the PIT Count is relatively small, the County's aim goes beyond reducing this metric. Notably, about half of the San Diego County unhoused population is unsheltered.

	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
San Diego County	5,093	5,171	10,264
Unincorporated regions	0	195	195

Source: Regional Task Force for Homelessness 2023 Point-in-Time Count

Access and Equity

The County's assessment Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH), completed as part of its 6th Cycle Housing Element, identifies five principal fair housing issues.

1. Areas with a higher concentration of racial/ethnic minority populations and lower incomes have lower access to economic and educational opportunities.
2. Urbanized areas of the County have higher percentages of minority populations and higher segregation indices.

3. There are no racially/ethnically concentrated areas of poverty in the unincorporated County (racially/ethnically concentrated areas of poverty have a non-white population of 50 percent or more and 40 percent or more of individuals living at or below the poverty line).
4. Renters had disproportionately higher housing cost burdens, had higher housing cost increases, were more likely to experience overcrowding, and were at a higher risk of displacement than homeowners.
5. Rural and backcountry portions of the County demonstrated higher and increased rates of poverty and housing burden than higher density areas.

Other data support the AFFH plan's findings. Services, Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs), and existing Affordable Housing are concentrated in lower-resourced areas.[20] While the County and HUD policy encourage HCV households to use their vouchers in higher resource areas by allowing for higher payment standards in those zip codes, there is still a concentration of HCVs in lower-resource areas.. Lower resource areas with high concentration of HCVs include El Cajon, Escondido, Lemon Grove, and western Chula Vista. Higher resource areas with low or no concentration of HCVs include Coronado, Poway, San Dieguito, San Marcos, and Solana Beach. This analysis includes both the unincorporated County and the 13 incorporated cities for which the County administers HCVs. Several of the County's planning areas and neighborhoods show up in multiple fair housing evaluation criteria and suggest that these areas may require more evaluation, attention, and possible focused intervention with fair housing programs or place-based improvements.

Due to historic housing, employment, and educational discrimination, low-income households are disproportionately African-American/Black and Indigenous. Low-income households experience higher rates of cost burden and homelessness, creating racial disparities in homelessness visible when the 2023 PIT Count is compared to the overall population of the County. It should be noted that this analysis is Countywide, not specific to the unincorporated area, and represents a need to be address by the whole region.

---

[20] Lower-resourced and higher-resourced areas refer to the terms as defined by the TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, created by the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) and Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The terms refer to the level of economic, educational, and health resources that have been shown by research to be most strongly associated with positive outcomes for low-income families.

Racial Disparities in Homelessness Compared to Overall Population

Source: ACS 2015-2019, 2023 PIT Count
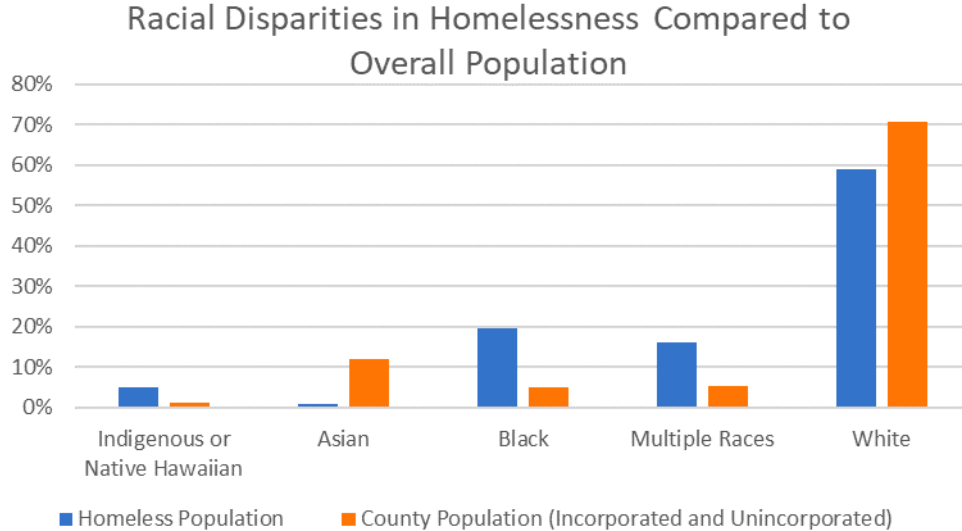
The County is dedicated to distributing resources equitably. Consistent with AFFH requirements, the County's Housing Element has identified sites for the development of affordable housing in higher opportunity areas where feasible. The County's land use planning emphasizes focused development in Villages, which are communities in unincorporated San Diego County where most existing development and infrastructure is located. Thirty-one percent (31%) of very low-, low-, and moderate-income RHNA is located in low resource areas, slightly higher than the 29% of land in San Diego County Villages. Nineteen percent (19%) of VLI, LI, and moderate-income RHNA is located in higher resource areas, more than the 12% of land in San Diego County Villages.

Countywide Housing Needs for People Experiencing Homelessness

Currently, there are not enough homelessness intervention resources to effectively make homelessness in San Diego County rare, brief, and one-time. As shown in the PIT Count data above, more than 10,000 people are experiencing homelessness in San Diego County, and about half are unsheltered. The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) is the county's lead agency for the region's Continuum of Care.

RTFH projected homelessness housing needs for the San Diego Continuum of Care (CoC) in its 2022 Regional Community Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in San Diego. As these numbers are San Diego Countywide, they span beyond the County's RHNA. However, numerous regional and County-produced reports on homelessness have also identified the need to increase housing production and resources in alignment with the goals of the Housing Blueprint. The Regional Community Action Plan reports quantitative needs for various forms of temporary housing interventions that are not the focus of the Housing Blueprint. The graphic below shows the Action Plan's needs for permanent housing types that are within the Blueprint's scope: Low-Income Housing and PSH.:

Housing Needs from RTFH 2022 Regional Community Action Plan
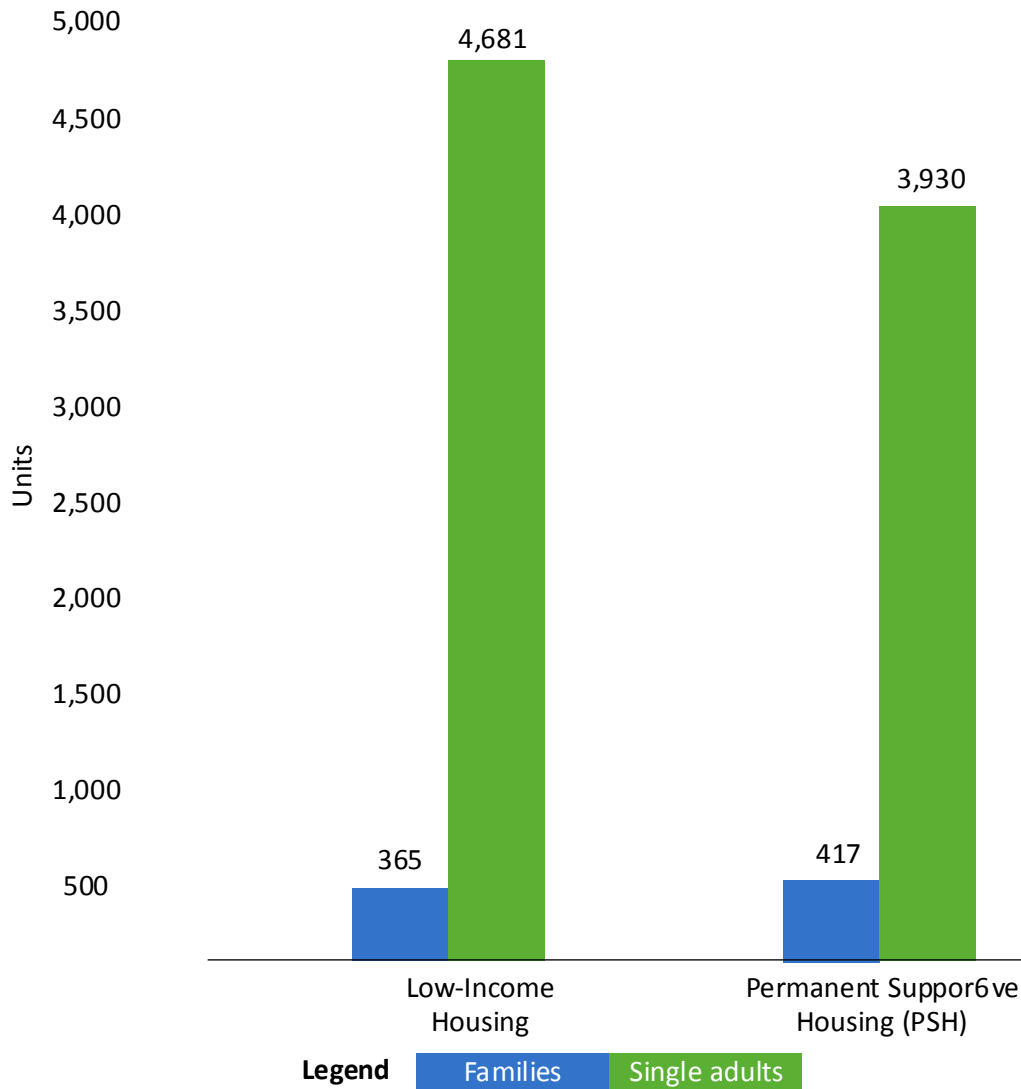
Source: RTFH 2022 Regional Community Ac6on Plan

The RTFH Community Action Plan centers housing as a solution to homelessness. System Goal 2 of the plan is to "Aggressively Expand Permanent Housing Options." Three strategies are outlined to meet this goal, presented below with a summary of some of the proposed actions for each strategy.

- Strategy A is to develop new affordable and supportive housing units. RTFH stakeholders can implement this strategy by creating PSH and low-income housing to meet needs, evaluating parcels of land, building capacity of smaller cities, utilizing new

funding, advocating for dedicated funding, and increasing the use of local funds for development.

- Strategy B is to maximize utilization of existing rental stock. RTFH stakeholders can implement this strategy by creating RRH slots, optimizing utilization rates, promoting regional landlord engagement, expanding the Flexible Housing Pool (FHP), aligning housing application across PHAs, building shared housing, and expanding shallow subsidies.
- Strategy C is to pair housing with supportive services for stability. RTFH stakeholders can implement this strategy by pairing Medi-Cal funded services including Enhanced Care Management (ECM)and Community Supports (CS) with mainstream housing resources and continuing to partner with County Behavioral Health Services on permanent supportive housing models.

In their work to implement these strategies, RTFH stakeholders can use the approach from the Regional Action Plan and 1-2-4 Framework for Homelessness Solutions facilitated by AllHome. This approach establishes a ratio approach to target outcomes and investment for homelessness prevention, interim interventions, and permanent housing, in order to increase the flow through the system and into permanent exits from homelessness.

The needs identified in the County of San Diego's Comprehensive Needs Assessment, updated in 2023 as part of the Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan, are consistent with RTFH's observations and goals. The Comprehensive Needs Assessment found that the following needs are shared Countywide.

- Additional permanent, affordable housing options
- Responding to upstream factors
- Increased coordination on issues related to homelessness
- Expanded homeless outreach, emergency shelter options, housing, and services
- Successful exits from homelessness into housing
- Low-barrier emergency housing and shelter resources
- Housing First, person-centered, and trauma-informed approaches
- Improved data-sharing processes
- Incorporation of equity
- Coordinated funding strategies

Strategies to address many of these homelessness needs, especially data-sharing processes, low-barrier emergency housing and shelter resources, homeless outreach, and responding to upstream factors are addressed in the **County's Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan** and will further be explored in a **Countywide Assessment of Homeless Services**. Together with the Housing Blueprint, these plans will address the entire housing spectrum and the spectrum of homelessness interventions that are necessary in the region.

Initial Insights on Housing Needs from Community Stakeholders

A comprehensive stakeholder outreach process, carried out for the Blueprint, produced similar findings. Focus groups were convened to discuss homelessness and housing insecurity, immigration and refugee services, child and family wellbeing, and the housing needs of justice-involved individuals, older adults, faith-based institutions, educational institutions, and individuals with disabilities. At a high level, focus groups called for a housing system that meets the full spectrum of need in San Diego County through consolidated leadership and flexible, expanded funding programs. Focus groups also called for cost-of-living increases for direct service providers, stronger tenant protections, and centralized navigation and referrals. A detailed summary of the stakeholder focus groups is included as Appendix C.

Determining the Housing Blueprint's Targets

The data presented above reflects a region with tremendous housing need – both the need to create more homes for existing and future residents and the need to address barriers to access to existing homes. In creating the final version of the Housing Blueprint, the County will rely on this needs data to guide how to prioritize its response to the areas of greatest need given the resources and authority the County controls. As the data shows, and what community stakeholders have reinforced thus far, the greatest housing need is faced by the lowest income earners (ELI and VLI households) who experience greater vulnerability as renters without sufficient existing local protections.

An estimated 19,000 households in unincorporated San Diego County and 182,000 households Countywide—or four in every five ELI and VLI renter households—are cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on rent. The rates of cost burden for ELI and VLI renters are higher than for any other income and tenure group, and these households are not served by the market without subsidy.

While the County's land use authority is limited to unincorporated areas, the County provides services to households throughout the region, from food support to health services to rental assistance. Given the need and precarity experienced by ELI and VLI households throughout the region and the County's regional role, it is important that the Blueprint includes programs and policies that respond to the issues of housing affordability more broadly, including housing support for ELI households, homeless prevention, and PSH development. For these households, the LeSar team believes the County has the responsibility to prioritize the investment of its resources and funding towards creating more housing opportunities at the deepest rent levels.

The 5 Ps Solutions Framework

The County Housing Blueprint follows the 5 Ps framework, consistent with SANDAG's existing plans for the region. The five Ps are a solutions framework that make up the Blueprint's five overarching Goals. These goals recognize that the County has a significant regional role in addressing the housing crisis and supporting households across the region's cities while also having the legal obligation and authority to meet housing and land use needs in the unincorporated area.

1. **Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability:** Implement housing solutions that address the historic patterns of exclusionary housing practices, segregation, and other inequities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities are available to everyone. Housing solutions should promote climate-resilient communities, the preservation of open space, and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
2. **Produce Housing for All:** San Diego County will support and implement policies to increase housing production of all kinds. Housing development should be affordable to ELI, VLI, LI, and moderate-income households. New housing in the San Diego region and unincorporated areas should be located in urbanized areas with access to transit, jobs, infrastructure and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents.
3. **Preserve Vulnerable Housing:** Support proactive strategies to preserve restricted and unrestricted affordable housing such as tracking expiration dates of affordable housing deed restrictions, keeping tenants informed of their rights, and investing in rehabilitation of housing to preserve affordability.
4. **Protect Tenants:** Support renters by providing information on tenant rights and creating protections to minimize economic eviction or unsustainable rent increases.
5. **Prevent Displacement:** Implement policies that prevent vulnerable residents from the harmful outcomes of displacement result from improvement to neighborhood amenities such as transit and open space. Strategies include studying existing and potential displacement pressures and monitoring the effectiveness of housing retention strategies in relation to planned transit investments.

Assessment of the County's Current Housing Actions, Programs, and Policies

This section provides an assessment of the County's breadth of current housing activity, based on review of the County's housing actions, programs, and policies. Information was provided by County staff; collected during meetings with staff from more than a dozen County agencies, departments, and offices to discuss their work and discuss the efficacy of the County organizational structure; and collected during discussions of housing needs and County programs and policies with about 50 community stakeholders in focus groups.

Currently, some level of housing services is carried out by each of the County's 4 Groups: Finance and General Government Group, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), Land Use and Environment Group, and Public Safety Group. Each group has a distinct yet complementary role. In many cases, there are formal agreements between departments to ensure coordination for housing-related initiatives. Summaries of the 4 groups and key departments that have a major nexus to housing and housing-related programming are provided below.

Housing and Community Development Services

Health and Human Services Agency, Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS) is the County's main affordable housing department. It coordinates and deploys the County's affordable housing development funds. It also manages the Housing Authority of the County of

San Diego (HACSD), which administers more than 10,500 HCVs in 13 cities and the unincorporated County (the cities of San Diego, Oceanside, Carlsbad, Encinitas, and National City each have their own housing authorities) and owns and operates four Public Housing Sites within the City of Chula Vista and one Farm Worker site in San Marcos.

HCDS also collaborates with Planning & Development Services (PDS) on developments in unincorporated areas, with the Department of General Services (DGS) for developments on County-owned land, and with other HHSA departments such as Homelessness Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC)-Office of Homeless Services (OHS) , Behavioral Health Services, Aging & Independence Services Child and Family Well-Being on potential services and referrals.

While HCDS generally can fund affordable housing developments throughout the County, including within incorporated cities, some funding sources are more geographically limited, as follows:

> Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds can be used in the Urban County: unincorporated County and the cities of Coronado, Del Mar, Imperial Beach, Lemon Grove, Poway, and Solana Beach.

> HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds can be used in the San Diego County HOME Consortium area: which includes the Urban County and the additional cities of Carlsbad, Encinitas, La Mesa, San Marcos, Santee, and Vista.

> Housing Choice Vouchers can be used in the HACSD jurisdiction: unincorporated County and the cities of Coronado, Chula Vista, Del Mar, El Cajon, Escondido, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Poway, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach, and Vista.

Each year, HCDS produces an Annual Plan to identify specific projects to be funded during the upcoming fiscal year, through approximately $14 million in the four federal entitlement programs administered by HCDS: CDBG, HOME, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). Prior to the development of the Annual Plan, the County outlines an Annual Plan Strategy which identifies funding priorities and processes for the upcoming year.

Target populations: HCDS programming typically targets the general ELI, VLI, and LI population, including people experiencing homelessness, seniors, veterans, low-income families, and people with disabilities.

Planning & Development Services

Planning & Development Services (PDS) is the County's planning department, administering its land use authority in the unincorporated area and tracking progress toward its SANDAG-determined 6,700-unit RHNA. While the department does not fund or directly develop housing, it is responsible for entitling new residential development giving PDS a central role in housing development. The department implements all State laws as they are adopted by updating forms, and preparing guidance documents, applications, maps, etc. A recent example is the creation of

new application processes to implement SB 9, SB 6 and AB 2011. In addition, the department codifies new State laws in the zoning ordinance through periodic updates, most recently in July 2023. PDS leads, and is supported by HCDS and DGS, in the preparation and implementation of the Housing Element and its implementation plan.

Moreover, with Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) making up about 1/5 of newly permitted homes in the unincorporated County, PDS implements new ADU laws and provides standard ADU building plans, which streamline the approval process and provide cost and time savings to applicants. The department is also developing an inclusionary housing ordinance, objective design standards, program options for a small lot subdivision and senior and assisted living housing program, and options for VMT mitigation program for Board consideration in 2024. While an inclusionary housing ordinance may result in some additional low- or moderate-income units being built, its impacts will be a function of market rate development and may further be limited by the ordinance's geographic scope.

VMT has impacted where and how housing is built by emphasizing more dense, walkable communities and optimizing public investments in transit and infrastructure. VMT has the potential to impact where new housing development is likely most likely to occur. The County Board has directed many actions to reduce the potential impact of VMT and create a path of least resistance for development. At this point in time, the impact of VMT and the outcomes of the VMT mitigation program, which is currently under development, are unknown; the County has seen a decrease in large subdivision, a rise in smaller infill projects and an increase in ADUs.

Target populations: PDS permits all housing in the unincorporated County, working primarily with market rate and Affordable Housing developers and other builders of housing. Unsubsidized housing is primarily affordable to above moderate-income households.

Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities – Office of Homeless Solutions

Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities was created as part of HHSA by Board action and officially formed in July 2021 with three offices, including the Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS). HSEC is dedicated to centralizing critical expertise and resources and providing a platform to engage in partnerships with cities and other regional partners for preventing and addressing homelessness in the San Diego County region. This includes partnering with the regional Continuum of Care lead, the Regional Taskforce on Homelessness, and working with cross-sector community stakeholders to prevent, reduce, and eliminate homelessness. HSEC also serves as a catalyst to better coordinate services and interventions across the County enterprise, including a focus on strategically leveraging existing resources and pursuing new resources to meet local and regional housing, shelter, and service needs.

In consultation with many stakeholders, HSEC developed the County's Framework for Ending Homelessness that consists of 5 strategic domains: Root Cause and Upstream Prevention; Diversion and Mitigation; Services, Treatment, and Outreach; Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources; and Permanent Housing and Support. Each year as part on ongoing collaboration, HSEC conducts an Annual Index of Framework Programs across the County enterprise. In

Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 the index indicated that other than HSEC, 17 County departments administered 66 programs within the County of San Diego that directly contribute to at least one of the five Framework strategic domains.

Through its Direct Services Branch, HSEC-OHS leads outreach in the vast unincorporated county and partners across all City jurisdictions to assist those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These teams connect people to self-sufficiency services, completing applications in the field (streets or encampments); provide case management and housing navigation to connect people experiencing homelessness to emergency and permanent housing options; and connect people to other supportive programs which OHS also administers. OHS also oversees numerous contracted programs focused on specialized populations experiencing homelessness such as youth, seniors, veterans, people with disabilities and justice involved people.

The Program Development & Strategic Planning Branch is responsible for all the programming, securing of grant funding, and strategic planning under Framework for Ending Homelessness and Action Plan. They work behind the scenes and across the enterprise to support activities under Framework for Ending Homelessness. Of note, OHS collaborates with DGS on siting compassionate emergency housing solutions to address needs of unsheltered people in the unincorporated communities such as RV, safe parking sites, and sleeping cabins.
Target population: HSEC-OHS programming is primarily targeted to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Department of General Services

Department of General Services manages the County's non-airport real estate assets. DGS's role in housing has grown significantly in recent years in alignment with the Board's increased actions regarding housing and homeless solutions. DGS supports HCDS and HSEC program and Board actions through a variety of tasks, such as development of real estate agreements, tracking County-identified excess land, site screening and preparation, and compliance with the Surplus Land Act (SLA). For example, the following process summarizes typical DGS activities for 100% affordable housing development on County land:

1. Need to Board Action. DGS prepares and dockets an agenda item to request the Board declare the property "exempt surplus land" in accordance with the SLA, Government Code section 54221(f)(1)(F)(i) and requests the Board's approval to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to qualified developers.
2. RFP Development. Upon approval by the Board, an RFP is drafted by DGS in collaboration with HCDS, which includes the goals for the site, such as population mixes, affordability levels, sustainability features, and any ancillary uses that the County would like included.
3. RFP Response. The RFP(s) is released by DGS, proposals are received, and reviewed. A developer(s) is selected and notified of award.
4. DDA, CEQA, & Board Action. After a developer(s) is selected, DGS begins negotiations on the terms of a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) for a 55 to 99-year ground lease, a project description is finalized, and County performs a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis for the project(s) as required by law. DGS completes the CEQA review along with other necessary site due diligence in order to remove some of the risk and reduce costs for interested developers. Once the DDA is final and CEQA is complete, an agenda item is docketed for Board approval to execute the DDA and Ground Lease.

5. <u>Lease Execution & Construction</u>. Once the developer has received financing, and the development(s) is fully permitted and entitled, a ground lease is executed by DGS and the developer, and construction can begin.

Several sites have been awarded to developers in recent years through this process. Additionally, DGS works with HCDS to support its Affordable Housing program for affordable housing developments on County-owned land.

Target population: Housing built on County-owned land must have some affordable component, as required by the SLA, however developments on County-owned land are typically 100% affordable to low-income households. This housing can be available to the general population in the region or targeted to a specific vulnerable population, such as people experiencing homelessness, seniors, low-income families, veterans, or people with disabilities, in alignment with County programs.

Behavioral Health Services

BHS serves over 100,000 people of all ages annually providing an array of mental health and substance use prevention, treatment services, and housing through a network of community-based providers to individuals who are Medi-Cal eligible. BHS's role in housing includes coordinating on-site services for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), including No Place Like Home and other developments, in partnership with HCDS and the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC). Through the network of community-based providers, BHS also supports services for and connections to an array of other types of housing, including transitional and bridge housing. BHS offers mental health and substance use residential treatment services, recovery residences for people enrolled in substance use outpatient services or support services, independent living, and licensed board and cares for adults with SMI who need assistance with daily living. A majority of housing programs within BHS programs is funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

Target population: People with serious mental health illness and substance use conditions who are Medi-Cal eligible

Other Health and Human Services Agency Departments

Recognizing the critical role that housing plays in health and self-sufficiency, nearly all HHSA departments leverage their expertise to connect specific populations to housing services or support housing-related programs. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Aging and Independence Services administers the **HomeSafe** program, which provides short-term housing stabilization services for older and dependent adults referred by Adult Protective Services to prevent and address homelessness.
- Child and Family Well-Being administers the **Transitional Housing Program**, which provides transitional housing and supportive services to former foster youth and out-of-home juvenile justice youth.

- Self Sufficiency Services' **CalWORKs Housing Support Program** (HSP) provides short and long-term housing assistance to CalWORKs families experiencing barriers to self-sufficiency due to homelessness or housing instability.

Public Safety Departments

Several of the County's Public Safety Group departments (Probation, the District Attorney, the Public Defender, and Sheriff) administer housing-related programs. These programs primarily focus on providing funding for short-term housing support for people involved in the criminal justice system or survivors of violence or abuse. The departments also have programs to engage people who are unhoused or unstably housed and connect them to existing resources in order to avoid incarceration or other contact with the criminal justice system.

Target populations: The public safety departments primarily work with people experiencing homelessness as well as people with criminal records who have challenges accessing housing.

Assessing the County's Relationship with External Entities

Beyond the County of San Diego programs, the broader region has a wealth of public and private organizations focused on solving the housing crisis. There are about 37 local government departments within the region's 18 cities, a large number of nonprofit organizations (including community-based organizations and faith-based institutions), developers (including both market rate and affordable housing developers), financial institutions (including banks and Community Development Financial Institutions), and many others that together form the housing ecosystem in the San Diego region and support the 5 Ps. LeSar has engaged these organizations in focus groups and will continue to do so through the Housing Blueprint stakeholder engagement process.

Many of these organizations are focused on solving the housing crisis through one or more of the 5 Ps, offering opportunities for the County to support existing initiatives and partner with other organizations rather than requiring new or duplicative programs. An example of an existing partnership is the established relationship and track record of successful collaboration with the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), which covers a similar population to HACSD. The County's BHS Department also works closely with SDHC to coordinate on-site services for PSH. The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH), the region's homelessness services and coordination lead agency, is another major regional partner that the County partners with on housing response. The County funds RTFH and the CoC board includes several County staff and one member of the Board of Supervisors.

There are also "housing adjacent" sponsors, especially from the faith-based and educational sectors that are leaning into being good partners on housing and homelessness solutions. It will take many actors to solve the housing and homelessness crises, and tapping into this ecosystem of sponsors will be critical for the County's efforts. Below are a few additional areas of opportunity for the County to continue or expand engagement in regional collaboration and partnership.

- **Local Governments**-- The Housing Blueprint can provide an opportunity for the County to assess and strengthen its relationship with other local governments. The County already collaborates with localities in various ways, for example by administering entitlement funding across multiple jurisdictions, but could go farther to pool additional funding sources for greater impact. There may be opportunities to build on the strength of making County-owned land available for Affordable Housing development by eliminating land use or other regulatory barriers placed by other jurisdictions. A particular avenue for increased local government collaboration can be through the regional planning agency, SANDAG.
- **Housing Authorities**--There may be opportunities for the HACSD, which covers the unincorporated County and 13 cities, a geographic area which accounts for nearly half the region's population, to collaborate with other Housing Authorities and consider potential partnerships to take advantage of the San Diego Housing Commission's MTW status.
- **Partnership to Housing San Diego (PHSD)**-- This countywide collaborative planning table brings together regional anchor institutions, including faith-based, educational, and government agencies (including a couple County representatives), where most participants do not have housing as their core mission. The PHSD initiative is fostering alignment and intentional collaboration and has engaged in planning and sponsoring new Affordable Housing development.

LeSar's assessment of the County's initiatives and strengths and opportunities is rooted in the concept of regionalism – that the County government has an important and unique role as a regional entity to provide leadership in addressing housing needs beyond the unincorporated County in the entirety of San Diego County.

Assessing County Actions, Programs, and Policies Through the 5 Ps

The LeSar team also assessed the County's existing housing actions, programs, and policies within the framework of the 5 Ps goals.

Produce Housing for All

This section provides an overview of housing production, including unsubsidized production in the unincorporated County, where the County has land use authority, as well as County-funded Affordable Housing production in cities within San Diego County, but not under the County's direct jurisdiction. The County's land use authority is limited to the unincorporated area, and even in those areas is further constrained; much of the unincorporated area is Tribal land, land owned by State and federal agencies, and military installations, including Camp Pendelton. As a result, the County has land use jurisdiction over 772,239 acres, or 35% of the unincorporated area. Development in the unincorporated County is also constrained by VMT policies, fire restrictions, and water availability.

Unsubsidized production in the unincorporated County is primarily detached single-family, which is the costliest to produce and typically the most expensive housing option. Detached single-family homes account for 63% of homes permitted from 2018 to 2022 but has a declining share each year. While only about ¼ of single-family detached homes are affordable to low- and moderate-income households, more than ¾ of ADUs, 5+ unit apartments, and mobile homes

are affordable to low- and moderate-income households.[21] The County has most significantly taken action to promote housing production generally through its Removing Barriers efforts. It has also supported single-family home production in particular, through adopting a fee waiver for solar panel permits and investigating options for a VMT mitigation program that could enable more development in the unincorporated area of San Diego County.
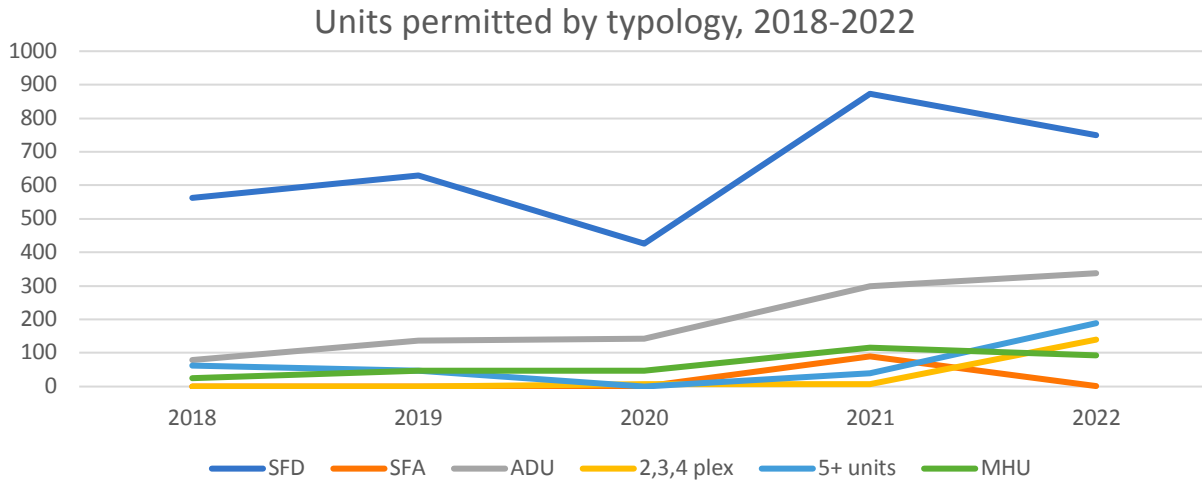
Units permitted by typology, 2018-2022

Source: LeSar analysis of HCD APR Data Dashboard

Share of homes affordable to low- and moderate-income households by typology produced, 2018-2022
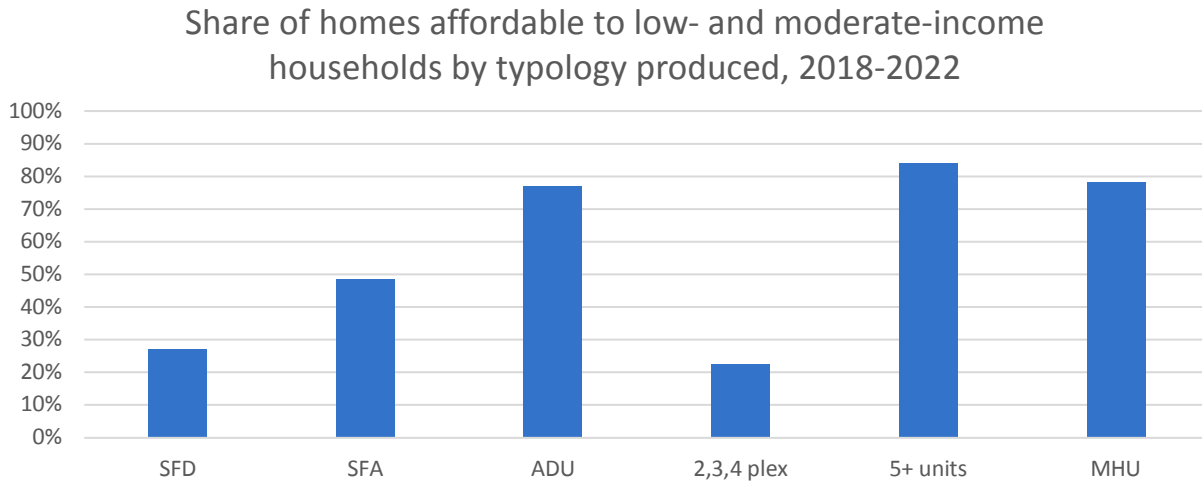
Source: LeSar analysis of HCD APR Data Dashboard

---

[21] The charts in this section rely on the following abbreviations for housing typologies defined by HCD:
- SFD: Single Family-Detached Unit
- SFA: Single Family-Attached Unit
- 2,3,4 plex: 2-, 3-, and 4-Plex Units per Structure
- 5+ units: 5 or More Units per Structure
- ADU: Accessory Dwelling Unit
- MHU: Mobilehome Unit/Manufactured Home

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are the fastest growing and second-most common housing typology built in the unincorporated area of San Diego County. One out of every five homes permitted in the unincorporated area from 2018 to 2022 is an ADU. This mirrors a trend Statewide, as State laws have legalized ADUs on virtually any single-family zoned property. ADUs in the unincorporated County also tend to be more affordable. In 2022, 86.4% of ADUs permitted were affordable to low- and moderate-income households (although these units were not deed-restricted). The County supports ADU production through its creation of pre-approved designs and, until January 2024, fee waivers.

Two housing typologies—2-4-plexes and attached single-family homes (typically called townhomes)—have minimal production in the unincorporated area. In some years not a single project was permitted in the unincorporated area. As new State laws enable more of this housing in single-family zoned areas, and if additional land use and financial barriers are addressed[22], they could be a growing share of housing permitted in the San Diego County. The County's implementation of SB 9, as well as future rezoning efforts, will support this.

Accounting for a low, albeit growing share of housing permitted in the unincorporated area, 5+ unit apartment buildings are mostly affordable to low- and moderate-income households. These units are also largely subsidized, deed-restricted Affordable Housing for lower-income households. The County supports this form of housing production through its rezoning efforts, and in particular supports deed-restricted Affordable Housing development through its subsidies.

The vast majority of housing permitted in the unincorporated area is for homeowners. This is because single-family production, which accounts for the majority of homes permitted from 2018 to 2022, has been entirely owner-occupied; in addition, every other housing typology is also made up of majority homeowner units.

Homeownership rate by housing typology produced, 2018-2022
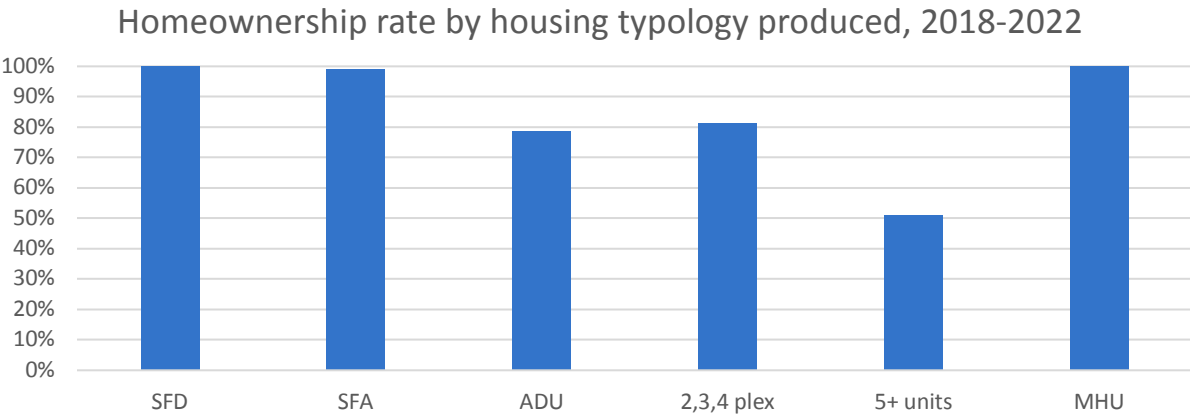
Source: LeSar analysis of HCD APR Data Dashboard

In supporting subsidized housing production, the County has funded 57 housing developments, containing 4,281 homes, since 2017. These projects are all 5+ unit multifamily developments.

---

[22] See the following report from the Terner Center: "California's HOME Act Turns One: Data and Insights from the First Year of Senate Bill 9," https://ternercenter.berkeley.edu/research-and-policy/sb-9-turns-one-applications/

Only six of the 57 County-funded projects are in the unincorporated area, as shown in the table below:

Location	Total Projects	Total Units	Total County Funding	IHTF	Other County Funds	NPLH	PLHA	PIP	HOME	CDBG	PBV/ VASH PBV
City of SD	28	2434	$137.9M	$62.9M	$26.1M	$48.9M	0	0	0	0	0
Other cities	23	1605	$115.6M	$31.1M	$2.2M	$50.8M	$3.7M	0	$23.4M	$4.4M	292
Unincorporated area	6	375	$25.5M	$8.7M	0	$4.2M	$1.M	$2.4M	$5.5M	$3.8M	234
TOTAL	57	4281	$279.M	$102.7M	$28.3M	$103.9M	$4.7M	$2.4M	$28.9M	$8.2M	526

HCDS has a strong track record of deploying funds for Affordable Housing production, including Permanent Supportive Housing units throughout the County. This includes its administration of the following funding sources:

- **Innovative Housing Trust Fund (IHTF)**: As mentioned above, to date the Board has allocated $105.6 million to the IHTF, much of which has been awarded to date through six Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs). As funding is added irregularly by Board actions, the County deploys these funds when they become available. IHTF funds provide a vital source of gap funding for projects throughout the County.
- **Entitlement and related State and federal funds**: This includes funding from the CDBG, HOME, No Place Like Home (NPLH), PLHA, and PIP programs.
- **Project Based Vouchers**: The County has deployed 465 PBVs through NOFAs since 2017. The HACSD has the authority and eventual capacity to deploy more than 2,000 PBVs.

Moreover, the County is undertaking a series of proactive steps to reduce land use, entitlement, and permitting barriers to housing. These initiatives should be continued and expanded where appropriate:

1. **Resolving existing CEQA roadblocks** that frequently trigger Environmental Impact Reports: This includes adopting a qualified Climate Action Plan (CAP) that would allow tiering and streamlining recommended for projects consistent with the land use assumptions used in the CAP, as well as developing a Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) mitigation program and a Program EIR to reduce EIR requirement for more projects.

2. **Establishing and possibly expanding the County's by-right program:** The County's Housing Element identified 236 RHNA sites, of which 44 are relisted sites that are subject to AB 1397. The County is identifying options for expanding the by-right program to the additional 192 RHNA sites as well as mixed-use and commercial sites to determine if these locations can be eligible for streamlined ministerial process. The County could additionally consider expanding the by-right program to a zoning overlay.

3. **Finalizing an inclusionary housing ordinance.** PDS is currently developing an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. The impacts of this may be limited, as noted earlier, because the Affordable units created are a function of market rate development, but

nonetheless represents a valuable tool. This ordinance may also provide an expedited review dependent on the percentage of Affordable Housing units within a project, reducing processing timelines.

4. **Complete and continue building on the Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA)**: The DFA enables a holistic determination of appropriate areas for development, taking into consideration infrastructure and housing typologies. Currently, the DFA focuses on reviewing four infill, VMT efficient communities; the LeSar team strongly supports the County's intention of using the DFA to potentially revise zoning and incentivize appropriate development as well as providing developers with information on potential sites. The team additionally supports expanding the DFA beyond the four communities.

5. **Deploying PBVs through Affordable Housing NOFAs:** As noted above, the County has deployed 465 PBVs since 2017, and has an eventual capacity to deploy more than 2,000 PBVs. HACSD can continue making vouchers available when suitable and feasible as a means of supporting more affordable housing development projects. Given the statutory role of the HACSD, only developments withing the HACSD jurisdiction as described above are able to apply for PBVs for County NOFAs.

6. **Making County-owned land available for Affordable Housing development:** As described above, DGS leads the County's land disposition process, making sites available for housing development. This process can continue to be refined and expanded, as noted in the gaps and barriers below.

Based on this information, the LeSar team has identified the following key gaps and barriers in the County's efforts to Produce Housing for All:

- Housing production for VLI and ELI units falls far short of the County's regional fair share target (RHNA). Through March 2023, the County permitted 190 units out of its 1,834 RHNA target for these categories. As noted in Section 2 above, the LeSar team believes the County should focus its limited resources on addressing the need for more units that are affordable to VLI and ELI households.
- Homeownership units are not being created for low- and moderate-income households. While there are down payment assistance programs for first-time homebuyers, current market conditions make it difficult for low-income homebuyers to utilize the programs and few homes affordable to low- and moderate-income households are being built or exist in the housing market. This fact is directly linked to the limited number of smaller attached homeownership opportunities being developed in the County.
- There is no substantial permanent local stream of funding for Affordable Housing production in San Diego County. Across the region, funding comes either from State or federal sources or one-time influxes from local governments, resulting in uncertainty for affordable housing developers with pipeline projects. The lack of permanent funding also prevents the County from being able to apply for funding sources such as the State's Local Housing Trust Fund.
- The Housing Authority of San Diego County is not a Moving to Work jurisdiction; this designation would provide the housing authority with added flexibility in the administration of both public housing and voucher programs.

- The County has a strong track record of making unused County-owned land available for affordable housing development, and this process can be further refined. The County could aim to create a 2-5 year pipeline of sites that could become available for housing development, as well as analyze existing sites and uses to determine additional opportunities for housing. The County could also continue to evaluate the potential for multi-use projects on County-owned land that can provide housing as well as other County services, such as libraries, health centers, and childcare.
- The County has a limited land use role. Of the 2.9 million acres in San Diego County, 2.3 million acres are in unincorporated areas. A significant portion of the unincorporated area is Tribal land, land owned by State and federal agencies, and military installations, including Camp Pendelton. As a result, the County has land use jurisdiction over 772,239 acres, or 35% of the unincorporated area. Importantly, development in the unincorporated County is constrained by VMT policies, fire restrictions, and water availability. Within these restrictions, the Blueprint will explore approaches to further streamline production and process improvements and VMT mitigation implementation.

Promote Equity, Inclusion and Sustainability

Major areas of potential County action to address this goal include addressing barriers to accessing Affordable Housing and to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH). Moreover, various strategies under the Produce goal also further equity, inclusion, and sustainability. For example, efforts to increase affordable housing production increases social equity; efforts to provide more homeownership opportunities to low- and moderate-income households who are typically unable to affordable detached single-family homes or to locate more affordable homes in previously exclusive areas increase inclusion; efforts to locate housing closer to jobs, transit, and amenities reduces vehicles miles traveled and thus increase sustainability.

In every stakeholder focus group, participants expressed the difficulty in accessing Affordable Housing, this including the long waitlist for Housing Choice Vouchers and the difficulty in finding and applying for deed-restricted Affordable Housing, for which there is no central application system. Indeed, applying for a deed-restricted affordable rental home is typically done by finding properties with available units and applying to them one-by-one, a complex, time-consuming process that is especially difficult for non-English speakers or lower-income households without access to internet services. Several departments in the County offer housing navigation, homeless outreach services that help connect people to resources, and existing relationships with SDHC and other agencies to help people access non-County housing resources.

The County's Housing Element includes its AFFH analysis and plan. In the unincorporated County, areas with higher nonwhite populations tend to have lower incomes and less access to resources. Moreover, renters experience disproportionately higher housing burdens—including cost burden—and face greater levels of displacement risk. Focus groups identified specific issues around housing access, as identified in the Focus Groups Summary Report, Appendix C.

Based on this information, the LeSar team has identified the following key gaps and barriers in the County's efforts to Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability:

- There is a need to create more Affordable Housing in higher resource areas and communities with greater access to schools, jobs, transit, and other vital resources.

- No easily accessible, central way to apply for and access existing deed-restricted Affordable Housing exists in the County.
- Stakeholders identified a need for housing that accommodates a wider range of needs, such as larger families, those with needs for on-site behavioral or mental health services, people with disabilities, etc.
- State regulations support increasing housing opportunities in areas that reduce VMT, but the unincorporated County has limited VMT efficient areas; PDS is current undertaking measures to identify additional opportunity areas.
- Understanding development feasibility and VMT mitigation measures through unincorporated communities, beyond the four communities identified in the DFA.

Preserve Vulnerable Housing

San Diego County is experiencing an ongoing loss of affordability, both through rising prices of unrestricted affordable housing and through loss of restrictions on deed-restricted Affordable Housing. While the County's 6th Cycle Housing Element identified 22 deed-restricted units at-risk of conversion to market rate, far more unrestricted affordable housing is at risk of losing affordability. The County has taken initiatives to understand and address this through a regional analysis of affordable housing preservation as part of the Transformative Housing Solutions initiative.

While HCDS NOFAs make funds available for Affordable Housing preservation, these projects compete for the same funds with new construction projects. Notably, the County recently awarded funding through the County's Housing Preservation and Anti-Displacement (HPAD) Pilot Program for an acquisition-rehabilitation project in Chula Vista that protected 151 homes affordable to low-income households for 55 years. The program was created in 2021 to protect existing "naturally occurring" affordable housing.

Based on this information, the LeSar team has identified the following key gaps and barriers in the County's efforts to Preserve Vulnerable Housing:

- There is no substantial permanent local stream of funding targeted to preserving Affordable Housing in the County. Funding comes either from State and federal sources or one-time appropriations from local governments.
- Some funding sources administered by the County could be used for preservation of existing affordable housing, but this activity may not compete well with new construction and only a small number of units have been preserved in recent years.
- Rents for existing unrestricted affordable housing are not actively monitored and thus loss of affordability is not being tracked.
- Stakeholders discussed the need for preservation of affordable mobile homes, as they are purchased by for-profit investor entities.

Prevent Displacement

Residential displacement is a growing area of the County's, as well as other local and regional entities', focus as part of the solution to the housing crisis. The SANDAG Anti-Displacement Study is an unprecedented comprehensive data report on displacement risk in the entire San Diego County region. This study identified, through various quantitative measures, areas of

ongoing and high displacement risk, including several in the unincorporated County, as shown in the darkest red areas of the map below:

Source: SANDAG Anti-Displacement Study Existing Conditions Report

As residential displacement in San Diego is often driven by economic forces that make housing unaffordable for lower-income residents, the most relevant anti-displacement programming analyzed as furthering the goal are those that provide people with the funds to weather rising rents and economic shocks that may lead to a household losing their home. The County has several programs with flexible funding sources that can be used to prevent displacement.[23]
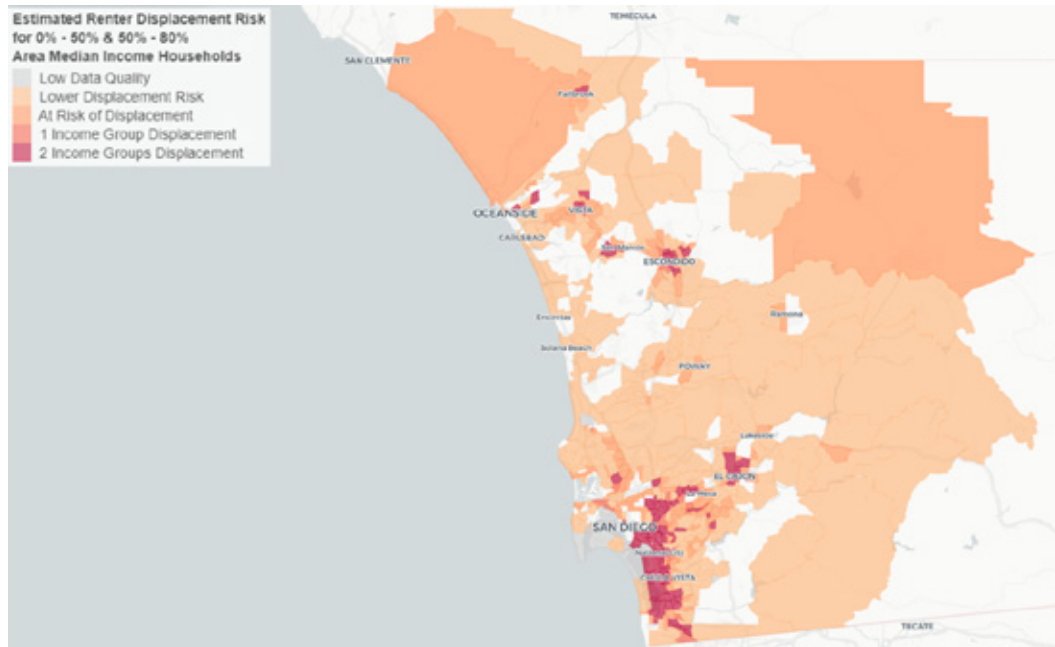
Based on this information, the LeSar team has identified the following key gaps and barriers in the County's efforts to Prevent Displacement:

- Lack of coordination and varied target areas and standards for displacement prevention programs that rely on various discretionary funding sources
- Limited funding for landlord engagement.
- Stakeholders emphasized the need to consolidate programs, resources, and services across the region, including those that help prevent displacement.
- Stakeholders discussed a need for more flexible funding programs to better meet the needs of households experiencing housing instability

---

[23] This includes the following programs, a partial list (with the administering department in parentheses):
- HOME - Emancipated Foster Youth Voucher Program (HCDS)
- Community Transition Center (Probation)
- Home Safe (AIS)
- Interim Housing Program (Probation)
- Shallow Rental Subsidy Program (HSEC-OHS)

Protect Tenants

Localities in the San Diego region have limited tenant protections. Recent State laws have provided protections to renters Statewide, including rent caps that prevent rent gouging and restricting the conditions under which an eviction can occur. Recent laws signed by the Governor in 2023 strengthen these protections and address loopholes in the original laws that were being used by landlords to evict tenants.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, localities, including San Diego County, instituted eviction freezes and other tenant protections. Moreover, in 2023, two cities—Chula Vista and San Diego—approved their first-ever tenant protection ordinances which provide eviction protections that exceed what is required by State law. The County's eviction protections expired in September 2022. Despite the expansion of tenant protections as a result of State laws, there is no enforcement mechanism or government staff designated to ensure compliance with the new requirements. A recent UCSD study made public Countywide eviction data visible, showing that the highest rates are in rural areas.

Despite the limitation in efforts to advance the goal of protecting tenants, there are several County programs that support this goal. This includes ongoing rental assistance programs, most prominently the HCV program which provides rental subsidies to more than 10,500 households. This also included, while funded with Covid-19 pandemic emergency funds, the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERAP) program, which provided temporary rental assistance for households in need. HCDS's Tenant Legal Services also provides essential tenant protection. Other sources of ongoing rental assistance funding include two programs with HOME funds (also administered by HCDS), the shallow rental subsidy (administered by HSEC-OHS), and several flexible funding sources, noted in the previous section, Prevent Displacement.

Based on this information, the LeSar team has identified the following key gaps and barriers in the County's efforts to Protect Tenants:

- Lack of renter protection policies and programs, e.g. rent stabilization, eviction protections, etc. These strategies will likely require local political action.
- Need for expanded ongoing rental assistance and targeted rental assistance, given than some are funded with one-time ARPA funds.
- Need for better coordination across various rental assistance programs, which are administered across various departments. The County should study whether consolidation of these programs would provide efficiencies or improved service, or if there are best practices that can be shared across programs and departments.

Establishing the Blueprint's Framework and Goals

Based on this memorandum's identification of housing needs and the County's existing efforts, the LeSar team identified a set of initial observations. These observations identified areas for further exploration and potential recommendations that the Blueprint can focus on. As the LeSar team conducted additional research and learned more about the County's work, these

observations were revisited, refined, and ultimately informed the draft Blueprint's recommended Strategies. The initial observations were as follows:

1. **Potential for Regional Leadership** – As the entity with the broadest geographic reach in the region, the County has the opportunity to engage more actively in regional issues and lead in housing policy.
2. **Collaboration and Organization of Housing Programs** -- The County has a plethora of important programs and funding streams that respond to affordable housing needs, administered by multiple departments. There may be ways to more strategically organize, coordinate, and cohere these efforts.
3. **Stronger Connection Between Housing and Homelessness** — The Blueprint can emphasize the role of permanent housing as a homelessness solution.
4. **Method to Manage and Track Progress**—County departments that address housing provide reports to the Board of Supervisors and mandatory State reporting, but there is no central location where the public can access the reports to determine progress in meeting goals or follow the status of initiatives.
5. **More Funding and Resources**—despite the best efforts of the County departments, there are not enough resources to create the housing needed.

Mission, Goals, and Next Steps

The Housing Blueprint will establish the framework and strategies to achieve the following draft mission statement and goals for the Blueprint.

Mission

The County of San Diego Housing Blueprint's mission is to ensure that all County residents are safely and affordably housed by increasing housing supply, reducing homelessness, and removing barriers to housing access.

Goals

The 5 Ps framework will guide the Blueprint to achieve this mission. As noted in the draft Housing Blueprint, the County adopted the 5 Ps as the Blueprint's set of overarching goals:

1. Produce housing for all
2. Promote equity, inclusion, and sustainability
3. Preserve vulnerable housing
4. Prevent displacement
5. Protect tenants

Within the 5 Ps Solutions Framework and in discussion with County staff, the LeSar team will continue to develop a set of objectives and specific recommendations. Based on these Assessments and the observations identified in this memorandum, the Housing Blueprint work will advance into the next phases of analyzing barriers and opportunities, a working group on middle income housing finance, and ongoing deep stakeholder engagement. In time, the LeSar

team will identify a coherent set of objectives that address the County's needs and create a final version of the Blueprint. The final Blueprint will include detailed objectives, each with a set of specific, actionable strategies and recommendations, as well as a system of tracking and evaluating Blueprint progress.

APPENDIX D

BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES ASSESSMENTS

Appendix D_Housing Blueprint Barriers and Opportunities Analysis

Introduction

This appendix summarizes the Barriers and Opportunity Analysis that was completed in February 2024 for the Housing Blueprint project. The analysis was conducted to identify regional and local barriers hindering the implementation of the 5Ps framework in San Diego County, particularly in the realms of land use, financing, and other relevant factors. Additionally, the analysis was done to identify actionable solutions for the County of San Diego (County) to effectively implement the 5Ps approach, optimizing available resources to ensure housing accessibility for all demographics, including seniors, people with disabilities, individuals with past justice involvement, and many other groups. These solutions aim to foster equity, inclusion, and sustainability, while safeguarding vulnerable housing, preventing displacement, and tenant protection.

Methodology

The methodology for the findings included in the analysis included researching barriers and opportunities, reviewing outputs and recommendations from previous tasks, examining land development policies, local lending and financing environments, federal, state, and local funding programs, as well as private sector and non-profit investment opportunities. Additionally, six focus groups involving Community Planning Groups, philanthropy, developers, private capital, and public sector stakeholders were used to gather input regarding specific barriers and opportunities for housing.

Barriers and Gaps

This section expands upon the gaps identified in the *San Diego County Housing Blueprint Infrastructure, Program, and Data Assessments* memo towards successfully implementing the 5Ps. In addition to gaps, which were defined as absences of resources for implementation, this section identifies barriers, which were defined as forces that impede or slow down implementation. This section is organized by the 5Ps and builds off research conducted throughout this project.

Barriers and Gaps towards Producing Housing for All

San Diego County's *Produce Housing for All* goal supports and implements policies to increase housing production of all kinds. Housing development should be located in urbanized areas with access to transit, jobs, and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents. By 2029, the entire San Diego region needs an estimated 171,685 new housing units, with the unincorporated county needing 6,700 units, according to the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), as determined by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). Nearly 60% of the units should be affordable to Very low-income (VLI), Low-income (LI) and Moderate-income (Mod) households. New housing in the San Diego region should be located in neighborhoods with access to transit, jobs and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents.

Based on prior research, the consultant team led by LeSar Development Consultants has identified the following barriers and gaps in the County's efforts to *Produce Housing For All*,

grouped by three themes: Housing Supply; Land Use, Entitlement, and Permitting; and Financing.

Housing Supply: **San Diego County is behind pace in meeting VLI and ELI housing needs** while being on pace to meet LI, Mod, and above moderate-income housing needs. The County has only permitted 10% of its ELI/VLI RHNA targets (917 and 1,834 units respectively) through 2022.

Land Use, Entitlement, and Permitting

1. The County has a **limited land use role**, confined to the unincorporated area, within which development is constrained by Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT) policies, lack of public transit, fire restrictions, and lack of water availability and infrastructure. Stakeholders indicated a need to balance development with the lack of infrastructure in the unincorporated area, environmental concerns (such as wildfire risk, sensitive species), and additional community services (such as grocery stores, libraries, healthcare).

2. The **development process** has been cited by stakeholders as slow, uncertain, and unfamiliar.

3. **Changing development patterns** may exacerbate the need for housing and place more pressure on land.

Financing Barriers

1. The County has **no permanent local housing funding source.** The Board's creation of the Innovative Housing Trust Fund (IHTF), which has deployed $105.6 million, has helped develop nearly 3,000 affordable homes throughout the region. However, funding is insufficient in light of the need for ELI and VLI units and funded by irregular, discretionary Board actions.

2. Insufficient supply of LI homes as well as a mismatch between house prices and income levels negatively affect **homeownership** opportunities for LI households.

Barriers and Gaps to Promoting Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability

The County's vision for a housing solutions framework is grounded in *Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability* aimed at addressing the historic patterns of exclusionary housing practices, segregation, and other inequities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities are available to everyone. Housing solutions should promote climate-resilient communities, the preservation of open space, and reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and VMT.

Based on prior research, the Team has identified the following barriers and gaps in the County's efforts to *Promote Equity, Inclusion and Sustainability*:

1. Both throughout the region and in the unincorporated county, Affordable Housing in many cases is not sited in **higher resource areas** and communities with greater access to schools, jobs, transit, and other vital resources.

2. **Vulnerable populations are challenged in accessing appropriate programs, resources, housing and shelter**. For example, stakeholders cited a need for detox beds for populations struggling with substance use and other challenges that require more care prior to transitioning to Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), as well as the potential need for ELI units with light-touch services and for those ineligible for PSH. The RTFH's 2022 Regional Community Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in San Diego indicates a need for 4,347 PSH units countywide, in addition to diversion, Emergency Shelter, and Rapid Rehousing beds. Immigration and education sector representatives mentioned the importance of larger units (4-5+ bedrooms); many working with older adults emphasized studios or one-bedroom units; and those working with older adults and justice-involved populations cited shared housing as a useful resource. Service providers indicated difficulties easily accessing shelter and applying for existing Affordable Housing for their clients. Also, those formerly incarcerated may face additional barriers accessing programs such as Tenant-Based Vouchers (TBV). Other TBVs or housing programs have strict eligibility requirements and/or may be time limited. Multiple disparate programs and lack of coordination of stakeholders across sectors, systems and geographies likely impact access challenges: stakeholders indicated confusion around programs provided by multiple jurisdictions with similar names.

3. Many homes in unincorporated county are in flood or fire zones and do not meet current codes or need to be rehabbed.

Barriers and Gaps to Preserving Vulnerable Housing

The County's *Preserve Vulnerable Housing* goal aims to support proactive strategies to preserve both Affordable Housing and unrestricted affordable housing, such as tracking expiration dates of affordable housing deed restrictions, keeping tenants informed of their rights, and investing in rehabilitation of housing to preserve affordability.

The Team has identified the following barriers and gaps to *Preserving Vulnerable Housing*:

1. Ongoing **loss of affordability**, both in Affordable Housing and unrestricted affordable housing, and **no ongoing tracking of unrestricted affordable housing at-risk of being unaffordable**.

2. **Current State subsidy and tax credit programs prioritize new construction over rehabilitation and preservation** of Affordable Housing and unrestricted affordable housing.

3. **No dedicated stream of rehabilitation and preservation funding at the local level**.

Barriers and Gaps to Preventing Displacement and Protecting Tenants

Displacement prevention and tenant protection often have similar solutions given that the affected population – vulnerable residents, who are typically tenants – overlap significantly. As such, this summary addresses barriers and opportunities for both Ps simultaneously.

The County's *Prevent Displacement* goal recognizes that the most vulnerable residents, low-income seniors and households with school age children, often face the worst outcomes from displacement: loss of a supportive community network, displacement from schools, overcrowded homes, and homelessness. The County can play a vital role in preventing this by implementing policies that prevent vulnerable residents from the harmful outcomes of displacement. Strategies include studying existing and potential displacement pressures and monitoring the effectiveness of housing retention strategies in relation to planned transit investments.

Similarly, in an environment with limited *Tenant Protections*, renters and other vulnerable populations tend to face greater housing precarity. Therefore, the County's vision for equitable housing should seek to support renters by providing information on tenant rights and creating protections to minimize economic eviction or unsustainable rent increases.

The Team has identified the following gaps and barriers in meeting these goals:

1. **Lack of coordination and varied target areas and standards** for displacement prevention and rental assistance programs that rely on various discretionary funding sources. Stakeholders indicated multiple times that the high number of uncoordinated displacement prevention and rental assistance programs, often with relatively small dollar amounts, placed a high administrative burden on service providers and individuals to keep up with sources and programs, especially with multiple jurisdictions providing such assistance with similar program names, multiple eligibility requirements and discretionary funding that can begin and end at any time.

2. **Lack of comprehensive renter protection policies, programs, and enforcement within the County.** While there has been a recent expansion of tenant protections as result of State laws, these protections are limited to selected properties, and there is no enforcement mechanism, government staff, or data systems designed to ensure tracking and compliance of the new requirements.

4   Opportunities for County Action

Following the Team's assessment of the County's existing housing and homelessness initiatives in the Task 4.1 *San Diego County Housing Blueprint Infrastructure, Program, and Data Assessments* memo, the Team concluded with five global observations to guide Blueprint work moving forward. These were developed in acknowledgement that issues of housing and homelessness are often cross-cutting, and opportunities for action often address multiple areas simultaneously. The global observations point towards broad, actionable categories of recommendations that can be utilized moving forward. Accordingly, this section's *Opportunities for County Action* are structured based on these global observations.

4.1 Potential for Regional Leadership

As the entity with the broadest geographic reach in the region, the County has the opportunity to engage more actively in regional issues and lead in housing and homelessness policy. The County can lead by facilitating collaboration and technical assistance with jurisdictions and other

stakeholders, as well as by developing strong policies that fill gaps in preserving at-risk housing, protecting tenants, and preventing displacement.

1. Provide **regional leadership by facilitating collaboration and technical assistance with localities.**

2. Support **faith-based and educational institutions** in identifying and utilizing potential sites, building off opportunities created by recent legislation.

3. Support **improved coordination, education, and navigation of services and resources, including housing,** for individuals and service providers.

4. **Assess the County's leadership role in homelessness response and prevention**.

5. **Implement strategies listed in the [Preserving Affordable Housing in San Diego County](#) report** developed as part of the Transformative Housing Solutions Initiative.

6. Develop a **comprehensive set of renter protection policies, programs, and enforcement mechanisms** suited to the County's particular needs.

4.2 Collaboration and Organization of Housing Programs

The County has a plethora of important programs that respond to affordable housing and homelessness needs, though they are administered by multiple departments. While these departments have formal systems of communication and collaboration, these efforts can be reinforced by the creation of a new housing strategy entity in the CAO's office.

1. Identify opportunities for **consolidation and coordination of funding and programs** for displacement prevention, rental assistance, and housing development.

2. The County could consider coordinating funding with external partners, including other jurisdictions within the County. For example, the County could convene jurisdictions to discuss the coordination of displacement prevention, rental assistance, and housing development resources, such as CDBG and HOME funding. Partners could coordinate on big-picture priorities together to ensure greater impact as well as on streamlining eligibility criteria, terms, and reporting requirements to reduce the burden on service providers and developer applicants. Participants could additionally discuss challenges and share best practices.

3. Ensure **streamlined and developer-friendly RFPs for County-owned sites**.

4.3 Stronger Connection Between Housing and Homelessness

Housing is the main solution to homelessness. While the Blueprint is focused on the County's housing strategies, the efforts on housing and homelessness must cohere and be considered comprehensively. Organizationally, the County's housing efforts are largely managed by HCDS, with homelessness efforts largely managed by the OHS, which coordinates with the RTFH, other public agencies, and service providers. While the number of homeless residents in the unincorporated area is small, the County provides homeless services and support throughout

the County. At a minimum, the County will have to ramp up internal and external coordination to ensure alignment between housing and homelessness initiatives and dollars.

1. **Reorganize County departments and consolidate housing and homelessness strategies** to reflect the interconnected nature of housing, homelessness, and land use programs and responsibilities.

2. Identify **opportunities to align and coordinate internally and externally** in planning to meet countywide homelessness needs, including leveraging potential Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) / Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) and Behavioral Health Infrastructure Bond funding, which emphasizes housing. The County should also continue to support the implementation of Medi-Cal Transformation.

3. **Explicitly prioritize Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Extremely Low-Income (ELI) Housing**.

4. Create a **single centralized application for Affordable Housing Tracking**

4.4 Utilize Technology and Reporting for Implementation and Tracking

County departments that address housing provide reports to the Board of Supervisors and mandatory State reporting, but there is no central location where the public can access the reports to determine progress in meeting goals or follow the status of initiatives. Reports are often long and difficult for the public to understand. The County can explore different ways in which technology can support tracking and implementing the Housing Blueprint, both for County staff and for the public.

1. Establish **clear measures of housing and homelessness needs** and **ensure coordinated reporting** against those targets.

2. Identify and map **underutilized sites** to encourage development.

3. Explore ways to **track, enforce, and enhance** existing renter protection policies.

4. **Rework website** to highlight active programs and pertinent data

4.5 More Funding and Resources

Despite the best efforts of the County departments, there are not enough resources to create the housing needed. The County can consider pursuing several opportunities to continue its support of development throughout both incorporated and unincorporated County, particularly for PSH, ELI and VLI, where the largest gaps persist. The Team will convene a Housing Financing Working Group in the beginning of 2024 and expects the topic of funding middle-income housing and homeownership to be fleshed out in more detail after such engagement. Below are a few opportunities the County can consider pursuing:

1. **Build off the County's 2022 study of an [Affordable Housing Trust Fund](#)** to further investigate the potential for such a fund.

2. **Review homeownership programs to determine ways to expand homeownership options** given challenging market conditions.

4. Consider **expanding promising housing and homelessness programs** such as the Shallow Rental Subsidy Program for seniors, Home Safe, the Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART), and the Community Care Coordination (C3) program in terms of funding, target population and/or staff members.

5. Build on the County's Green Affordable Housing Study to facilitate homeowner and developer education on using **energy funding** to reduce costs.

6. Monitor the impact of the County's **Housing Preservation and Anti-Displacement (HPAD) Pilot Program** and consider ways to expand and improve it.

7. **Track and advocate for State-level preservation funding opportunities** to facilitate absorption into San Diego properties.

5   Next Steps

Within this Framework and in discussion with County staff, the Team will continue to develop a set of specific recommendations. Based on the barriers and opportunities identified in this summary, as well as prior work completed, the Housing Blueprint work will advance into the next phases of convening a working group on middle income housing finance and ongoing deep stakeholder engagement. In time and with County staff feedback and community input, the Team will identify a coherent set of objectives that address the County's needs and create a final version of the Blueprint. The final Blueprint will include detailed and prioritized objectives, each with a set of specific, actionable strategies and recommendations, a system of tracking and evaluating Blueprint progress, and budget and resource needs.

APPENDIX E

HOUSING FINANCE WORKING GROUP MEMORANDUM

Appendix E_Housing Finance Working Group Memorandum

To: Stacy Calderon, PMP
Senior Associate, Housing Team
LeSar Development Consultants

From: KEYSER MARSTON ASSOCIATES, INC.

Date: May 13, 2024

Subject: Summary of Process and Final Recommendations
Housing Finance Working Group
San Diego County Housing Blueprint

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Housing Blueprint effort undertaken for the County of San Diego (County) LeSar Development Consultants (LDC) in coordination with Keyser Marston Associates, Inc. (KMA) and Mariposa Strategies, LLC (Mariposa) (Consultant Team), this memorandum summarizes the Housing Finance Working Group (HFWG) mission, membership, process, and final recommendations.

The Mission Statement for the HFWG was to identify approaches to increase the affordability and production of, and reduce the cost of, for-sale housing for populations earning up to 120% of Area Median Income (AMI) in the unincorporated areas of the County, specifically:

- Financing tools or partnerships to stimulate middle-income homeownership
- Incentives or policy changes to spur production of middle-income for-sale housing
- Land use planning changes to increase housing affordability

HFWG members included market-rate and affordable housing developers, lenders, housing advocates, labor organizations, and other key stakeholders. HFWG member invitees were selected from a range of housing interests and finance expertise to build a diverse group that reflects the richness of perspectives and experiences within the San Diego region.

The Consultant Team initially identified approximately 60 potential stakeholders to participate in a series of three (3) HFWG virtual meetings. The final list of registered participants included 31 individuals. A complete list of HFWG members is presented in Exhibit A.

PROCESS

An agenda, slide deck, and other relevant materials were distributed to registered participants prior to each HFWG meeting. The Consultant Team facilitated three interactive meetings with the HFWG, as described below.

Meeting #1: Assessment of Current Conditions and Challenges
Thursday, February 29, 2024 | 12:30 to 2:00 P.M.

The objective of Meeting #1 was to gain insight from the HFWG members on barriers to homeownership in terms of both the developer experience (financing/building for-sale housing) and the homebuyer experience (qualifying/purchasing for-sale housing). The Consultant Team presented an overview of current market and financial trends in unincorporated San Diego County. The Consultant Team then facilitated an interactive discussion among HFWG members. To further guide the discussion, the Consultant Team conducted two (2) polls to allow members to rank the importance of various barriers from the developer and homebuyer perspective.

Meeting #2: Potential Solutions, Programs, and Policies
Thursday, March 14, 2024 | 12:30 to 2:00 P.M.

The primary objective of Meeting #2 was to allow HFWG members to engage in a more thorough discussion on potential developer and homebuyer programs and incentives that could be considered by the County. The Consultant Team provided the polling results from Meeting #1 as well as a summary of other barriers that were identified by HFWG members. The Consultant Team also profiled other parallel land use planning and housing policy initiatives that the County is undertaking. An additional four (4) polls were conducted to rank potential developer and homebuyer tools and incentives to support middle-income housing development and homeownership.

Meeting #3: Working Group Recommendations
Thursday, April 11, 2024 | 12:30 to 2:00 P.M.

The objective of Meeting #3 was to finalize the list of developer and homebuyer incentives to present to the County. HFWG members were presented with the poll findings from Meeting #2. The Consultant Team presented a series of matrices for each of the recommended incentives that identified key benefits, key challenges, and comparable examples from other jurisdictions or institutions. HFWG members were then asked to rank the recommended incentives. The rankings were weighted from "weak support for County to pursue recommendation" to "strong support for County to pursue recommendation". The Consultant Team also provided the HFWG members with one (1) week to provide additional feedback.

FINAL RECOMMENDED INCENTIVES

Based on the HFWG meetings, and the range of comments and feedback received from members, the Consultant Team has finalized the list of recommended incentives for County consideration to three (3) developer-based incentives and three (3) homebuyer-based incentives, as follows:

RECOMMENDED INCENTIVES	
Developer Incentives	**Homebuyer Incentives**
1. Establish a revolving loan fund	4. Create a Middle-Income Homebuyer Assistance Program
2. Defer Development Impact Fees (DIFs)	5. Provide financial education and homebuyer readiness program support for community-based organizations serving disadvantaged communities
3. Streamline and expedite entitlement processing for housing developments	6. Prepare development standards and zoning reform incentivizing small-scale for-sale developments

The Consultant Team conducted high-level overviews for each of the recommended incentives. These final recommended incentives are presented in Exhibits B through G, and include the following information:

1. Description of incentive
2. Potential program parameters
3. Comparable examples
4. Key benefits
5. Key challenges

The Consultant Team recommends that the County evaluate the recommended incentives and conduct thorough evaluations related to implementation, administration, and adoption of each of these potential incentives.

HOUSING FINANCE WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

HOUSING BLUEPRINT

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

First Name	Last Name	Company	E Mail Address
Douglas	Austin	AVRP Studios	dhaustin@avrpstudios.com
Chris	Cate	BIA of San Diego	chris@chrisjcate.com
Peter	Dennehy	John Burns Research and Consulting	pdennehy@jbrec.com
Jose	Dorado	City of El Cajon	jdorado@elcajon.gov
Ansermio	Estrada	San Diego County Building and Construction Trades Council	ansermio@sdbuildingtrades.com
Ricardo	Flores	LISC San Diego	rflores@lisc.org
Steph	Groce	C4GS-ZEDlife	sgroce@c4gs.org
Leilani	Hines	City of Oceanside	lhines@oceansideca.org
Robert	Ito	Ito Girard and Associates	robert@itogirard.com
Vida	Khavari	Guild Mortgage	vkhavari@guildmortgage.net
Sean	Kilkenny	Nolen Communities	skilkenny@nolencommunities.com
Carol	Kim	San Diego County Building & Construction Trades Council	carol@sdbuildingtrades.com
Stacey	Kurz	City of Chula Vista	skurz@chulavistaca.gov

Adrian	Luna	BIA of San Diego	adrian@biasandiego.org
Jim	Mahler	American Federation of Teachers 1931	aftjim@mac.com
Arnulfo	Manriquez	MAAC	amanriquez@maacproject.org
Nathan	Moeder	London Moeder Advisors	nathan@londonmoeder.com
Rob	Morgan	Trestle Build	rob@trestlebuild.com
Josh	Newton	UCSD	jdnewton@ucsd.edu
Louie	Nguyen	Mission Driven Finance	louie@missiondrivenfinance.com
Maurico	Perez	National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals	mo@mysandiegobroker.com
Sujata	Raman	San Diego Housing Commission	sujatar@sdhc.org
Heather	Riley	Allen Matkins	hriley@allenmatkins.com
Carlos	Rodriguez	City of Chula Vista	crodriguez@chulavistaca.gov
Marie	Sanders	City of Poway	msanders@poway.org
Sean	Santa Cruz	Hallmark Communities	ssantacruz@hallmarkcommunities.com
James	Sly	San Diego East County EDC	james.sly@eastcountyedc.org
Chris	Stanley	City of Chula Vista	cstanley@chulavistaca.gov
Stephen	Russell	San Diego Housing Federation	steve@housingsandiego.org
Oscar	Uranga	Unison Communities	oscar@unisoncommunities.com
Brian	Warwick	City of Chula Vista	bwarwick@chulavistaca.gov

EXHIBIT B **RECOMMENDATION #1** **INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS DEVELOPER FINANCIAL BARRIERS**	
Recommendation	Establish a revolving loan fund
Description	Explore the establishment of a revolving loan fund for developers of middle-income ownership housing
Potential Program Parameters	• Work with philanthropic organizations to create a revolving loan fund for middle-income ownership housing developments • Funds provided as either predevelopment loans and/or mezzanine construction loans to be taken out upon sales to homebuyers • As an example, eligible projects could be required to include a minimum 25% of units at initial prices affordable to households earning up to 150% AMI • Homes would be subject to affordability covenants for a term of 45 years; during the term of the covenants, owners could only sell their units at restricted prices to qualified households
Comparable Examples	• **City of Los Angeles New Generation Fund (NGF)** – Acquisition and pre-development capital for affordable housing development. Eligible projects can include either rental or homeownership units targeted to households earning at or below 150% AMI. The low-interest rate loans are repaid once developers qualify for permanent financing. • **Middlemarch Fund** – Provides developers access to lower cost equity capital in exchange for restricting rental housing units between 80% and 120% AMI. Units must be deed restricted for a minimum of 30 years. Funds are made available once a project is ready to break ground with a financial institution commitment and building permits issued.
Key Benefits	• Provides supplemental capital source for housing developers • Enhances project feasibility by reducing overall cost of financing • Generates economic return for investors
Key Challenges	• Requires County General Fund budget set-aside, partnerships with philanthropic organization(s), and/or private investors • Requires outreach to developers regarding advantages of program • Long-term covenants may be a disincentive for buyers and will create ongoing administrative responsibilities for the County

EXHIBIT C RECOMMENDATION #2 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS DEVELOPER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Defer Development Impact Fees (DIFs)
Description	Explore a Development Impact Fee (DIF) deferral program that allows developers of middle-income ownership housing to pay DIFs at project completion
Potential Program Parameters	• Developers of middle-income ownership housing could defer payment of County DIFs until project completion (Certificate of Occupancy) • As an example, eligible projects could be required to include a minimum 25% of units at initial prices affordable to households earning up to 150% AMI • Implementation of a DIF deferral program may not warrant long-term affordability covenants or restrictions on the resale of homes to qualified affordable buyers; however, there may be an opportunity to incorporate a minimum number of years the original buyer should occupy the home before re-sale
Comparable Examples	• **City of San Marcos Public Facility Fee (PFF) Deferral Program** – Program provides developers the option to defer public facilities impact fees until the development is ready for its utility release. An application to defer payment of PFF must be completed by the developer and approved by the City. As a condition of the deferment, a lien is recorded on the affected property with the County Recorder in the amount that is deferred and is enforceable against successors in interest to the owner. • **City of Chula Vista Deferred DIF Program –** Industrial, commercial, and high-density residential (rental) projects located in Western Chula Vista and the Chula Vista Auto Park have the ability to defer certain development impact fees beyond Certificate of Occupancy by annexing into the Western Chula Vista Community Facilities District (CFD 17-I). The program allows the fees to be deferred for 10 years, with repayment in years 11 through 30. Deferred fees accrue interest at 2% per year.
Key Benefits	• Enhances project feasibility by reducing development costs (specifically interest costs)
Key Challenges	• Temporarily delays County receipt of funds needed to develop public facilities and infrastructure to serve new residential development • Directs benefit towards a housing activity and income group that may not be the highest need/priority vs. targeted to affordable rental housing restricted to very low and low income levels

EXHIBIT D RECOMMENDATION #3 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS DEVELOPER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Streamline and expedite entitlement processing for housing developments
Description	Streamline and expedite entitlement processing for all housing developments, particularly middle-income ownership housing. Align the County's multiple land use, mobility, housing plans, studies, and policy initiatives to support new housing development. Address factors contributing to lengthy delays in processing entitlements for housing developments compliant with the General Plan.
Potential Program Parameters	• Prepare realistic updated General Plan projections for development in the unincorporated area that reflect impacts of the adopted VMT Guidelines and likely CEQA challenges • Adopt targeted Specific Plans and Community Plan Amendments with Programmatic EIRs • Implement changes to entitlement processing through new operational procedures, staff recruitment and training, and a shared mission of accelerating housing production • Expand the range of housing developments that can be approved ministerially • Establish an expedited entitlement process for middle-income ownership housing developments, potentially defined as projects with at least 25% of the units initially affordable to households up to 150% AMI

EXHIBIT D RECOMMENDATION #3 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS DEVELOPER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Streamline and expedite entitlement processing for housing developments

Comparable Examples	• **City of Riverside Streamline Riverside Program** – Program provides customers with various tools that allow customers to work through the development process and promotes certainty and transparency. These tools include:
	
	    o One Stop Shop – entire City development team is located on a single floor at City Hall
	
	    o Development Review Committee – process that allows early input from all City departments to improve review processes for entitlements
	
	    o Code Updates – reduces red tape to allow development proposal to move in an expedited manner
	
	    o Uniform Plan Check Turnaround – ensures all City departments return plan review comments on the same date
	
	    o Expedited Plan Check Services – allows customers to request quicker service for an additional review, cutting review time in half
	
	    o Useful Technology Software – provides customers the ability to submit projects, permit applications, and electronic plans through a public portal and provides customers with 24/7 remote access to City staff

EXHIBIT D RECOMMENDATION #3 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS DEVELOPER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Streamline and expedite entitlement processing for housing developments

Comparable Examples (cont'd.)	• **City of San Diego Initiatives** – In recent years, the City has implemented a series of initiatives to promote and expedite the production of housing. The initiatives include:
	
	   o Affordable Housing Permit Now Program – allows City staff to liberally grant incentives and waivers, requires City departments to process building permit applications and certificates of occupancy within five (5) business days, and conclude all reviews required to issue approvals for 100% affordable housing projects
	
	   o General Plan Refresh (Blueprint SD) – proposes amendments to the General Plan to include policies to encourage more home production in areas that can best help achieve the City's climate action goals
	
	   o Land Development Code Updates – annual update and monitoring of the City's land development code by the City's planning department to simplify and streamline the permitting processes, assure compliance with State and Federal regulations, eliminate unnecessary barriers, redundancies and contradictions, and align policy with the City's climate, equity, and housing goals
	
	   o Complete Communities: Mobility Choices – reforms development processes to align with mobility goals by streamlining projects located in VMT efficient areas, providing developers with a VMT calculator, and implementing mitigation measures for new development

Key Benefits	• Ensures streamlined development processing through efficient administration of County policies and initiatives • Expedited timing and enhanced certainty results in cost savings to developers • Creates realistic expectations of achievable development, locations, and timing
Key Challenges	• Requires a "culture shift[24]" for County planning and development departments which would need to institute operational and organizational changes to shift from a focus on regulation and enforcement to a pro-housing culture focused on accelerating housing production by working in partnership with developers • Requires time and cost to update County land use plans and policies

[24] Defined as the process in which an organization encourages employees to adopt behaviors and mindsets that are consistent with the organization's values and goals.

EXHIBIT E RECOMMENDATION #4 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS HOMEBUYER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Create a Middle-Income Homebuyer Assistance Program
Description	Modify, supplement, and expand homebuyer down payment and closing cost assistance to ensure they serve a greater share of prospective homebuyers in San Diego County, including creating a middle-income homebuyer assistance program targeted to households earning up to 150% of Area Median Income (AMI).
Potential Program Parameters	- Work with philanthropic organizations to create a middle-income homebuyer assistance program for first-time homebuyers targeted to households earning up to 150% of Area Median Income (AMI.) - Given current market conditions, including steep home price appreciation and low supply of entry-level ownership housing, existing 80% AMI restrictions on the current San Diego County Down Payment Assistance Program make the program infeasible for households seeking to purchase a home today. Even among those making between 120-150% AMI, down payment and monthly mortgage payments make homeownership out of reach for individuals who do not rely on generational wealth to achieve homeownership. To ensure that limited funds go to the households that need it most (those starting on their wealth-creation journey), the program can be targeted to first-time homebuyers who are also first-generation homebuyers. - The Middle-Income Homebuyer Assistance Program can be used for down payment assistance, closing costs, or to buy down interest rates. - Create a special set-aside for residents of Affordable Housing units in San Diego County to free up more affordable housing units for residents needing housing.
Comparable Examples	**The California Dream For All Program** – Run by the California Housing Finance Agency, provides up to a 20% down payment equity sharing loan for first-time, first-generation homebuyers. **Los Angeles Housing Department Moderate Income Purchase Assistance Program** – Program provides a loan of up to $115,000 for down payment, closing costs, and acquisition. Up to $115,000 will be available for homebuyers earning between 80-120% Area Median Income (AMI) and up to $90,000 will be available for homebuyers earning between 121%-150% AMI. **Los Angeles County Greenline Home Program – P**rogram provides a $35,000 grant for downpayment or closing cost assistance towards the purchase of a home for first-time home buyers of Los Angeles County who are low to moderate income (up to 150 AMI).

EXHIBIT E RECOMMENDATION #4 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS HOMEBUYER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Create a Middle-Income Homebuyer Assistance Program
Key Benefits	- Provides needed homebuyer assistance to "missing middle" homebuyers who are struggling to achieve homeownership despite their moderate-income status due to current market conditions. - Creates a targeted demand-side approach to individuals most likely to have not benefited from generational wealth. - Bolsters first-time homebuyers beginning on their generational wealth creation journey. - Increases property tax revenue.
Key Challenges	- Requires County General Fund budget set-aside, partnerships with philanthropic organization(s), and/or private investors - Requires outreach to real estate professionals to ensure knowledge of the program. - Depending on the size of money allocation for this program, the program will run out quickly due to high demand.

EXHIBIT F RECOMMENDATION #5 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS HOMEBUYER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Financial education and homebuyer readiness program support for community-based organizations serving disadvantaged communities.
Description	Fund the expansion or creation of financial education programs operated by community-based organizations serving historically disadvantaged communities throughout San Diego County.
Potential Program Parameters	• Eligible community-based organizations must be headquartered in historically disadvantaged areas of the County. • Eligible community-based organizations must primarily serve communities that have been historically shut out of homeownership and wealth-creation opportunities through racial segregation, redlining, and a history of racism. • Financial education programs can cover homebuyer readiness, certified HUD-approved housing counselors, wealth creation, and asset diversification. Additionally, the programs must be designed to provide cultural sensitivity and relevance to the communities being served. • Grant allocation can be determined both by the strength of applications and a determination of areas of the county that are least being served by financial education programs. • Ensure that financial education initiatives are a part of all county homeownership initiatives.
Comparable Examples	• **Wells Fargo Worth Initiative** – The San Diego Housing Commission received a $7.5 million grant from Wells Fargo to increase the number of BIPOC homeowners in the San Diego region. A critical component of this program involves funding homebuyer readiness programs for a small number of non-profits with existing housing counseling services. • **Operation Hope** — This is one of the best non-profits in the nation focusing on equipping individuals and communities with the financial tools they need to secure a better future through financial independence. The organization partners with financial institutions, corporations, agencies, and community organizations to offer various programs such as credit and money management, small business development, youth financial literacy, and financial disaster recovery.

EXHIBIT F RECOMMENDATION #5 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS HOMEBUYER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Financial education and homebuyer readiness program support for community-based organizations serving disadvantaged communities.
Key Benefits	• Connects prospective homebuyers to existing programs available to them in the county. • Creates critical partnerships with communities that work closely with underserved communities and recognizes the linkage between homeownership and racial equity. • The Recent National Association of Realtors Settlement that reforms the way sellers' agents get compensated might result in a reduction of sellers' agents in the market. In the past, seller's agents, particularly those working with first-time homebuyers often spent several months to a year getting homebuyers "mortgage-ready." This will likely increase the need/demand for housing counselors to guide first-time homebuyers through the home buying process. • Encourages and guides low to moderate-income San Diego residents to create wealth even before purchasing a home (investments beyond real estate).
Key Challenges	• Entry-level housing supply continues to be the most underbuilt housing category in the market. Without units for sale, housing counseling will not increase homeownership rates alone.

EXHIBIT G RECOMMENDATION #6 INCENTIVE TO ADDRESS HOMEBUYER FINANCIAL BARRIERS	
Recommendation	Prepare development standards and zoning reform incentivizing small-scale for-sale developments
Description	Implement new development standards to accommodate small lot-single-family, townhomes, and condominiums. Adopt enabling legislation to create for-sale Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

Potential Program Parameters	• To incentivize the building of townhomes and small-lot single-family entry-level housing: reduce minimum lot size requirements to 1,400 square feet in selected unincorporated areas of the county.
	• For sale ADUs:
	   o Eliminate sales restrictions and adopt legislation expressly allowing ADU sales.
	   o Publish ADU checklist indicating Subdivision Map Act compliance and lender subordination information.
	   o Establish first right of offer to owner occupants to encourage new homeownership. (45 days on publicly accessible databases i.e., MLS.) To avoid issues with lenders, do not require owner occupancy.
	   o Create ADU homeownership program in the county with staff that expedites ADU condominium processing. This program could be paired with existing homebuyer programs in the county, i.e., down payment assistance programs.
	   o Could create a pilot program geared toward first time homebuyers to establish proof of concept.

Comparable Examples	• **City of Houston Minimum Lot Size Reduction** – In 1998, Houston reduced the by-right minimum lot size from 5,000 to 3,500 SF within the city's inner core and permitted even smaller lots (down to an average of 1,400 SF) for subdivisions that met certain conditions. In 2013, the 1,400 SF minimum lot size was extended to cover all the land in the city with wastewater collection services. Thousands of townhomes are now built in Houston each year and the BIPOC homeownership rates are one of the highest in the nation.
	• **Examples of For Sale ADUs –**
	   • **Princeton, NJ:** Allows separate sale of ADUs, creating ownership opportunities at 30-50% below the median sales price of a full home. The initiative is helping the city become more inclusive and diversified.
	   • **Portland, OR:** Portland allows the sale of ADUs as condominiums, creating homes that sell for 40-60% of market prices. Sales of newly built ADUs in 2022 were all within 120% AMI affordable range for 2-person Portland households.
	   • **Seattle, WA:** 40% of all ADUs built in Seattle are sold as condominiums, creating new ladders into homeownership for generations priced out.

Key Benefits	• Incentivizes the development of entry-level homeownership supply without subsidies. • Leverages success of ADU production in San Diego County to be used toward entry-level homeownership (low-hanging fruit.)

APPENDIX F

HOUSING BLUEPRINT CASE STUDIES

Appendix F_County of San Diego Housing Blueprint Case Studies

As part of the County of San Diego Housing Blueprint, LeSar Development Consultants has researched and prepared eight brief case studies of communities implementing a key best practice applicable to the region. These case studies fulfill the requirements of task 4.1.4 Landscape Analysis by providing an overview of how relevant best practices are implemented in different jurisdictions.

The eight case studies cover the following topics:

Topic	Case Study	Page
Regional collaboration on housing production	21 Elements—San Mateo County	141
New regional funding source	Regional Housing Finance Authority—BAHFA	144
Regional public/private structured fund	Housing Trust of Silicon Valley	146
Housing working group	Measure ULA Citizen's Oversight Committee	148
Centralized housing application portal	DAHLIA/Doorway Online Housing Portals	150
Publicly-owned land and middle-income housing	Vienna Social Housing	152
Middle-income production strategy	Houston, Texas townhomes land use incentives	154
Landlord engagement	Landlord Engagement	156

These case studies were selected in collaboration with County staff in Fall 2023 to be responsive to stakeholder engagement as well as LeSar's initial observations about the County's housing needs and barriers to meeting the goals of the 5 Ps. Since then, the research and analysis work of the Blueprint continued, and the Blueprint project team has identified a set of eight Strategies. Each Strategy is detailed in the Blueprint with several specific short-term and medium-term actions the County can undertake, among other information. Where applicable, the appropriate case studies are referenced in the narrative of each Strategy.

The following pages include the eight case studies, where are organized to cover the following topics:

- **Program Summary:** An overview of the program/policy's overall purpose, organization, and other general information.

- **Program Details:** In addition to the name and location, this section identifies the organization or agency responsible for the program, its target population, as well as available budget information, funding source, and staff.
- **Impact:** How this program or policy has addressed housing needs or barriers, any challenges or opportunities faced so far, and more.
- **Potential Opportunity:** How this program can impact the San Diego region.

21 Elements—San Mateo County

Program Summary

21 Elements is a unique county-led effort that brings together all 21 jurisdictions in San Mateo County (County) to cooperate on the development of housing elements, collaborate on housing policy, share what is working, respond to new laws or issues, and explore potential policies and programs. Originally created in 2008 by County housing and planning staff, 21 Elements is co-sponsored by the San Mateo County Department of Housing (DOH) and the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C-CAG). Key project partners include the State Department of Housing and Community Development and the San Mateo County Department of Health. Representatives from each of the cities, towns, and the County meet monthly to coordinate efforts and advance their work.

Program Details

- **Program Name** – 21 Elements
- **Jurisdiction** – San Mateo County
- **Department responsible** – Joint responsibility between DOH and C-CAG.
- **Target population** – Impacts all housing activities and all target populations in the County.
- **Budget with breakdown** – Approximately $500,000-$700,000 annually to contract with a firm to coordinate the meetings, prepare materials, and help jurisdictions prepare ordinances (including inclusionary ordinances, accessory dwelling unit ordinances, and other policies and programs).
- **Funding source** – 21 Elements was originally funded in part by the participating cities, with funds leveraged from C/CAG and the DOH. In recent years, the County has received REAP funding from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to fund this effort.
- **Staffing** – 21 Elements is largely staffed by the consulting firm Community Planning Collaborative (formerly Baird and Driskoll). As the effort expanded to other communities (see discussion below), ABAG found that a single county planning collaborative can typically be served by one half-time consultant. This varies depending on the county as smaller cities often require a higher touch.
- **Program timeline** – Began in 2008

Impacts

In addition to the value of the region working across jurisdictions to address housing needs, 21 Elements has benefitted cities and the County by reducing the costs associated with the development and implementation of both housing policy and programs. One benefit cited by the County is that many smaller cities were able to complete their Housing Elements in house because of the resources, tools, and technical assistance they received through this effort. Specifically, 90% of participating jurisdictions stated that 21 Elements saved them time and money and all surveyed believed it was a worthwhile investment and improved the quality of their Housing Element.

San Mateo has both rural and urban areas and includes diverse constituencies, some which are more accepting of growth and others who oppose new development. As part of the program, 21 Elements seeks to provide opportunities for community engagement and learning. One of these efforts is called Let's Talk Housing. This tool is intended to provide community members with a vehicle to express their opinions and to learn about housing.

Due to the success of 21 Elements, ABAG facilitated the creation of subregional planning collaboratives for the remainder of the Bay Area. Using Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grant funds, ABAG provided the Planning Collaboratives of Alameda County ($493,000), Contra Costa County ($657,000), Marin County ($490,000), Napa/Sonoma Counties ($526,000), San Francisco City/County ($128,000), and the Solano County Transportation Authority ($490,000) the monies needed to administer grant funds, engage a consultant team, and provide technical assistance. Note that the numbers in parentheses are this year's number; this will be the third year that ABAG has provided support to these planning collaboratives.

Since its formation, 21 Elements has:

- Established a subregion for the Regional Housing Needs Allocation Process.
- Helped jurisdictions prepare Housing Elements over two cycles
- Assisted with the implementation of Housing Element actions and policies.
- Created draft ordinances for policies including inclusionary zoning and Accessory Dwelling Units.
- Developed a variety of tools, including templates, methodologies, data and information, and best practices that each jurisdiction can use.
- Provided guidance and best practices around zoning mechanisms and implementation.
- Completed a tenant displacement analysis and developed regulations and programs to address displacement.
- Negotiated a streamlined pre-qualification process with the State Department of Housing and Community Development for the Sustainable Communities Strategy development process.
- Coordinated a County-wide nexus study for potential residential and commercial linkage fees to streamline the process and reduce the cost for individual jurisdictions.
- Developed a Countywide analysis of fair housing.
- Studied and made recommendations about policies and regulation of short-term rentals.
- Interpreted and helped with the implementation/compliance with new State housing laws.
- Conducted a collaborative effort to develop new Safety and Environmental Justice elements across multiple jurisdictions.
- Provided training and expert presentations on housing issues.
- Provided information about funding availability and grants.
- Created a vehicle for community engagement around housing (see above).

Potential Opportunity

21 Elements provides a great example of how the County of San Diego could take a leadership role around housing and homelessness by providing a space where all 18 cities and the County can work together to plan and implement housing policies and programs. Because San Diego County includes a large city, it may be that a similar effort would involve the leadership of the County, the City of San Diego, and the San Diego Association of Governments in addition to the participation of the other cities. The benefit to the County and all its jurisdictions is the ability to learn from one another in an ongoing, collaborative way, to seek partnerships across jurisdictional boundaries, and to investigate opportunities to respond to housing and homelessness in ways that might not be possible without an ongoing dialogue. This can include jointly seeking new funding.

Similar to the 21 Elements program, all jurisdictions can contribute to the cost of this effort. San Diego County could fund its portion from current housing funds or seek contributions from foundations or corporations.

Regional Housing Finance Authority—BAHFA

Program Summary

In 2019, AB 1487 (David Chiu, San Francisco) established the [Bay Area Housing Finance Authority](#) (BAHFA), which has the authority to raise and distribute funds through a variety of methods for production, preservation, and protection efforts in the 9-county San Francisco Bay Area. In 2022, the Governor signed AB 679 (Kamlager, Los Angeles), which created a similar regional body for Los Angeles County called the [Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency](#) (LACAHSA).

While both agencies have the ability to provide technical assistance and administer regional programs, they also can raise significant funding for their regions. BAHFA has received approvals from its governing boards to place a measure on the November 2024 ballot for a $20 billion General Obligation bond that it projects will enable the construction and preservation of an estimated 72,000 affordable homes. BAHFA estimates that, without this funding, the region will only have the ability to fund 71,000 homes, far short of the region's housing goals. LACAHSA is also looking at opportunities for regional funding measures.

Program Details

- **Program Name** – Bay Area Housing Finance Authority
- **Jurisdiction** – 9-county Bay Area
- **Department responsible** – BAHFA is housed within the Association of Bay Area Governments/ Metropolitan Transportation Commission. The MTC and ABAG governing boards share oversight and there is both an Advisory Committee and an Oversight Committee.
- **Target population** – Focused on housing for lower- and moderate-income households with a focus on the 3Ps
- **Budget with breakdown (4-Year Budget)**– BAHFA Staff Time and Pilot Programs-- $13.8 million, Admin and operations (including legal and ballot work)-- $4 million
- **Funding source** – BAHFA received an allocation of $20 million from the Legislature to begin operations and implement several small housing pilots. LACAHSA has received an estimated $2 million in philanthropic and grant funding from the Southern California Association of Governments to get started and is seeking additional funding.
- **Staffing** – BAHFA has an Executive Director and seven staff positions, though leverages staff from ABAG/MTC
- **Program timeline** – Began in 2020

Program Impacts

Before BAHFA was established, the Bay Area's nine counties and 101 cities were on their own in tackling their housing needs, with no regional focus. Many did not have the resources or the technical expertise to address their housing goals and did not have the capacity to raise the funding needed to respond. BAHFA provides the support needed to address housing issues, raise funds, and facilitate collaboration between jurisdictions in solving a problem that does not end at a city's or county's boundaries.

BAHFA is just getting started, but in the first couple of years after bringing on staff, it has worked to implement several pilot programs:
1. Creation of an affordable housing search and application portal known as [Doorway](#).

2. Development of a [comprehensive inventory](#) of affordable housing developments throughout the nine-county region that provides information about location and funding gaps.
3. Creation of and planning for several preservation pilots, including a [Welfare Exemption Preservation Program](#) and a Housing Preservation Pilot that was funded with Regional Early Action Planning REAP 2.0 dollars.
4. Researching and planning for anti-displacement and homeless prevention pilot programs.

Most importantly, BAHFA has planned for a $20 billion housing bond and is the body that will place the measure on the ballot (the final amount is to be determined). [A coalition](#) with more than 40 member organizations has assembled to educate and organize support for the ballot measure, with representatives from the nonprofit, philanthropic, business, and public sector, representing the housing, racial equity, climate, and transportation sectors, working together in partnership. At $20 billion, the GO bond, funded through ad valorem property taxes, would require an estimated tax of $20.52 per $100,000 in assessed value—or about $200 per year for a million-dollar home. Under State law, 80% of the funds would remain in the county of origin for local housing programs, with the remaining 20% going to BAHFA for regional housing efforts.

The ballot measure will appear in all nine counties, but it can pass even if voters in one or two counties reject the measure.

Potential Opportunity

Establishing a regional body like BAHFA or LACAHSA in San Diego County can benefit the region by increasing opportunities for funding, collaborating on housing solutions, and responding to issues that transcend jurisdictional boundaries.

In 2022, Senator Ben Hueso introduced [SB 1105](#), which would have created the San Diego Regional Equitable and Environmentally Affordable Housing Agency, with similar authority to BAHFA and LACAHSA, particularly the ability to place a funding measure on the ballot. This measure did not move forward.

While both BAHFA and LACAHSA were formed through State legislation, there is some agreement that legislation is not necessary for a single-county entity. BAHFA required legislation in order to raise and distribute funding across the nine-county region. Los Angeles County arguably had the authority to do that without legislative authority. It could have formed a joint powers authority to exercise shared power. However, local leaders sought formal action to establish a single countywide agency that had the authority to raise money and fund systemic solutions.

In 2023, Senator Nancy Skinner introduced SB 440, which would enable local governments to join together to establish regional housing finance agencies for affordable housing with similar powers as BAHFA and LACAHSA, but with new authority to acquire and own property and make land use decisions about the use of the property. This bill did not move in 2023 and has not yet had a hearing this year, raising questions about its future.

Regardless of whether the path to creating a regional body would be through legislation or a JPA structure, creating a regional body to raise funding and bring the San Diego region together is certainly an idea that is worth consideration.
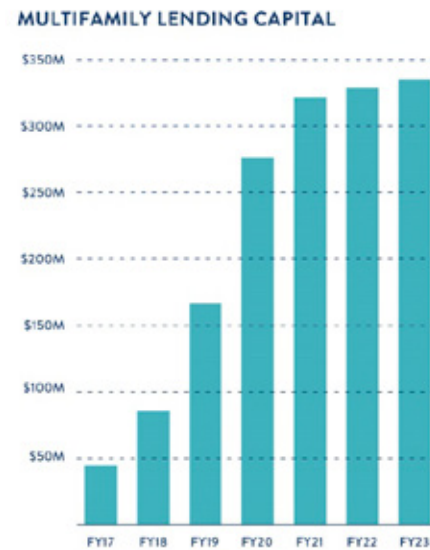
Housing Trust of Silicon Valley

Program Summary

The Housing Trust of Silicon Valley is an illustrative example of how a county government can seed a substantial housing fund that benefits an entire region and attracts greater private investment and philanthropy. The Housing Trust of Silicon Valley was formed in 2000, born out of a $2 million grant from the County of Santa Clara that matched three-fold by six $1 million grants from Intel, Adobe, Cisco Systems, Applied Materials, Solectron, and KB Homes.

A housing trust fund's impacts are seen in the long-term, as the funds must be assembled and deployed to new affordable housing developments, but the impacts will also continue to bear fruit for decades to come. A fund is implemented by identifying initial seed funding, a capital structure and structure that enables top-loss public funds as well as philanthropic grants and other private investment. A suitable organization, typically a nonprofit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), must then be identified to manage and deploy the fund.

Program Details

- **Program name:** Housing Trust of Silicon Valley
- **Jurisdiction:** County of Santa Clara and wider SF Bay Area
- **Department responsible:** N/A, external entity that partnered with County
- **Target population**: The Housing Trust's primarily funds housing for lower-income households, including people experiencing homelessness.
- **Budget:** Since 2000, the Housing Trust has invested $554.9 million in affordable housing.
- **Funding source:** Various public and private entities, including an initial $2 million grant from Santa Clara County. The Housing Trust has nearly $350 million in lending capital, which has grown nearly 7 times in the last six years
  - The Housing Trust draws largely on the technology industry, an anchor of the region's economy, including major corporations such as Meta (Facebook), Alphabet (Google), and Apple. Recent investments and funding sources include:
    - $96.7 million in Notes through the Technology, Equity, Community, and Housing (TECH) fund, established in March 2017
    - $10 million revolving line of credit with US Bank
    - $15 million revolving line of credit with Charles Schwab Bank
    - $150 million grant from Apple's Affordable Housing Fund in April 2017
    - $5 million grants from California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in 2022 and 2023

Figure 1: Housing Trust of Silicon Valley Multifamily Lending Capital. Source: Housing Trust of Silicon Valley

- $10 million loan (1.5% interest for 5 years) from Google in July 2023
- $1 million loan (1.25% for 2 years) from Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, The Peninsula, Marina and Sonoma Counties in July 2023
- $80,000 grant from Bank of America Charitable Foundation
- **Staffing:** The Housing Trust is a private entity and does not rely on government staffing. The organization has a staff of about 30, and a 15-member Board of Directors
- **Program timeline**: The Housing Trust was formed in 2000, as a result of County and private investment.

Impacts

The Housing Trust of Silicon Valley has grown to be an important source of affordable housing funds in the San Francisco Bay Area. It has attracted private funds, especially from the technology industry, as the region has the headquarters of several major firms with an economic interest in easing the region's housing crisis. Over more than 20 years, the Housing Trust has invested more than $550 million to create about 50,000 homes for the region's workforce, families, seniors and special needs individuals.

The recently established TECH Fund has drawn additional private investment, and functions as an important vehicle for major businesses in the region to support affordable housing production. These funds include philanthropic contributions as well as investments that draw a financial return. The latter options make the Housing Trust an organization that not only support the region's housing needs, but also supports the regional economy and the financial returns of the firms that support it.

The Housing Trust is one of the largest such organizations in the country. It is seen as a highly stable investment and is the first CDFI to have ever received an AA- bond rating from S&P, one of the highest possible ratings.

Potential Opportunity

The San Diego region stands to benefit from a similar regional collaboration between public and private funders interested in supporting housing affordability. While the region does not have the same economic base as Silicon Valley, it does have a similar set of large anchor institutions with substantial financial holdings and potential to invest in affordable housing. The San Diego Foundation's recently established Housing Impact Fund (HIF) will be a vital tool for the region, drawing on private funds to support affordable housing production. It may be a starting point for public investment as well, drawing on County funds—and over local government funds—that can attract additional private investment.

Measure ULA Citizen's Oversight Committee

Program Summary

City of Los Angeles voters in 2022 adopted Measure ULA, which funds affordable housing and homelessness solutions through a transfer tax on real estate sales over $5 million. Funds from the program are invested in affordable housing production, permanent supportive housing, legal aid to renters, emergency assistance to low-income seniors, and emerging and innovative housing strategies. Approximately $300 million in annual revenue for these purposes is expected.

Measure ULA has a Citizen's Oversight Committee (COC) that strengthens its implementation by providing a diverse, engaged, and informed group to discuss housing matters in an ongoing fashion. The COC, the creation of which was mandated by the measure, has been active since May 2023. It has provided meaningful input on the measure's administration and implementation by reviewing and providing substantive feedback on revenue flow, program design, and program performance.

The COC serves as an example of how San Diego County can create an appointed advisory citizens' board to assist with housing activities. Such a board could deepen engagement on housing by having a regularly engaged body of community members providing feedback and input, as opposed an open-ended solicitation of feedback in occasional public meetings.

Program Details

- **Program Name:** Measure ULA Citizen's Oversight Committee (COC)
- **Jurisdiction:** City of Los Angeles
- **Department responsible:** Los Angeles Housing Department
- **Target population:** The COC draws on Los Angeles residents engaged on housing policy with the following lived and professional expertise: affordable housing finance, tenant rights, union representation, or low-income renters.
- **Budget with breakdown:** Members paid at least $150 per meeting appearance
- **Funding source:** Measure ULA
- **Staffing:** 15 volunteer members, in dialogue with City of LA elected officials and staff
- **Program timeline:** Ongoing since 2022

Impacts

The Measure ULA Ordinance mandates an oversight committee to monitor and audit program funds and advise elected officials and City staff on appropriations, expenditures, administration, and implementation.

Each of the 15 seats on the COC is filled by an individual who holds particular lived and/or professional expertise, including affordable housing financing, tenant rights, union representation, or lived experience as a low-income tenant. The COC is mandated to develop guidelines for ULA programs and approve expenditure plans. By including the perspectives of engaged, well-informed citizens with a mix of personal and professional experiences relevant to Los Angeles's affordable housing crisis, all aspects of Measure ULA implementation are improved. Measure ULA implementation is especially improved by

the ongoing engagement provided by the COC. The COC's ongoing, substantive engagement contrasts from public comment periods and public hearings because of the depth and thoughtfulness that long time periods allow the COC to bring.

In its first year, the COC met at least monthly, approved a first set of interim guidelines and the inaugural expenditure plan, and conducted a needs assessment. The COC has been developing the permanent guidelines for all 11 ULA programs, which determine the plans and programmatic details for each strategy. In addition to these responsibilities, the COC provides transparency and accountability by conducting audits, holding public hearings, investigating potential conflicts of interest, holding an annual town hall to report on progress and shortcomings, and making adjustments to program guidelines as needed.

The COC has provided meaningful impact on Measure ULA by reviewing and providing substantive feedback on revenue flow, program design, and program performance. The broad scope of the COC allows the group of citizens address all of Measure ULA's impact areas, including affordable housing finance and development, rental subsidies, homelessness solutions, and capacity building. Some of the COC's recommendations are still in negotiation with program staff and elected officials, who retain ultimate decision-making power. Negotiations to integrate the COC's feedback are expected to be finalized by June.

Potential Opportunity

San Diego County could commission a similar committee by formulating guidelines based off the charter for Measure ULA, soliciting interest through CBOs and existing public engagement events, and linking the committee's activities to ongoing housing activities. This could create a source of ongoing feedback and engagement to strengthen the County's housing activities.

DAHLIA/Doorway Online Housing Portals

Program Summary

In 2016, the City and County of San Francisco launched DAHLIA, a portal that guides apartment seekers through the process of searching for and applying for housing, with filters and a map-based interface to narrow down available options. The portal can be accessed on both desktop and mobile devices and is available in four languages—English, Spanish, Chinese, and Tagalog.

DAHLIA was built to be open source so that other jurisdictions could use the portal's user interface and features to create their own unique affordable housing processes. In 2023, the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) launched Doorway, which centralizes housing listings for the remaining eight Bay Area counties. Doorway will include an exciting new feature enabling renters to immediately determine eligibility for various apartments and to access a common application that allows them to apply for multiple listings directly through the portal. This feature is expected to be released in the spring of 2024.

Program Details

- **Program Name** – DAHLIA/Doorway
- **Jurisdiction** – 9-county Bay Area (San Francisco has its own portal)
- **Department responsible** – Mayor's Office of Housing (DAHLIA) and Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (Doorway)
- **Target population** – Renters seeking affordable housing
- **Budget with breakdown** – For the Doorway Portal, BAHFA provided around $3 million in State funding that covered the costs of staff and consultants. This was supplemented with volunteers from Google.org and another $3 million in private donations. It is estimated that the ongoing project maintenance cost for the 8 counties will be $1.5 million.
- **Funding source** – BAHFA funding received through a direct State earmark, along with pro bono support from Google.org and Exygy, and private donations.
- **Staffing** – The City/County of San Francisco maintains DAHLIA. BAHFA maintains Doorway.
- **Program timeline** – DAHLIA launched in 2016. Doorway came on line in 2023

Impacts

Searching for and applying for affordable housing is a daunting experience for renters, who must research available properties and find contact information to check availability. A complex network of agencies and property owners oversee the myriad developments, with different materials, applications, and processes, which can be confusing for potential renters. The use of paper applications requires applicants to travel in person to various sites during business hours, or to wait on hold to talk to a rental assistant. Applications can be as long as 20 pages and require pages of supporting information. In many cases there is a waiting list or the property has restrictions that don't match renter needs, so applicants waste time applying for housing they don't qualify for. And once applicants applied, they did not know the status of their application. The need for a central application system was identified through the Housing Blueprint stakeholder focus groups, as well.

The DAHLIA and Doorway portals only include verified opportunities for active housing vacancies and waitlists, significantly reducing the time a prospective renter must spend to identify potential units that

price, and other features. They also provide the ability to check on the status of online applications that are submitted (for Doorway this is currently only available in Alameda County, San Mateo County, and the City of San Jose, though this is expected to be expanded to all areas). You can also sign up for listing alerts.

The online application process reduced application times from several days to just 15-20 minutes. As of May 2021, DAHLIA reported that it had received more than 650,000 affordable housing applications (accounting for 97% of all applications), placed 50 households in homes per month, and had 1.6 million visitors. Early data showed that, when online applications were available, 85% of potential residents preferred the online system to paper applications. Another positive outcome of DAHLIA is that it provides the City/County with data to help them design future programs and policies to better serve residents.

Potential Opportunity

This is a best practice that San Diego County could implement to improve affordable housing process for the region's lower-income residents. It is anticipated that the startup costs would be significantly lower as a result of the work already completed. Additionally, for Doorway, the project spans eight of the nine counties, so the cost to administer and maintain the database is considerably higher than what it would be for one county. BAHFA feels that it is worth the cost in order to build a system that both benefits renters and property owners and provides significant data to help with future analysis.

Vienna Social Housing

Program Summary

The Vienna Social Housing system stands as a vital case study of a region with a healthy housing system. It accomplishes this through a variety of approaches that touch across the 5 Ps. Founded on the belief that everyone has a right to housing, Vienna has proactively developed high quality social housing for decades. While Vienna is not a housing utopia, today a majority of Vienna's residents live in high quality, environmentally sustainable social housing, spending a fraction of their income on housing compared to residents of the San Diego region.

Vienna Social Housing refers to government-owned or regulated permanently affordable housing. It offers housing stability through permanently rent-restricted homes tailored to local housing needs, not influenced by market-driven price fluctuations. The Vienna Social Housing model, originating in the early 20th century, is renowned as one of the world's most stable and effective models. This model prioritizes high-quality, affordable housing low- and moderate-income households, setting Vienna apart by offering a diverse range of housing types, including both publicly and privately owned units. The social housing sector in Vienna caters to the majority of residents, with 60% of its 1.9 million inhabitants residing in such accommodations. Notably, 40% of Vienna's housing stock falls under the social housing umbrella.

Two key drivers of the Vienna Social Housing system being highlighted for the Housing Blueprint are its reliance on publicly-owned land and its impact on middle-income households. The Social Housing System relies on Wohnfonds Wien, a City-established independent nonprofit agency charged with acquiring land for housing and focusing on the rehabilitation of deteriorating housing stock. Wohnfonds Wien acquires sites for social housing and provides long-term, low-cost ground leases to developers in exchange for what is essentially a perpetual affordability commitment. The agency is able to act strategically by acquiring land for developments years into the future, and identifying sites near existing or planned infrastructure. In addition, the housing system is accessible to households earning about double the median income and with households not required to recertify income to remain. This creates housing developments and neighborhoods with people of various income levels. This also means households can—and do—remain in social housing throughout their lives, even as their incomes increase and can afford higher-priced private market housing.

Program Details

- **Program Name:** Vienna Social Housing
- **Jurisdiction**: Vienna, Austria
- **Department responsible**: Multiple city departments and other agencies
- **Target population (e.g., AMI category, seniors, TAY, etc.):** Long-term Vienna residents (primarily EU citizens) earning up to roughly 200% of the median household income
- **Budget with breakdown:** The City has approximately €450 million ($490 million) per year for the social housing program. 85% of these funds are allocated to capital costs (two-third of which to new construction and one-third to rehabilitation) and 15% of the annual budget is used for rental subsidy and tenant services.
- **Funding source:** The City's social housing program is primarily funded by a 1% income tax that every worker in Vienna pays, which accounts for about €250 million/year in revenue.

Another €200 million/year comes from loan repayments as well as ground lease and rental income.

- **Staffing**: The social housing system has numerous staff in various departments, agencies, organizations, etc.
- **Program timeline:** Vienna developed its social housing systems more than 100 years and has been continually refining it.

Impacts

Vienna's social housing system has created numerous impacts, ultimately leading to the city being internationally recognized as having a healthy, stable housing system. These impacts are seen in some of the following ways:

- The social housing system serves a broad population: three out of five Viennese households live in social housing, which comprises 40% of Vienna's housing stock (whereas in typical American cities, deed restricted affordable housing accounts for about 5% or less of the housing). As noted above, the social housing system also enables mixed-income developments and neighborhoods.

- The social housing system is constantly building new homes: The city of roughly 2 million people builds 7,000 social housing units per year. This is driven in part by the low-cost land regularly made available for development by Wohfonds Wien.

- The social housing system drives down rents across the entire housing market: Because the social housing system accounts for such a high share of Vienna's housing, residents have options when choosing where to live. This means demand for homeownership is low and private market landlords have to compete with the low prices of social housing, keeping their asking prices lower.

Potential Opportunity

Through the Housing Blueprint, San Diego County has opportunities to implement elements of the Vienna Social Housing system. This includes expanding its efforts to identify and deploy publicly-owned land for affordable housing and supporting efforts to create middle-income housing.

Houston, Texas townhomes land use incentives

Program Summary

The City of Houston has made land use changes to promote the construction of townhomes,[25] enabling more homes to the built in the city that rely on a smaller amount of land per unit, reducing the overall price of single-family homes.

In 1998, Houston reduced the by-right minimum lot size from 5,000 to 3,500 square feet within the city's inner core, and permitted even smaller lots (down to an average of 1,400 square feet) for subdivisions that met certain conditions. In 2013, the 1,400 square feet minimum lot size was extended to cover all the land in the city with wastewater collection services. Allowing homes on a minimum of 1,400 square feet is equal to a density of 31 homes per acre, which is higher density than what is typically allowed in single-family zones.

Local governments can increase the amount of land zoned for townhomes and small-lot single-unit homes by rezoning or changing developing standards to existing zoning codes. While changes to minimum lot sizes and zoning to allow more townhomes can take effect immediately, new housing typically takes several years from permitting to design to completion. Moreover, this strategy would more likely bear benefits of greater access to homeownership and affordability when a substantial number of new homes are built, which would occur in the long-term.

Program Details

- **Program name:** Houston townhome development
- **Jurisdiction:** City of Houston, Texas
- **Department responsible:** Houston Planning & Development Department
- **Target population:** Low- to moderate-income households interested in homeownership, typically with 3 or more household members
- **Budget with breakdown:** N/A
- **Funding source:** N/A
- **Staffing:** Planning & Development Department permitting staff
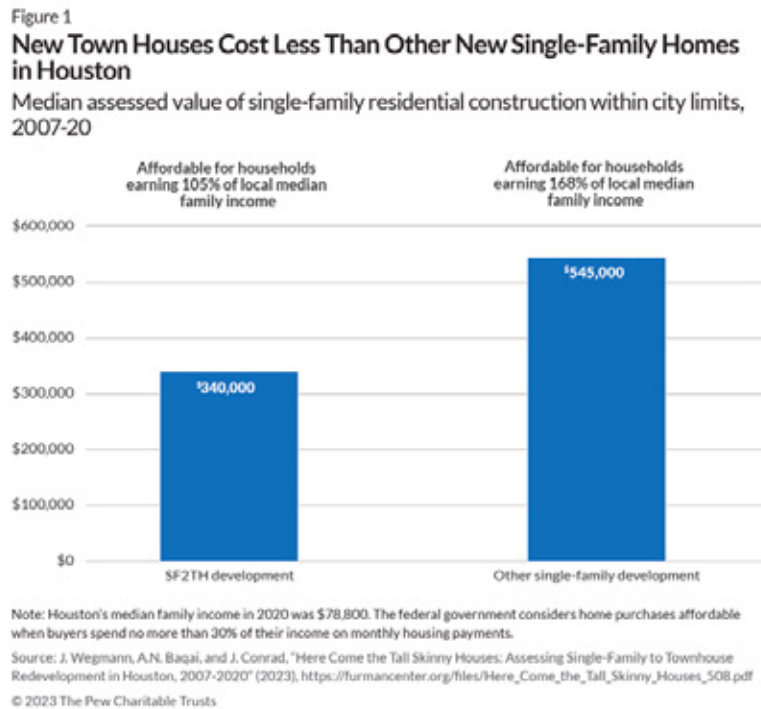- **Program timeline:** Ongoing since 1998

Impacts

Thousands of townhomes are now built in Houston each year and the BIPOC homeownership rates are one of the highest in the nation. While homeownership rates and housing costs in Houston are the result of countless policy decisions, economic factors, and more, certain benefits to the increase of townhome development are apparent. While townhomes are often built on formerly commercial lots, this strategy has also opened up larger single-family lots for subdivision; units built on formerly single-family lots typically account for 100-200 homes built per year in Houston since 2013.

The townhomes built through this strategy sell for prices significantly lower than the conventional single-family home in Houston. The graph below shows that the median-price townhome in Houston in

---

[25] This case study uses the term townhome, which typically refers to attached single-family homes. In Houston, however, for a variety of reasons, many units called townhomes are built as detached units, which are more akin to small-lot (detached) single-family homes.

2020 was affordable to households earning 105% of local median family income, about two-thirds of the price of other single-family homes:

Figure 1

New Town Houses Cost Less Than Other New Single-Family Homes in Houston

Median assessed value of single-family residential construction within city limits, 2007-20

Note: Houston's median family income in 2020 was $78,800. The federal government considers home purchases affordable when buyers spend no more than 30% of their income on monthly housing payments.

Source: J. Wegmann, A.N. Baqai, and J. Conrad, "Here Come the Tall Skinny Houses: Assessing Single-Family to Townhouse Redevelopment in Houston, 2007-2020" (2023), https://furmancenter.org/files/Here_Come_the_Tall_Skinny_Houses_508.pdf

© 2023 The Pew Charitable Trusts

And while this strategy has led to thousands of modestly-priced homes being built in the city each year, major neighborhood changes have not been seen. This is as a result of several factors. First, easing opposition from this strategy's most vocal opponents, Houston allowed homeowners to exclude their blocks from the city's minimum lot-size rules. Small-lot townhomes are only allowed in certain areas. Next, multiple townhomes being built on formerly single-family lots is fairly rare, with only 0.5% of single-family lots turning into townhomes from 2007 to 2020. Thus, existing single-family neighborhoods are not seeing major change as a result of townhomes. Lastly, townhome development does not appear to be leading to gentrification of historically disadvantaged neighborhoods, as such homes tend to be built on more affluent areas where the high value of land is more attractive to developers who are seeking to more efficiently use land.

Potential Opportunity

This strategy is relevant to the San Diego region, where much of the housing in the unincorporated area is single-family homes. Townhomes and other small-lot single family owners tend to be for homeownership, which is also an important outcome that the Housing Blueprint aims to advance.

Landlord Engagement Practices

Program Summary

Landlord engagement programs seek to provide resources and incentives to landlords to ensure they are aware of local, state, and federal laws and programs, and can effectively communicate vital information to tenants. This case study provides examples of several landlord engagement practices, with a sample program of each.

Many landlord engagement programs improve access to quality rental units by expanding centralized landlord engagement strategies to better identify rental units, particularly for tenants experiencing housing instability and/or utilizing housing choice vouchers. Since landlords have unique and specific needs based on their target population, it is important to engage a variety of landlord groups, including small landlords and BIPOC landlords. Landlord engagement programs not only protect tenants and landlords from costly eviction proceedings, but they also help prevent displacement in the short-term by enhancing housing navigation services to reduce housing instability.

Local landlord engagement strategies can help achieve the following objectives:

- Understand the local rental housing landscape: this includes developing an inventory and contact list of all landlords. Additionally, non-profit organizations provide knowledge and resources in fighting evictions, navigating other housing-related issues (e.g., rent increases, repairs, habitability, etc.), and establishing accountability to ensure that tenants are in safe living conditions. Localities can use this information to create a centralized repository that can also include eviction data obtained from county court systems.
    - Example program: Rental unit registry (Culver City)
      Many California localities with their own rental stabilization ordinances have registries of rental homes, which help ensure landlords comply with rent increase limits and maintain habitability of their units. One such example is Culver City, whose city council adopted a rent stabilization ordinance in September 2020. A $167 per unit annual registration fee paid by landlords funds the work of implementing this ordinance, which included creating a rental unit registry. The public can search the registry to find property owners by name, address, parcel number, or account number. The registration process also requires landlords to provide tenants information on the City's rent control ordinance and information on their rights.
- Develop and maintain relationships with local landlords: meaningful engagement begins with establishing trust among stakeholders. This could include attending already-established landlord association meetings to better understand the challenges and opportunities that landlords face and to establish an open line of communication. Once a jurisdiction has an idea of how they can further support landlords, it could host roundtable discussions or convenings that focus specifically on landlord-specific needs. From the insight gleaned from these convenings, jurisdictions could create a landlord advisory board that offers feedback on local landlord-tenant programs and policies.
    - Example program: Seattle, Washington, Housing Provides webpage

The City of Seattle provides regular, updated information on its website for landlords. By providing clear, concise, and easily navigable guidance online, the City is helping smaller landlords understand their obligations under state and local law. The City website frames being a landlord positively, describing the work as being "an invaluable partner in providing safe homes for our community." The City website includes simple guides for how to find a tenant, managing their relationship with the tenant, information on noticing requirement, and more. The City also published a detailed webinar that covers topics such as fair housing law, rent payments, and landlord's right to access the unit. This website has helped support landlords by having access to clear information on their rights and obligations.

- Provide resources and incentives to landlords: once the appropriate engagement infrastructure is established, jurisdictions will be able to better understand the needs and priorities of landlords, and the potential solutions to help address those needs. As mentioned above, it is important to include the insights and perspectives of a variety of landlord groups, importantly, those that may often be overlooked in policy decisions or overshadowed by larger landlords. The insight gleaned from landlords related to supportive services, landlord-tenant relationships, and access to capital can inform the specific resources and incentives that jurisdictions will create.
  - Example program: Landlord Engagement & Assistant Program (Sacramento) Funded by the County of Sacramento, the Bay Area Community Services (BACS) administers the Landlord Engagement Assistance Program (LEAP), which provides various incentives to landlords for renting to formerly homeless individuals. These incentives are reflective of similar best practices used nationwide as well as the County of San Diego's Landlord Incentive Program, including the following:
    - Up to $3,000 signing bonus for taking on a new tenant
    - Covering up to $55,000 in loss from damages beyond the security deposit
    - Guaranteed rent: Up to one month of rent prior to lease up or between tenants, while paperwork is being processes and approved,
    - 24-hour landlord support hotline

Program Details

- Program Name: Landlord engagement/assistance
- Jurisdiction: jurisdiction-wide or regionwide (specific examples provided above)
- Department responsible: housing authority, local housing department, nonprofit organizations, etc.
- Target population: renter households, including households experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness and housing choice voucher holders
- Staffing: depends on the depth and breadth of the resources and incentives that are provided. For example, jurisdictions can create one landlord liaison who could staff a landlord advisory board. Jurisdictions can also create additional staff to assist in addressing landlords' questions and concerns, and maintain data dashboards that store rental property information and landlord contact information.

- Program timeline: ongoing

Impacts

There are several impacts of landlord engagement programs. In addition to direct education, training, and ongoing communication between landlords and localities to ensure their needs are met, tenants will also benefit from these programs. One principal outcome of landlord engagement efforts, however, is to decrease unlawful evictions; many unlawful evictions occur due to lack of information related to the evictions process. If landlords have access to resources to inform them of tenants' rights and other policies that govern unlawful evictions, it is possible that unlawful eviction filings would decrease. This would benefit both landlord and tenants, as eviction proceedings are timely and costly. Another key outcome is to increase renters' access to existing housing resources, but helping connect households with suitable landlords.

Potential Opportunity

These practices are all applicable to the San Diego region, where the housing crisis has made accessing rental housing challenging for many households. Engagement with landlords can help support the valuable practice of providing housing with an understanding of and commitment to the rights and obligations of being a rental property owner.

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK
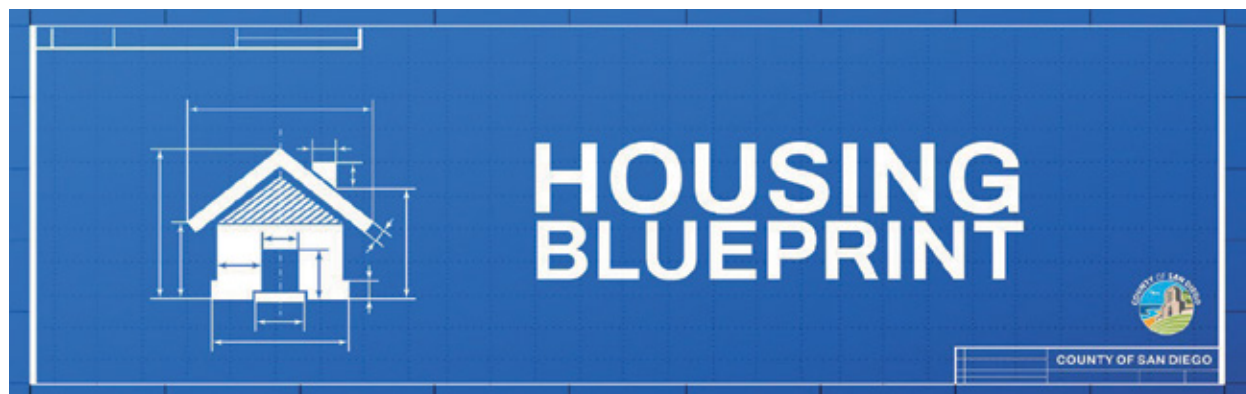
Community Engagement Findings Phase II

County of San Diego Housing Blueprint
June 2024

Prepared by:
LeSar Development Consultants

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
FINDINGS PHASE II

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HOUSING BLUEPRINT
JUNE 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The region is currently facing a housing affordability crisis, leading to increased displacement and homelessness. In December 2022, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved a Draft Housing Blueprint (Draft Blueprint) to serve as a guiding tool in addressing the housing needs of the county. This Draft Blueprint, developed by the County team, aimed to maximize resources, balance priorities, and address the ongoing housing crisis effectively. Community engagement has been a cornerstone of this initiative, ensuring that the Blueprint reflects the needs and concerns of residents.

Community engagement for the Blueprint took place in two phases: Phase I, spanning from February 2023 to May 2023, focused on gathering feedback on the draft goals and objectives after the release of the Draft Housing Blueprint. It aimed to raise awareness of the County's housing affordability crisis and solicit input. Phase II of the community engagement initiative, spanning from August 2023 to May 2024, built upon the groundwork laid in Phase I. Phase II consisted of three distinct stages: assessing County housing infrastructure and responsibilities and the local housing landscape, identifying barriers and opportunities, and formulating recommended Strategic Actions. The insights gathered during Phase II have played a pivotal role in developing and enhancing the Housing Blueprint.

METHODOLOGY

The project team, led by LeSar Development Consultants, worked with County staff to identify key stakeholders for Phase II to generate a comprehensive list for outreach and engagement. This list included individuals working in the housing sector as well as those affected by housing issues and the general public in San Diego County. Emphasizing equitable community engagement, the team focused on including vulnerable communities and people experiencing housing insecurity. The team used various engagement methods, such as focus groups, stakeholder meetings, webinars, and surveys, ensuring diverse representation, and offered virtual participation, translation, and accessibility services for public meetings.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Throughout Phase II, the project team employed a variety of methods to collect feedback and enhance the Blueprint. Focus groups played a vital role in facilitating targeted discussions on housing challenges, financing mechanisms, and strategies. Stakeholder meetings allowed for in-depth discussions and presentations of the Draft Blueprint, encouraging active participation from diverse stakeholders. General public engagement, including webinars, community sessions and surveys, ensured broader community involvement and transparency in the decision-making process. Across the various community engagement activities, nearly 350 individuals participated.

Table 1. Phase II Engagement Activities				
STAGE OF WORK	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANT GROUPS	DATE	ATTENDANCE
Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape	Stakeholder Meeting	Middle Income Housing Workgroup**	3/8/2023-3/14/2023	13
	Focus Group	Homelessness and Housing Insecurity	11/09/2023	7
		Immigration and Refugee Services	11/13/2023	2
		Child and Family Wellbeing (Foster Care)	11/14/2023	5
		Justice- Involved	11/15/2023	5
		Older Adults	11/15/2023	7
		Education	11/16/2023	9
		Faith-based	11/16/2023	7
		Individuals with Disabilities	11/17/2023	7
Subtotal				**62**
Identification of Barriers and Opportunities	Focus Group	Community Planning Groups	12/7/2023	6
		Developers #1	12/8/2023	3
		Private Capital Lenders	12/11/2023	2
		Local and Regional Stakeholders	12/12/2023	5
		Philanthropy	12/13/2023	5
		Developers #2	12/14/2023	10
	Stakeholder Meeting	Housing Finance Working Group	2/2024– 4/2024	31
		Tribal Leaders: Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA)	2/20/2024	4
		Tribal Leaders: SANDAG Interagency Technical Working Group on Tribal Transportation Issues (Tribal TWG) (In-person)	2/28/2024	8
Subtotal				**69**

Table 1. Phase II Engagement Activities

STAGE OF WORK	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANT GROUPS	DATE	ATTENDANCE
Recommended Strategies	General Public Engagement	Housing Blueprint Informational Webinar #1	12/20/2023	8
		Housing Blueprint Informational Webinar #2	12/21/2023	22
	Stakeholder Meeting	Housing Justice Stakeholder Meeting	4/30/2024	10
	Focus Group	Lived Experience #1	4/30/2024	5
		Lived Experience #2	5/1/2024	7
		Lived Experience #3	5/2/2024	6
	General Public Engagement	Housing Blueprint Community Session #1	5/1/2024	17
		Housing Blueprint Community Session #2	5/2/2024	44
		Community Survey	4/26/24- 5/12/2024	99
Subtotal				**218**

*Note that before engaging the project team in Phase II, the County convened the Middle-Income Housing Workgroup to review and build on the City of San Diego's workgroup recommendations and provide input on current production barriers, ways to increase workforce housing production, and other ideas to increase workforce housing opportunities. The findings from the Middle-Income Working Group, facilitated by the County in Phase I in 2023, have been included in the Phase II results.

FINDINGS

Feedback from community engagement activities is organized into three stages: 1) Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape, 2) Identification of Barriers and Opportunities, and 3) Development of Recommended Strategies. Input from each stage improved the Blueprint and built on earlier feedback. Key themes emerged at each stage. These themes are listed below by stage.

Stage 1: Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape

• **Universal Impact:** The housing crisis affects everyone, necessitating affordable housing for all.

• **Diverse Needs:** Housing options must meet the needs of various income levels, disabilities, and preferences.

• **Resource Discrepancy:** Gaps exist in housing for larger families, seniors, and justice-involved individuals.

• **Co-Location:** Affordable housing should be near essential services.

• **Innovative Funding Solutions:** Flexible funding programs and new housing models are needed.

• **Streamlined Support:** Simplifying programs and services is crucial for effectiveness.

• **Sustainable Workforce:** Better pay and conditions are needed to retain experienced staff.

• **Tenant Protections:** Measures like right-to-counsel and eviction diversion are vital.

Stage 2: Identification of Barriers & Opportunities

Barriers

- **Affordable Housing:** High costs, mortgage rates, and permit uncertainties hinder access to new housing and prevent displacement.

- **Accessibility:** Housing accessibility for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and those with fixed incomes needs improvement.

- **Discrepancies in Unincorporated Areas:** Limited infrastructure and amenities in unincorporated regions affect housing development competitiveness.

- **Access to Homeownership Programs:** Eligibility challenges hinder access to homeownership programs, especially for those below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).

- **Awareness of Available Programs:** Lack of widespread awareness about County-led programs that assist with funding.

- **Financing:** Affordable developers face financing challenges in low-income housing development.

Opportunities

- **Provide Technical Assistance:** County-provided education on state laws, zoning codes, and funding strategies is sought after.

- **Implement Recognized County Initiatives:** Proactive land identification, permitting process improvements, and new partnerships are recognized and supported.

- **Bolster Unincorporated Planning:** Developments should consider Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) requirements and access to funding streams like the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program (AHSC).

- **Institute Innovative Solutions:** Establish sustainable funding, explore regional policy coordination, and consider pre-approved housing designs. Other ideas include creating a County Housing Finance Authority, rehabilitating older homes, and streamlining approvals on public land.

Stage 3: Development of Recommended Strategies

Feedback from the Stage 1: Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape and Stage 2: Barriers and Opportunities Analysis informed the creation of recommended Strategies. In this stage, engagement expanded to conduct additional forums, webinars, community sessions, and focus group and stakeholder meetings. The Housing Finance Working Group delved deeply into tools and ideas for creating more middle-income housing focusing on middle income homeownership. The project team worked with County staff to develop recommended Strategies, which were then shared with the community by inviting the public to provide feedback through a survey. Community feedback on the eight Strategies resulted in suggestions that ranged in specificity and scale. Some suggestions reinforced existing actions, while others offered new ideas, as summarized below.

Strategy 1: Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing

- **Consolidate County-Level Plans:** Consolidate internal housing and homelessness plans at the county level for alignment and expedited implementation.

- **Address Equity in Funding:** Review funding equity for tribes and other marginalized groups.

- **Conduct Comprehensive Assessments:** Conduct thorough housing assessments to address community needs effectively.

- **Provide Technical Support:** Provide essential technical support for environmental studies and processes.

- **Support Unincorporated and Rural Areas:** Include rural areas' needs in planning strategies, recognizing their unique challenges.

- **Streamline Processes:** Streamline construction processes to expedite housing production and reduce costs.

Strategy 2: Create New Funding Sources for Housing

- **Preserve Homeownership:** Preserve homeownership through measures like interest rate caps.

- **Fully Fund Homelessness Programs:** Fully fund and expand homelessness programs to meet growing demands.

Strategy 3: Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access

- **Report Progress:** Report progress on the Housing Blueprint with detailed metrics.

- **Transparently Report Progress Through Multiple Channels:** Ensure transparency through various accessible channels.

- **Assist with Data Collection:** Assist rural areas with comprehensive data collection for informed decision-making.

- **Humanize Housing:** Humanize housing challenges through impactful personal narratives.

Strategy 4: Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact

- **Prioritize Vulnerable Populations:** Prioritize vulnerable populations' access to housing resources.

- **Prioritize Existing Funding:** Efficiently release existing funds administered by the County.

Strategy 5: Unlock Land for Sustainable and Resilient Development Opportunities

- **Repurpose County Assets for Housing:** Utilize County assets and underutilized land creatively to meet housing needs.

- **Remove Obstacles in Housing Creation:** Address regulatory obstacles to expedite housing creation.

- **Reform Zoning for Small-Scale Developments:** Reform zoning to accommodate diverse housing types.

- **Waive Additional Fees:** Consider fee waivers to incentivize Accessory Dwelling Unit construction.

- **Protect Natural Resources and Ecosystems:** Safeguard natural resources by avoiding development on conserved lands.

- **Apply Progressive Taxes:** Introduce progressive taxes to address housing market imbalances.

Strategy 6: Provide Solutions for Middle-Income Housing Production and Programs

- **Support First-Time Homebuyers:** Support first-time homebuyers with tailored programs.

- **Expand Homeownership Access:** Explore innovative models like social housing to address affordability.

- **Streamline Entitlement Processing:** Expedite entitlement processing to accelerate housing development.

- **Bolster Middle-Income Homebuyer Assistance Program:** Expand assistance programs for middle-income households.

- **Establish a Revolving Loan Fund:** Consider options like revolving loan funds to support housing initiatives.

- **Defer Development Impact Fees (DIFs):** Consider a deferral program to allow developers to pay fees upon project completion.

- **Consider Social Housing:** Consider implementing social housing options, addressing the needs of all income brackets in housing policy.

- **Address Disparities:** Address disparities in homeownership rates across diverse communities.

Strategy 7: Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies

- **Implement Housing Resiliency Strategies:** Implement strategies to safeguard homes from various risks.

- **Regulate Short-Term Rental:** Regulate short-term rentals to mitigate housing market disruptions.

- **Consider Impact on Communities:** Ensure that new development and/or preservation strategies conserve community character, prevent displacement, and manage the integration of different housing types.

- **Promote Community Land Trusts:** Advocate for community land trusts as effective preservation tools.

Strategy 8: Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts

- **Support Tenants:** Provide mediation services to resolve tenant-landlord disputes.

- **Remove Barriers to Housing:** Remove barriers to housing opportunities for marginalized groups.

- **Target Prevention Initiatives:** Target initiatives to prevent homelessness and support housing stability.

- **Support Financial Education Programs:** Support financial literacy programs to empower disadvantaged groups.

- **Balance Tenant and Landlord Perspectives:** Balance tenant and landlord concerns for a fair housing market.

- **Administer Renter and Homeowner Supports:** Extend support to renters and homeowners facing housing challenges.

- **Expand Voucher Availability:** Increase the availability of vouchers to enhance affordability.

- **Prioritize Preservation Methods:** Prioritize housing preservation methods, including rent control, increased housing subsidies, anti-harassment measures, and tenant protections.

The insights gathered from community engagement have helped shape and refine the eight Strategies recommended to enhance the Housing Blueprint.

I. Introduction

Background

The region is facing a housing affordability crisis, leading to increased displacement and homelessness. In December 2022, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved a Draft Housing Blueprint (Draft Blueprint) [Appendix 1] as a guiding tool to maximize resources, balance priorities, and ensure the necessary steps to meet the region's housing needs. The Blueprint will lay out the goals, objectives, and Strategies to respond to the housing crisis while aligning with the County of San Diego's (County) core values. The Blueprint will help guide policy and decision-making by the board regarding housing matters and provide a clear roadmap that enables the County to identify and secure the necessary resources to effectively achieve its housing-related goals.

Community input has been vital to the County's efforts to address the crisis to date and key to the development of the Blueprint. Community Engagement for the Blueprint took place in two phases: Phase I (February 2023-May 2023) focused on gathering feedback on the draft goals and objectives after the release of the Draft Housing Blueprint. It aimed to raise awareness of the County's housing affordability crisis and solicit input. This effort was led by the County team and the resulting Community Feedback Findings Report, posted on the Engage San Diego webpage, summarized public input gathered during this phase, highlighting areas for improvement and common themes [Appendix 2]. The feedback received covered goals and objectives and identified missing elements, opportunities, and perceived barriers.

Purpose

For Phase II (August 2023-May 2024), the project team, including the County and led by LeSar Development Consultants, built upon the groundwork from Phase I to enhance the Blueprint. Phase II consisted of three distinct stages of work – 1) Conducting a comprehensive assessment of the County's housing infrastructure and responsibilities and the local housing landscape, 2) Identifying barriers and opportunities, and 3) Developing a set of recommended strategies to enhance the Housing Blueprint. The insights gained during Phase II informed the revision process for the final Blueprint slated for presentation to the Board in August 2024. Extensive stakeholder input was integrated throughout the process, collecting feedback from industry experts, affected target populations, and the community at large through a variety of methods.

The three stages of Phase II focused on different objectives and built upon each other, all with the purpose of informing and enhancing the Housing Blueprint.

1. **Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape:** To analyze the County's housing actions, programs and policies, as well as the institutions and agencies focused on housing outside the County government, focusing on affordability, accessibility, and demographic-specific constraints.

2. **Identification of Barriers and Opportunities:** To gather detailed insights on barriers and opportunities in financing, development, and supports for housing.

3. **Development of Recommended Strategies:** To develop and refine the 8 recommended Strategies to enhance the Blueprint. The Strategies were created based on data from activities from the Assessment and the Barriers and Opportunities Analysis.

This Community Engagement Findings Report details the second phase of community engagement activities and summarizes the feedback received. This report does not include the many internal interviews and meetings conducted with staff from County agencies, departments, and offices; these are incorporated in the Housing Blueprint appendices. These findings will be used to inform the final Blueprint to be presented to the Board in Summer 2024.

II. Methodology

The project team created a community engagement plan to support Phase II activities. This plan details the approach to stakeholder identification, method selection, and analysis [Appendices 4-6].

Stakeholder Identification

After development of the community engagement plan, the project team identified key stakeholders to engage in Phase II. The project team began by creating a broad list of stakeholder groups based on the project's goals and objectives. This list included groups directly involved in the housing sector, such as those focused on production, preservation, prevention, and protection, as well as groups affected by housing issues, both upstream and downstream. It also included those seeking or currently in housing in San Diego County, encompassing the general public.

From these broad categories, the project team created a stakeholder list of individuals, identifying specific representatives from various industries, geographic regions, demographic populations, and interests across San Diego County. In prioritizing equitable community engagement, special attention was given to including vulnerable communities and individuals experiencing housing insecurity.

The team then determined the most appropriate engagement activities for each stakeholder group. These activities ranged from focus groups and working groups to stakeholder meetings and general community outreach efforts, such as webinars, forums, community sessions, and surveys. For the general public stakeholder group, the project team emphasized diverse representation, offering virtual participation, utilizing different meeting formats, providing translation and accessibility services, and maintaining transparency regarding the utilization of input received. The team marketed these engagement opportunities through a variety of channels, including the County's social media platforms, Engage San Diego webpage, email lists, flyers, community bulletin boards, community meeting announcements, and more.

III. Community Engagement Activities

Over the course of Phase II, the project team employed a variety of methods to collect feedback and enhance the comprehensiveness of the Draft Blueprint. These activities took place between August 2023 and May 2024. Across the various community engagement activities, nearly 350 individuals participated. Through structured questioning, participants were able to share their perspectives.

Focus Groups

Focus groups played a vital role in community engagement, allowing for targeted discussions on various topics. The project team conducted a total of 17 focus groups: eight in November 2023, six in December 2023, and three in April-May 2024. The dates of each focus group and their corresponding stages of work are listed in Table 2. A summary of how the activity was used for each stage of work follows the table.

Table 2. Focus Groups			
STAGE OF ENGAGEMENT	PARTICIPANT GROUP PERSPECTIVE	DATE	ATTENDANCE*
Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape	Homelessness and Housing Insecurity	11/09/2023	7
	Immigration and Refugee Services	11/13/2023	2
	Child and Family Wellbeing (Foster Care)	11/14/2023	5
	Justice- Involved	11/15/2023	5
	Older Adults	11/15/2023	7
	Education	11/16/2023	9
	Faith- Based	11/16/2023	7
	Individuals with Disabilities	11/17/2023	7
Identification of Barriers and Opportunities Analysis	Community Planning Groups	12/7/2023	6
	Developers #1	12/8/2023	3
	Private Capital Lenders	12/11/2023	2
	Local and Regional Stakeholders	12/12/2023	5
	Philanthropy	12/13/2023	5**
	Developers #2	12/14/2023	10
Development of Recommended Strategies	Lived Experience #1	4/30/2024	5
	Lived Experience #2	5/1/2024	7
	Lived Experience #3	5/2/2024	6
Total			96

*Note that there were two individuals who attended multiple focus groups.

**Note that the philanthropic focus group had three people attend. Two separate interviews were conducted with individuals who couldn't attend to ensure sufficient representation and feedback collected from the philanthropic perspective. These two individuals were included in the total of five included in the attendance.

Stage 1: Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape

The project team held eight virtual focus group sessions to explore housing challenges, focusing on affordability, accessibility, and demographic-specific barriers. Each focus group was comprised of service providers or direct representatives of populations or sectors likely to interact with County programs: 1) Homelessness and Housing Insecurity, 2) Immigration and Refugee Services, 3) Child and Family Wellbeing (Foster Care), 4) Justice-Involved Individuals, 5) Older Adults, 6) Education, 7) Faith-Based, and 8) Individuals with Disabilities.

Stage 2: Identification of Barriers and Opportunities

Six focus groups were conducted by the project team to gather insights on financing, development, and support for housing in the region. Key stakeholders were selected based on relevance to five prioritized perspectives: 1) Community Planning Groups, 2) Developers, 3) Private Capital Lenders, 4) Local and Regional Stakeholders, and 5) Philanthropy.

Stage 3: Development of Recommended Strategies

Additionally, the project team conducted an additional three focus groups with people with lived experience to collect feedback on the recommended Strategies. Over the course of the project, a distinct shortage of feedback from people with lived experience of housing instability and homelessness was noted. The County recognizes that lived experience is an important primary datapoint, and in Spring 2024, the project team added the lived experience focus groups. The project team utilized a local lived experience advocacy and leadership network to identify individuals interested in participating. The project team ensured that there was demographic and countywide geographic representation among the lived experience focus groups, offered translation services, and provided compensation.

Stakeholder Meetings

The project team convened stakeholder meetings, including a Housing Finance Working Group, sessions with tribal leaders, and meetings with housing justice advocates, to collect input on barriers and opportunities and present the recommended Strategies and gather feedback. These groups were identified through a review of stakeholders involved in earlier engagement stages. It was determined that input from these groups was insufficient, making it necessary to hold working groups and stakeholder meetings to address the gaps in representation from tribal entities, housing justice advocates, and housing finance experts.

The dates of each stakeholder meeting and its corresponding stage of work is listed in Table 3. A summary of how the activity was used for each stage of work follows the table.

Table 3. Stakeholder Meetings

STAGE OF WORK	PARTICIPANT GROUP	DATE	ATTENDANCE
Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape	Middle Income Housing Workgroup	3/8/2023-3/14/2023	13
Identification of Barriers and Opportunities Analysis	Housing Finance Working Group	2/2024– 4/2024	31
	Tribal Leaders: Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA)	2/20/2024	4 provided feedback* (The SCTCA includes representation from 25 federally recognized Indian tribes in Southern California)
	Tribal Leaders: SANDAG Interagency Technical Working Group on Tribal Transportation Issues (Tribal TWG) (In-person)	2/28/2024	8 provided feedback* (The Tribal TWG includes representation from 17 sovereign tribal nations)
Development of Recommended Strategies	Housing Justice Stakeholder Meeting	4/30/2024	10
Total			66

*The number reflects those who provided feedback, not the total number of attendees. Since these presentations were held at meetings organized by tribal leaders, the project team could not track the total attendance.

Stage 1: Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape

Prior to engaging the project team in Phase II, the County convened the Middle-Income Housing Workgroup to review and expand on the City of San Diego's recommendations, addressing barriers to middle income housing production and exploring strategies to increase opportunities. The group, consisting of experts and advocates in middle-income and affordable housing finance and development, was selected based on their knowledge in financing, funding, streamlining, and regulating housing production. Two meetings were held in Spring 2023. The Middle-Income Housing Workgroup was facilitated by the County in Phase I in 2023, but the results have been included in the findings for Phase II.

Stage 2: Identification of Barriers and Opportunities

The project team formed a Housing Finance Working Group to identify financial tools and incentives to make housing more affordable and reduce financing costs for essential workers. The group, comprising members from diverse backgrounds and organizations, aimed to provide recommendations for increasing housing availability. The Housing Finance Working Group, which included public agencies, industry groups, non-profits, financial institutions, philanthropic foundations, housing developers, and technical experts, met three times virtually. The first meeting focused on understanding barriers to homeownership for developers and buyers. The second meeting delved into potential solutions and policies based on feedback from the first meeting. The third meeting aimed to finalize recommendations for developer and homebuyer incentives. Feedback was gathered through interactive discussions, polls, and a one-week period for additional input after the final meeting.

The project team delivered presentations at two key tribal leadership gatherings: the Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) meeting and the SANDAG Interagency Technical Working Group on Tribal Transportation Issues (Tribal TWG) meeting. Representatives from the 17 sovereign tribal nations of San Diego County typically attend these recurring events. During the February meetings, the project team provided an overview of the Housing Blueprint and facilitated a brief Q&A session, focusing on identifying needs, barriers, and opportunities. The project team also promoted upcoming general public engagement to encourage ongoing feedback.

Stage 3: Development of Recommended Strategies

The project team organized one virtual roundtable meeting that brought together advocates for housing development and tenant protection/rights to provide feedback on the recommended Strategic Actions. The stakeholders in this Housing Justice Group were selected based on a review of the stakeholder matrix used in previous engagements. Attendees represented organizations dedicated to promoting mobility, equitable urban planning, community organizing, economic prosperity, social justice, tenant legal services, housing justice, and eviction prevention.

GENERAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Promotion for informational webinars, community sessions, and a survey utilized multiple channels, such as the project webpage on Engage San Diego County, social media platforms, GovDelivery notices, flyers, stakeholder community meeting announcements, and department newsletters. These informational webinars and community sessions were designed for and presented to the general public to ensure widespread feedback. The project team informed the public about the availability of language interpretation and accessibility accommodations for the webinars and community sessions, including Spanish language interpreters and surveys in the County's eight threshold languages available via Engage San Diego County, with translations provided through the Google Translate widget, and other accessibility modifications available upon request.

Table 4. General Public Engagement			
STAGE OF WORK	PARTICIPANT GROUP	DATE	ATTENDANCE*
Recommended Strategies	Housing Blueprint Informational Webinar #1	12/20/2023	8
	Housing Blueprint Informational Webinar #2	12/21/2023	22
	Housing Blueprint Community Session #1	5/1/2024	17
	Housing Blueprint Community Session #2	5/2/2024	44
	Community Survey	4/26/2024- 5/12/2024	99
	Engage San Diego webpage	8/2023- 5/2024	5,200 visits (excluded from total)
Total (excludes webpage visits)			190

*The webinars, community sessions, survey, and webpage all allowed participants to remain anonymous. Therefore, the participant numbers might include duplicates.

Stage 3: Development of Recommended Strategies

The project team organized two 60-minute virtual webinars to inform and gather input from the community on the Housing Blueprint. These sessions covered the purpose of the Blueprint, the County's housing initiatives, the development timeline, draft goals and objectives, and upcoming engagement activities, and a brief Q&A session.

Additionally, the project team hosted two 90-minute virtual community sessions, for the general public. The purpose of these sessions was to provide updates on the progress of the Housing Blueprint, present eight recommended Strategies, gather initial feedback through a Q&A period, and encourage completion of a survey. Discussion questions during the Q&A focused on general feedback on the recommended Strategies, changes to the Strategies, and measuring progress of the Housing Blueprint.

The County posted a 9-question survey through the Engage San Diego webpage to gather input on recommended Strategies and gauge preferences for tracking progress and receiving updates. (Though this document uses the term Strategy, at the time of the survey, the Blueprint was using the term Strategic Action.) The survey ran for 17 days. It included two open-ended and seven closed-ended questions, covering 5 content-related and 4 demographic inquiries. See Appendix 3 for the full set of survey questions.

The Engage San Diego County project webpage, launched during Phase I, continued to provide a platform for users to inquire about the project. It has remained active throughout the project's progression, continuously updated with new developments and community engagement opportunities. Users could directly access the 'Ask a Question' function on the webpage. Promotion of the webpage was integrated into all project-related communications, including County News Center articles, social media, GovDelivery notices, fliers, community meeting announcements, and department newsletters.

IV. Findings

Feedback from the community engagement activities is organized according to the three stages of work: 1) Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape, 2) Barriers and Opportunities, and 3) Recommended Strategies. Significant themes emerged across all the feedback collected, and each theme is discussed in detail within the relevant stage of work. Themes highlighted in grey reflect feedback that was similar to the feedback received in Phase I.

Stage 1: Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape

This assessment involved reviewing the County's housing actions, programs and policies, as well as the institutions and agencies focused on housing outside the County government. During the discussion, many provided recommended actions to address these housing challenges. The following is a summary of themes pulled from this assessment.

- *Universal Impact:* The region's housing affordability crisis affects everyone, including children, families, immigrants, justice-involved individuals, and older adults, limiting the effectiveness of social service systems and leading to displacement. Addressing this requires a systematic response providing affordable housing for all residents.

- *Diverse Housing Needs:* Housing options must meet the diverse needs of the region's population. Flexible approaches are necessary to meet the spectrum of housing needs, considering factors like income, disability, and personal preference.

- *Resource Discrepancy*: Resources fall short of meeting the housing needs identified across San Diego County's diverse population. Specific gaps include housing for larger families, immediate options for seniors, and support for individuals re-entering society from the justice system.

- *Co-Location of Housing and Services:* Housing should not only be affordable, but it should also be accessible and located near essential services and community resources, enhancing the impact of affordable housing initiatives.

- *Innovative Funding Solutions:* There is a demand for flexible and innovative funding programs to bridge gaps in the existing system and address diverse housing needs. Replicating programs like HOME and exploring new models such as affordable housing on campuses can have significant impacts.

- *Streamlined Support:* Streamlining programs, resources, and services is essential for an effective housing system. Administrative burden caused by disparate program requirements significantly impacts service providers and individuals navigating the system who advocated for centralized databases, streamlined reporting, and improved navigation support.

- *Sustainable Workforce:* Sustaining the housing system's workforce is crucial. Direct service providers play a vital role but face high turnover due to overwork and low pay. To retain experienced staff, public sector funders should offer better pay and working conditions, including cost-of-living increases.

- *Tenant Protections:* Tenant protection measures are necessary to safeguard vulnerable populations from homelessness. County leadership is urged to develop and promote programs (such as right to counsel, rental registries, eviction diversion, etc.) as part of strategies to address the housing crisis.

[23]The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) offers formula grants to states and localities to support affordable housing initiatives. These grants, often utilized in collaboration with local nonprofits, fund activities such as building, buying, and rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership, and providing direct rental assistance to low-income individuals. It is the largest federal block grant aimed exclusively at creating affordable housing for low-income households.

Stage 2: Identification of Barriers & Opportunities

When asked about the barriers and opportunities in the financing, development, and supports for housing in the region, stakeholders shared the following:

Barriers

- **Affordable Housing:** Affordability remains a significant hurdle, spanning from accessing new housing to preventing displacement. Factors such as high costs, mortgage rates, insurance, and permit uncertainties exacerbate the issue.

- **Accessibility:** There needs to be a focus on housing accessibility for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and those with fixed incomes.

- **Discrepancies in Unincorporated Areas:** The development of housing in unincorporated regions faces hurdles like insufficient infrastructure and amenities, which impacts costs, competitiveness in financing, and project feasibility.

- **Access to Homeownership Programs:** Due to eligibility hurdles, there are difficulties in accessing homeownership programs, particularly for those below 80% AMI. Need to promote homeownership and middle-income housing.

- **Awareness of Available Programs:** Lack of widespread awareness about County-led programs that assist with funding.

- **Financing:** Financing stands out as the primary barrier cited by affordable developers in low-income housing development.

Opportunities

- **Provide Technical Assistance:** Parties express interest in County-provided technical assistance and education on various topics, such as the implications of state laws, zoning codes, how to braid funding, and existing County programs.

- **Implement Recognized County Initiatives:** Stakeholders acknowledged County effort related to proactive land identification, improvements in permitting processes, and leadership in securing new partnerships.

- **Bolster Unincorporated Planning and Development:** Affirm development by including potential tiers of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) requirements, adjusting requirements to access specific funding streams (e.g. Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program (AHSC)),

- **Institute Innovative Solutions:** The County should establish a sustainable funding source, explore regional coordination on policy, and consider pre-approved housing designs for larger lots. Additional considerations can include the creation of a County Housing Finance Authority for acquisition and distribution of funds, instituting rehab programs for older and/or dilapidated homes, and allowing by-right approvals on public land.

Stage 3: Development of Recommended Strategies

The more recent community engagement focused on the recommended Strategies, resulting in comprehensive yet specific feedback, summarized below. While some of these suggestions extend support for actions already identified by the project team, others offered additional suggestions for the project team to consider. Of note, much of the feedback related to Strategy 6 was from the Housing Finance Working Group, also building on several steps identified by the Middle Income Housing Working Group.

Strategy 1: Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing

- **Consolidate County-Level Plans:** Consolidate internal housing and homelessness plans at the county level for alignment and expedited implementation.

- **Address Equity in Funding:** Review the funding opportunities available to external entities, e.g. tribal diversity, including gaming and non-gaming classifications to identify areas of inequity in funding and involvement.

- **Conduct Comprehensive Assessments:** External entities, such as local tribes, require comprehensive housing assessments to understand the current situation and guide future strategies effectively.

- **Provide Technical Support:** Assist in the provision of technical support for environmental studies and processes from entities like HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), which are crucial for implementing future housing strategies and securing funding and partnership opportunities.

- **Support Unincorporated and Rural Areas:** Incorporate rural and unincorporated areas' housing needs into the organizational approach, recognizing their unique challenges and lack of formal mechanisms for engagement with the County.

- **Streamline Processes:** Recognize the impact of bureaucracy and red tape on housing production and consider streamlining processes to facilitate quicker construction and lower costs.

Strategy 2: Create New Funding Sources for Housing

- **Preserve Homeownership:** Preserve homeownership capabilities through measures like capping interest rates.

- Fully Fund Homelessness Programs: Fully fund and build out homelessness programs to address shortages and ensure success, allowing providers to operate at full capacity.

Strategy 3: Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access

- **Report Progress:** Report on the progress of the Housing Blueprint through the following datapoints.

  - How the Housing Blueprint efforts interact with other policy projects (e.g. the Sustainable Land Use Framework, Climate Action Plan, Feasibility Analyses, etc.)

  - Housing retention rates

  - Homeownership opportunities created regionally

  - Regional vacancy rates (ideally shown in map format)

  - How much land has been "unlocked"

  - What permanent funding sources are being pursued

  - What outreach was done for each action implemented

  - Types of housing created or accessed

  - Demographics of those housed

  - Personal stories of clients

  - Cost of living for housing and housing adjacent needs

- **Transparently Report Progress Through Multiple Channels:** Report progress transparently and consistently, utilizing multiple channels, such as small, town hall-style meetings, existing regional work groups, informal report outs (i.e. Facebook), etc., to ensure accessibility for all stakeholders.

- **Assist with Data Collection:** Assist rural areas with data collection to highlight community needs and attract economic development, ensuring they have a voice in housing policy decisions.

- **Humanize Housing:** Humanize housing development through personal stories to garner larger community support.

Strategy 4: Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact

- **Prioritize Vulnerable Populations:** Prioritize funding for vulnerable populations who face unique challenges, including low-income individuals, seniors, Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), and single adults.

- **Prioritize Existing Funding:** Prioritize releasing existing funds held at the various jurisdictional levels before seeking additional revenue, ensuring efficient use of available resources.

Strategy 5: Unlock Land for Sustainable and Resilient Development Opportunities

- **Repurpose County Assets for Housing:** Utilize County assets and repurpose underutilized land for housing.

- **Remove Obstacles in Housing Creation:** Adjust policies to address the delays in the land-into-trust process, conflicts with conservation plans, and taxation issues for tribes. Adjust zoning to allow for multi-family housing on single lots.

- **Reform Zoning for Small-Scale Developments:** Implement new development standards to accommodate small-scale for-sale developments, including single-family homes, townhomes, and condominiums. Enable legislation for for-sale Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

- **Waive Additional Fees:** Revisit the possibility of waiving ADU permit fees to encourage construction and alleviate housing shortages.

- **Protect Natural Resources and Ecosystems:** Avoid using conserved or preserved lands for housing development to protect natural resources and ecosystems.

- **Apply Progressive Taxes:** Introduce progressive taxes to better utilize unused land and prevent monopolization by large home-buying firms.

Strategy 6: Provide Solutions for Middle-Income Housing Production and Programs

- **Support First-Time Homebuyers:** Promote opportunities for first-time homebuyers and cooperative housing ownership models, especially for those with previous negative experiences with landlords in the rental market.

- **Streamline Entitlement Processing:** Speed up entitlement processing for housing developments, especially for middle-income ownership housing. Align various County plans and initiatives to support new housing development and address delays.

- **Bolster Middle-Income Homebuyer Assistance Program:** Expand down payment and closing cost assistance to a broader range of prospective homebuyers, including a program targeting households earning up to 150% of Area Median Income (AMI).

- **Establish a Revolving Loan Fund:** Explore creating a revolving loan fund for developers of middle-income ownership housing, partnering with philanthropic organizations.

- **Defer Development Impact Fees (DIFs):** Consider a deferral program for Development Impact Fees (DIFs), allowing developers to pay upon project completion.

- **Consider Social Housing:** Consider implementing social housing options, addressing the needs of all income brackets in housing policy.

- **Address Disparities:** Address disparities in homeownership rates across geographic locations and demographics.

Strategy 7: Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies

- **Implement Housing Resiliency Strategies:** Implement tactics to preserve homes against natural disasters, economic impacts, and predatory buyers.

- **Regulate Short-Term Rental:** Regulate short-term rentals which contribute to housing price increases and impact affordable housing availability and stability.

- **Consider Impact on Communities:** Ensure that new development and/or preservation strategies conserve community character, prevent displacement, and manage the integration of different housing types.

- **Promote Community Land Trusts:** Advance community land trusts as effective preservation tools.

Strategy 8: Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts

- **Support Tenants:** Aid tenants dealing with difficult landlords, such as mediation services, and prevent unjust rent increases.

- **Remove Barriers to Housing:** Remove barriers like income requirements for certain housing opportunities to support the needs of fixed-income individuals.

- **Target Prevention Initiatives:** Target homelessness prevention initiatives to maintain housing stability, avert the hardships associated with homelessness, and reduce inflows into the homelessness response system.

- **Support Financial Education Programs:** Fund financial education programs in disadvantaged communities through community-based organizations.

- **Balance Tenant and Landlord Perspectives:** Balance tenant protections with landlord concerns, ensuring fair treatment for both parties and promoting a stable housing market.
- **Administer Renter and Homeowner Supports:** Provide support for both renters and homeowners to keep people in homes.

- **Expand Voucher Availability:** Increase the availability of vouchers to enhance affordability.
- **Prioritize Prevention Methods:** Prioritize prevention methods, including eviction prevention methods, rent control, increased housing sub

INFORMING THE STRATEGIES AND HOUSING BLUEPRINT

The insights collected from the three stages of community engagement—1) Assessment of County Infrastructure and Responsibilities and Local Housing Landscape, 2) Barriers and Opportunities Analysis, and 3) feedback on the recommended Strategies—have been instrumental in shaping and refining the eight Strategies proposed to enhance the Housing Blueprint, as outlined below. The project team relied on the community feedback in Spring 2024 to inform the guiding principles of the Blueprint, refine the more detailed strategies within each Strategy, and to inform the creation of metrics for measuring progress in implementing the Blueprint. A majority of the input provided by stakeholder and public input largely aligned closely with the five Ps or the eight Strategies listed below.

1. **Refine the County's Organizational Approach to Housing:** Input on the necessity for increased regional collaboration and alignment guided the formulation of this Strategy.

2. **Create New Funding Sources for Housing:** Community feedback emphasized the urgency of establishing permanent revenue sources to support various housing initiatives.

3. **Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Access:** Stakeholders highlighted the importance of enhancing public engagement, transparency in housing planning, progress tracking, and data accessibility, leading to the development of this Strategy.

4. **Focus and Streamline Administration of Housing Funding (Subsidy) to Maximize Impact:** Community insights emphasized the need to prioritize funding for supportive housing, affordable housing for Extremely Low-Income (ELI) households, and vulnerable households.

5. **Unlock Land for Sustainable and Resilient Development Opportunities**: Community input underscored the significance of strategies to enhance housing affordability, including developing homes near transit, jobs, and other amenities, as well as utilizing County-owned land for affordable housing development.

6. **Provide Solutions for Middle-Income Housing Production and Programs:** Feedback highlighted the need to increase access to affordable housing for middle-income households, particularly through rental housing and first-time homeownership programs.

7. **Implement Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies:** Stakeholders stressed the importance of preventing the depletion of affordable housing stock.

8. **Strengthen and Enforce Tenant Protections and Homeless Prevention Efforts:** Input emphasized the necessity to safeguard renter households and provide additional resources to mitigate homelessness.

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

APPENDIX 1

DRAFT HOUSING BLUEPRINT

County of San Diego

Housing Blueprint

The County of San Diego's (County) Draft Housing Blueprint (Blueprint) will outline the County's overarching goal, objectives, and strategies used to achieve its housing objectives.

Overarching Goals: As adopted from San Diego's regional planning agency, SANDAG, and its Housing Acceleration Program Strategy (2022):

(1) Produce Housing for All
Support and implement policies to increase housing production of all kinds. Housing development should be located in urbanized areas with access to transit, jobs, and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents.

(2) Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability
Implement housing solutions that address the historic patterns of exclusionary housing practices, segregation, and other inequities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities are available to everyone. Housing solutions should promote climate-resilient communities, the preservation of open space, and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

(3) Preserve Vulnerable Housing
Support proactive strategies to preserve restricted and unrestricted affordable housing such as tracking expiration dates of affordable housing deed restrictions, keeping tenants informed of their rights, and investing in the rehabilitation of housing to preserve affordability.

(4) Prevent Displacement
Implement policies that prevent vulnerable residents from the harmful outcomes of displacement resulting from improvements to neighborhood amenities such as transit and open space. Strategies include studying existing and potential displacement pressures and monitoring the effectiveness of housing retention strategies in relation to planned transit investments.

(5) Protect Tenants
Support renters by providing information on tenant rights and creating protections to minimize economic eviction or unsustainable rent increases.

Priorities: Priorities will be informed by finalized goals and objectives. The Chief Administrative Officer will conduct community and stakeholder engagement on the draft Housing Blueprint and will return for the Board's consideration and approval of the Housing Blueprint goals and objectives.

Objectives: The objectives are meant to help the County focus its strategies and resources (such as partnerships, finances, and staffing) on implementing projects, programs, and policies that align with the County's values of Integrity, Belonging, Equity, Excellence, Access, and Sustainability. The objectives also support the County's Strategic Initiatives of Sustainability, Equity, Empower, Community, and Justice.

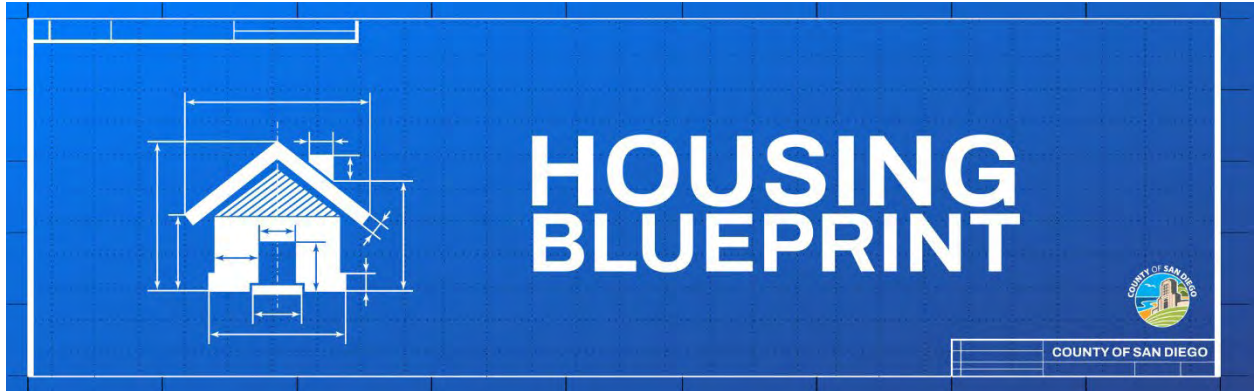| <div align="center">**Objectives**</div> |
|---|
| • As mandated by the State (<u>Housing Element Law</u>) and allocated to the County by SANDAG, plan for and facilitate construction of 6,700 units by 2029 across the income categories assigned in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) (very low, low, moderate, above moderate) for the unincorporated area
 o Finance and incentivize the creation 2,800 Low- and Very Low-Income units (2,800 is the combined number of Low and Very Low-Income units mandated by the State and allocated to the County by SANDAG) |
| • As reflected in the Joint City and County of San Diego <u>Housing Resolution</u>, support the production of 10,000 affordable units regionally by 2030 on publicly owned property |
| • Create more available affordable units each year. |
| • As directed by the Board, implement sustainability criteria for affordable housing developments funded by the County or developed on County property. |
| • Identify and leverage alternative funding sources and cultivate partnerships |
| • Advance sustainable housing production by accelerating sustainable housing in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) efficient or infill areas near jobs and transit, in alignment with County's <u>Transportation Study Guide</u> (TSG), Net Zero Carbon Commitment, <u>Regional Decarbonization Framework</u> (RDF), and state mandates such as <u>California Air Resources Board</u> (CARB) plans, advancing equity. |
| • As mandated by the State (<u>AB 686</u>) Advance equity and fair housing by focusing affordable housing production in high opportunity areas, in alignment with <u>State Tax Credit Allocation Committee</u> (TCAC) criteria. |
| • Advance housing across the region of San Diego County, including within areas of incorporated cities that are near jobs, amenities, transit, and/or otherwise meet our equity, community, and sustainability objectives. |

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

APPENDIX 2

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK FINDINGS REPORT (PHASE 1)

Community Feedback Findings

County of San Diego Housing Blueprint
Draft Goals & Objectives

August 2023

Prepared by:

County Communications Office
County Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics

Contents

Figures

Tables

Appendices

1. Overview

Background

The County of San Diego (County) is creating a roadmap to help guide our ongoing response to the housing affordability crisis. The County's first Housing Blueprint (Blueprint) will serve as a guiding tool in maximizing County resources, balancing priorities, and ensuring the steps we take to meet San Diego's housing needs align with our core values of integrity, belonging, excellence, access, sustainability, and equity. The Board of Supervisors (Board) approved a draft Blueprint [Appendix 1] in December 2022 with an initial set of five goals and eight objectives that reflect prior community input, specific regional priorities, direction from the Board, and state mandates.

Community input has been vital to the County's efforts to address the crisis to date and key to the development of the Blueprint. From late February to early May 2023, the County conducted a variety of community engagement activities to raise awareness for San Diego's housing affordability crisis, communicate the purpose and need of the Blueprint, and gather feedback on its draft goals and objectives, hereafter referred to as "goals" and "objectives". The goal of these activities was to ensure the Blueprint is grounded in a complete set of guiding principles that serve as a thoughtful roadmap for how the County can help curb the region's housing affordability crisis. The topics covered in the community engagement activities included interests and concerns about the goals and objectives, missing topic areas, prioritization of both the goals and objectives, and potential opportunities and barriers to implementing the proposed objectives.

Purpose

Community feedback is the foundation of the Blueprint. Combined with additional research scheduled for the next phase of the Blueprint's development, it will inform a series of anticipated recommendations for a revised set of goals and objectives and help identify strategies to implement objectives in pursuit of the Blueprint's goals. This report summarizes the community engagement activities and resulting feedback gathered on the Blueprint's draft goals and objectives for consideration as the County works to finalize its strategy.

Methods

The County utilized a multi-pronged communication and engagement strategy to connect with the community on the Blueprint. The strategy centered on leveraging existing opportunities across multiple County departments to reach a wide cross-section of community members. Engagement activities included establishing a project page on the Engage San Diego County site, which is the County's online engagement platform, deploying community surveys, presenting at County stakeholder meetings, providing County departments with a communications toolkit, releasing County News Center articles, and hosting a virtual community meeting to gather stakeholder feedback. There were 381 respondents to the community surveys, reflecting over 2,600 comments. An additional 167 pieces of feedback were received from the other engagement activities detailed in **Sub-section 2.1**

Findings

Feedback about the Blueprint included what respondents liked about the goals, what they thought was missing from the goals and objectives, potential opportunities for achieving the objectives, and

perceived barriers to achieving the objectives. The results derived from the feedback were captured in 24 themes outlined in **Section 4** and **Figure 4** of this report.

Responses also addressed the level of detail provided for the goals and objectives as well as the language, terminology, and concepts used. The results illustrate there are varying sentiments about the County's role in housing and how affordable housing is developed and provided across the region.

The following are a few data points highlighting the findings presented within the full analysis included in **Sections 3** and **4** of this report**.**

- Across both surveys used to gather feedback – a Quick Survey and an Expanded Survey, three-quarters of survey respondents indicated that they need affordable housing or know someone who needs affordable housing.

- Nearly 72% of the Expanded Survey respondents were first-time participants in public feedback activities related to County housing efforts since January 2019.

- 43% percent of Expanded Survey respondents felt the goals reflected what is needed to meet the housing needs of San Diego County residents, while 46% said they did not, and 11% said they were not sure.

- When asked if they felt the objectives reflected what is needed to achieve the goals, respondents to the Expanded Survey were closely split between yes, no, and unsure.

- According to the ranking of the five goals, survey respondents reported that 'Produce Housing for All' was the most important goal to them, and 'Protect Tenants' was the least important.

- According to the ranking of the five non-mandated objectives, 'Create more available units each year' was ranked as the most important to respondents by those who took the Expanded Survey. Conversely, the objective 'Identify and leverage alternative funding sources and cultivate partnerships' was ranked least important.

- 24 themes were identified to capture the concepts that were observed most in the feedback on the goals and objectives missing from the Blueprint and areas of opportunity or potential barriers to the implementation of objectives received from all respondents.

The limitations of the data mentioned in **Section 5** should be considered when reviewing the data. Specifically, while all feedback received was reviewed, not all feedback received falls within the legal authority of the County. In addition, though this Report provides the County with insight into the sentiments of those who participated in the engagement opportunities, the results are not from a representative sample of the county's population and cannot be used as a basis to understand true, complete public sentiment on all items mentioned.

2. Feedback Collection

The County solicited community feedback on the Blueprint's goals and objectives through the community engagement activities outlined in Table 1 below. The methods used to analyze the feedback collected are provided in Appendix 2.

Table 1. Community Engagement Activities

Engagement Activity	Period of Activity
Community Survey	
Expanded Survey	Feb. 28 – Apr. 9
Quick Survey	Mar. 14 – Apr. 9
Stakeholder Meeting Presentations	Mar. 9 – Apr. 9
Email Correspondence	Feb. 28 – May 2
Virtual Community Meeting	Apr. 5
Engage San Diego	
Webpage Questions	Feb. 17 – May 9

2.1. Community Engagement Activities

Community Surveys

The County released two community surveys [Appendix 3]—a 43-question survey (Expanded Survey) and an abridged 5-question survey (Quick Survey). The Expanded Survey was available for a 71-day period starting on February 28, and the Quick Survey was made available for a 54-day period starting on March 14. The Quick Survey was developed in response to community feedback requesting a less time-consuming feedback option. Both surveys closed on April 9. There were 381 total respondents.

Between the two surveys, there were 34 open-ended questions. Four of the five questions (open-ended, two close-ended) in the Quick Survey overlapped with the Expanded Survey. While the Expanded Survey listed all eight individual objectives, the Quick Survey distilled the objectives into five topic areas (objectives topic areas).

The surveys asked respondents to:

- Indicate if anything was missing from the goals, objectives, and objectives topic areas and propose additional ones
- Rank the goals, objectives, and objectives' topic areas based on the level of importance to them
- Indicate likes, concerns, and possible areas of change for the goals
- Identify possible opportunities for, or barriers to, implementing the objectives
- Identify the level of the participant's engagement in housing discussions with the County
- Indicate the participant's geographic area of residence (zip code), preferred language, and interest group, if applicable

The survey was made available to the public on the project's Engage San Diego County webpage and promoted through a variety of communication channels including County News Center articles, social media, GovDelivery notices, fliers, stakeholder community meeting announcements, and department newsletters. A summary of communications activities is available in Appendix 4.

The public was notified through Engage San Diego County and language on notices that the surveys were available in the County's eight threshold languages through the Google Translate widget on Engage San Diego County. In addition, accessibility-related modifications could be made upon request.

Virtual Community Meeting

On April 5, the County conducted a 90-minute Virtual Community Meeting via Zoom as a public information and input opportunity for the community at large. The meeting aimed to explain the purpose and need for the Blueprint, present the goals and objectives, and gather input on the importance of the goals and objectives to the meeting participants and identify additional topics the County should consider. The meeting was also designed to respond to participants' questions. Forty-two people participated in the meeting.

Through a Zoom Poll [Appendix 5], participants were asked to choose one goal and up to two objective topics most important to them. Following each poll question, participants were asked to provide the reasons for their rankings through discussion. Participants were also asked to identify any additional topics the County should consider. Written feedback was also an option available to participants via the Zoom Chat function.

The meeting was promoted through a variety of communication channels including the project webpage on Engage San Diego County, social media, GovDelivery notices, fliers, stakeholder community meeting announcements, and department newsletters. The public was notified through Engage San Diego County and information included on meeting notices that language interpretation and accessibility-related modifications would be made upon request. Spanish language interpreters were available during the meeting.

Stakeholder Meeting Presentations

The County delivered presentations to seven regularly scheduled County stakeholder meetings including advisory board meetings, community planning and sponsor group meetings, and planned engagement activities for parallel housing efforts like Transformative Housing Solutions. County stakeholder groups were invited to request presentations and other opportunities to discuss the goals and objectives of the Blueprint through their respective County staff liaisons.

Like the Virtual Community Meeting, the presentations were designed to explain the purpose and need for the Blueprint, present the goals and objectives, and gather input on the importance of the goals and objectives to the meeting participants and additional topics the County should consider. These meetings used the same strategies to gather feedback as the Virtual Community Meeting, including an open-ended discussion to generate feedback on the goals and objectives, along with identifying any additional topics the County should consider. Depending on the meeting, the discussions were either hosted on a virtual platform or in person. The stakeholder groups listed in Table 2 engaged in the feedback discussion during one of their regularly scheduled meetings. Some of the committee meetings included public attendees.

Table 2. Stakeholder Meeting Presentations and Attendance

Date	Stakeholder Meeting	Committee Attendance	Public Attendance
March 9	Transformative Housing Solutions Project Meeting	N/A	2
April 6	Housing Council, Behavioral Health Services	6	13
April 6	Behavioral Health Advisory Board	11	~65
April 13	Community Action Board	4	0
April 14	Committee for Persons with Disabilities	7	1
April 18	Fallbrook Community Planning Group	12	~25
May 2	Bonsall Community Sponsor Group	4	5

Note: Short presentations were deployed by County staff across 26 additional County stakeholder meetings to raise awareness for the Blueprint and invite participation in the engagement activities. Stakeholder feedback was not collected during these short presentations; therefore, they are not listed in the table above.

Email Correspondence

In addition, a few participants provided their feedback on the Blueprint through email correspondence addressed to County staff between April 5 to May 2. Correspondence was solicited as part of the stakeholder meeting presentations and the project page on the Engage San Diego County website.

Engage San Diego County Webpage Questions

The Engage San Diego County project webpage offered an opportunity for users to pose questions about the project. This function of the webpage was made available at the page launch on February 17 and will remain available throughout the project's development; however, this report reflects those questions received through May 25.

Users who visit the site can access the 'Ask a Question' function directly on the main project page. The site was promoted through all project-related communications including County News Center articles, social media, GovDelivery notices, fliers, community meeting announcements, and department newsletters.

3. Participation

3.1. Number of Respondents Captured in Engagement Activities

The following table shows the number of people who provided feedback or asked questions across all engagement activities. There were 381 unique respondents to the community surveys. Of the 381 survey respondents, 160 took only the Expanded Survey, 210 took only the Quick Survey, and 11 took both surveys. While the number of attendees in the stakeholder meeting presentations is reflected in Table 2, the numbers in Table 3 below reflect the number of comments and questions received during the meetings.

Table 3. Engagement Activity Respondents

| Engagement Activity	Number of Respondents
Community Survey	
Both Surveys	11
Expanded Survey	160
Quick Survey	210
Stakeholder Meeting Presentations*	
Transformative Housing Solutions	0
Housing Council	4
Behavioral Health Advisory Board	14
Community Action Board	0
Committee for Persons with Disabilities	10
Fallbrook Community Planning Group	28
Bonsall Community Sponsor Group	26
Email Correspondence	
Community Development Inbox	6
Virtual Community Meeting*	
Zoom Poll	31
Comments	36
Engage San Diego	
Webpage Questions	12

*Number reflective of comments received and not activity attendees

3.2. About the Community Survey Participants

Geographic Location

Of the 171 Expanded Survey participants, 73% stated they live in an incorporated city in the county and 20% reported they live in an unincorporated area of the county. Based on the ZIP Code data collected, participants were spread out across the region.

Figure 1. Participation by Location of Expanded Survey Participants (N=171)
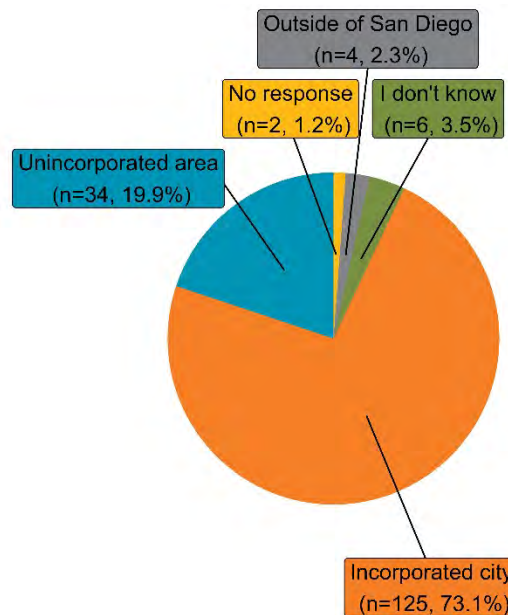
Existing Level of Participation in County Housing Engagement

Survey respondents were asked to select all that apply when asked how they would describe their level of participation in housing discussions with the County. According to the Expanded Survey, nearly 72% of the respondents were first-time participants in public feedback activities related to County housing efforts since January 2019. About 22% had contributed feedback at least one other time, and 7% had contributed three or more times. Respondents to the Quick Survey were not asked about their participation in such public feedback activities.

Figure 2. Participation in County Housing Efforts (N=171)
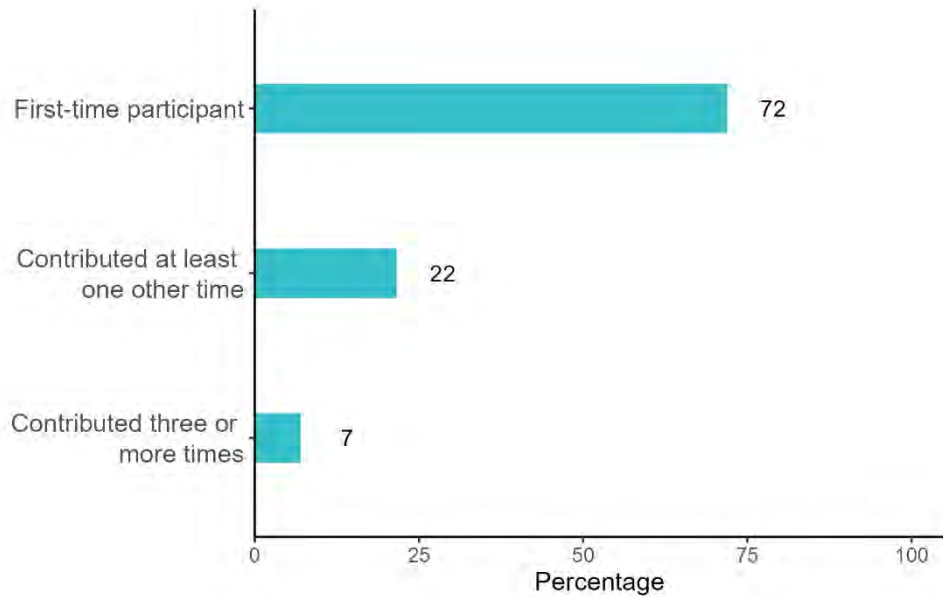
How Survey Participants Described Themselves

Respondents were asked to select all applicable characteristics as listed in Figure 3 to best describe themselves. Across both surveys, three-quarters of survey respondents indicated they need affordable housing or know someone who needs affordable housing. About 8% stated they are a member of a community planning group, 8% said they represent an affordable housing and/or homeless services advocacy group, and 8% reported they are part of an environmental advocacy group. Nearly 30% reported 'Other'.

Figure 3. Participants by Self-identified Categories (N=381)
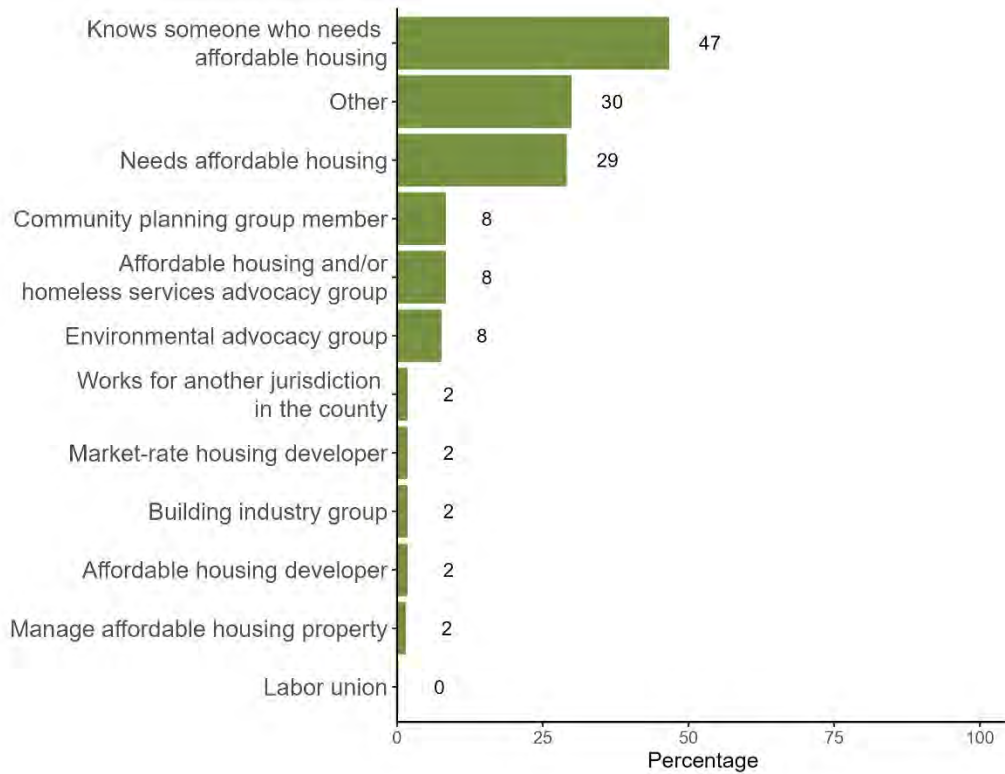
Of the 30% of respondents (114/381) who selected 'Other', the majority indicated they were either concerned/interested community members or homeowners, including a very small percentage who said they were landlords.

Table 4. Participants in Self-identified "Other" Category (N=114)

"Other" category	Number	Percent
Concerned/interested community member	46	40.4%
Homeowner	22	19.3%
Building industry group	10	8.8%
Need affordable housing	10	8.8%
Other advocacy group	9	7.9%
Not specified	6	5.3%
Manage an affordable housing property	4	3.5%
Market-rate housing developer	3	2.6%
Work for another jurisdiction in the county	2	1.8%
Affordable housing advocacy group	1	0.9%
Environmental advocacy group	1	0.9%

3.3.   About the Other Engagement Activities Participants

Participants in the other engagement activities included active members of County boards, commissions, and committees who requested a presentation and discussion on the Blueprint. These committees include the Behavioral Health Services Housing Council, Behavioral Health Advisory Board, Community Action Board, Committee for Persons with Disabilities, Fallbrook Community Planning Group, and the Bonsall Community Sponsor Group.

As noted in Table 2, some of the committee meetings included public attendees. No demographic or other information about the participants was gathered through these meetings, the Virtual Community Meeting, email correspondence, or the Engage San Diego County webpage 'questions' function.

4. Results

4.1.   Summary of Feedback

As outlined in **Sub-section 2.1**, engagement activities focused on gathering feedback from participants on the Blueprint's goals and objectives. While all feedback received was reviewed, not all feedback received falls within the legal authority of the County. In addition, though this Report provides the County with insight into the sentiments of those who participated in the engagement opportunities, the results are not from a representative sample of the County's population and cannot be used as a basis to understand true, complete public sentiment on all items mentioned.

This section outlines responses indicating goal likes, missing topics in the goals and objectives, goals and objectives rankings by the level of importance to the respondent, and possible opportunities and potential barriers to implementation of the objectives. Reflected in the thematic map graphic, "**Community Viewpoints on the Blueprint by Theme"** (Figure 4) on the next page are the 24 most salient themes found in respondents' feedback across all respondents regarding the goals and objectives missing from the Blueprint and possible opportunities and potential barriers to the implementation of the objectives. Subsequent sections describe each theme in detail.

It should be noted that some respondents challenged the purpose of and need for the Blueprint, citing that: 1) government does not have a role in facilitating access to affordable housing or in the housing market, 2) the County's efforts should focus on employment assistance, educational attainment, and other social services to facilitate access to housing and lessen the need for housing assistance programs, or 3) the goals and objectives are not actionable and do not include sufficient information, specificity, or clarity to allow the respondent to provide an informed response.

> *How to Follow the Themes (Figure 4)*
>
> *Community feedback overlapped across the four feedback areas (goals, objectives, opportunities, and barriers). For this reason, the themes are not repeated in the discussion of findings for each area. Instead, these overlapping themes are referenced by section and number of the document in the narrative and repeated by number and color in Figure 4. For example, "Reduced barriers to housing production" was identified as a missing goal, but respondents also referred to this topic as missing from the objectives and a potential opportunity as well as a barrier to implementation. It is found listed under Goals Missing as item 4 and then repeated as a number 4 in a blue box under the three other categories.*

COMMUNITY VIEWPOINTS
COMMON THEMES ON THE BLUEPRINT
Draft Goals & Objectives

GOALS MISSING	OBJECTIVES MISSING	IMPLEMENTATION OPPORTUNITIES	IMPLEMENTATION BARRIERS
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4 5 6 10 3 5	4 5 6 10 1 3 1
1 Landlord & tenant rights	1 Assessment of feasibility	1 Financing & funding solutions	1 Public perceptions
2 Population representation	2 Middle-income housing focus	2 Partnerships	2 Availability of suitable land
3 Safeguards from development impacts	3 Flexible financing & developer incentives	3 Property conversions & modifications	3 High financial & environmental costs
4 Reduced barriers to housing production	4 Investments in social services		4 Limited financing options
5 Affordable housing development & environmental protection regulations	5 Expanded transit services		
6 More affordable housing locations	6 Improved agency coordination		
7 Housing-related costs assistance	7 Design quality & building standards		
8 Community safety measures & amenities			
9 Detailed displacement safeguards			
10 Separate equity and sustainability goals			

How to follow the themes.

Community feedback often overlapped across the four feedback areas (goals, objectives, opportunities, and barriers). For this reason, overlapping themes are repeated by number and color in the graphic. For example, "Reduced barriers to housing production" was identified as a missing goal, but respondents also referred to this topic as missing from the objectives and a potential opportunity as well as a barrier to implementation. You will find it listed under Goals Missing as item 4 and repeated as a number 4 in a blue box under the three other categories.

Each theme is described in detail in Section 4 of the Findings Report.

4.2. Feedback on Draft Goals

The Blueprint's five draft goals listed below are adopted from San Diego's regional planning agency, SANDAG, and its Housing Acceleration Program Strategy (2022). According to SANDAG, these housing policy goals, also known as the "5 P's", address the root causes of the housing crisis.

1. **Produce Housing for All:** Support and implement policies to increase housing production of all kinds. Housing development should be in urbanized areas with access to transit, jobs, and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents.
2. **Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability:** Implement housing solutions that address the historic patterns of exclusionary housing practices, segregation, and other inequities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities are available to everyone. Housing solutions should promote climate-resilient communities, the preservation of open space, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.
3. **Preserve Vulnerable Housing:** Support proactive strategies to preserve restricted and unrestricted affordable housing such as tracking expiration dates of affordable housing deed restrictions, keeping tenants informed of their rights, and investing in the rehabilitation of housing to preserve affordability.
4. **Prevent Displacement:** Implement policies that prevent vulnerable residents from the harmful outcomes of displacement resulting from improvements to neighborhood amenities such as transit and open space. Strategies include studying existing and potential displacement pressures and monitoring the effectiveness of housing retention strategies in relation to planned transit investments.
5. **Protect Tenants:** Support renters by providing information on tenant rights and creating protections to minimize economic eviction or unsustainable rent increases.

How Well the Goals Reflect What Is Needed to Respond to the Housing Needs of San Diego County

Of the people who took the Expanded Survey, 43% felt the goals reflected what is needed to meet the housing needs of San Diego County residents, while 46% said they did not, and 11% said they were not sure.

Figure 5. Goals and the Housing Needs of San Diego County Residents (N=171)
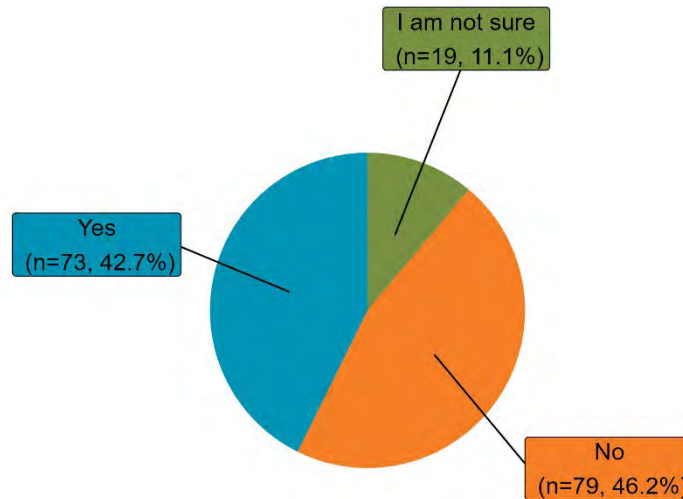
How Participants Ranked the Goals

Survey respondents ranked the importance of the five draft goals with "1" being the most important and "5" the least. According to the rankings, 'Produce Housing for All' was the most important goal, and 'Protect Tenants' was the least important.

Figure 6. Average Goal Ranking – Survey Participants (N=355 to 361)*
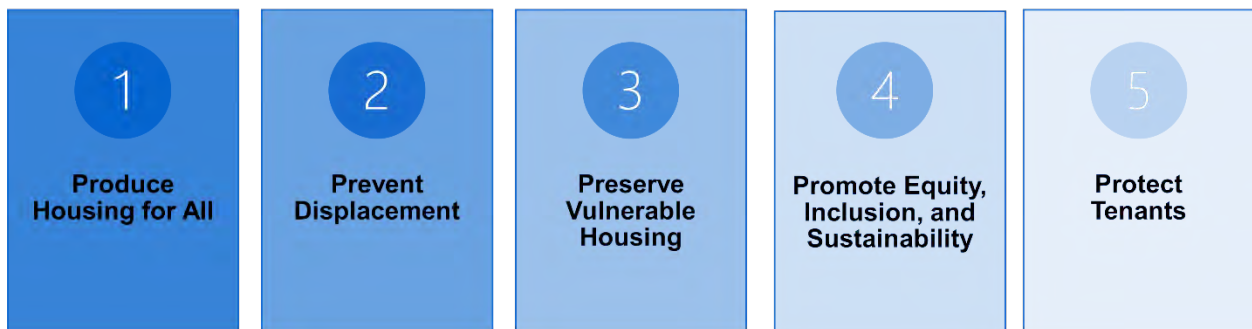
*The data for the goal rankings were provided separately for each goal. The average rankings were calculated based on the available responses for each goal ranking, ranging from 355 to 361 responses.

'Produce Housing for All' was also ranked the top goal at the Virtual Community Meeting. Among 27 poll respondents at the Virtual Community Meeting, 41% stated that 'Produce Housing for All' was most important to them. 'Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability' was also ranked highly by Virtual Community Meeting poll participants. 'Prevent Displacement' was not ranked highly at the Virtual Community Meeting but was ranked the second most important goal by community survey participants.

Figure 7. Most Important Goal - Virtual Community Meeting (N=27)
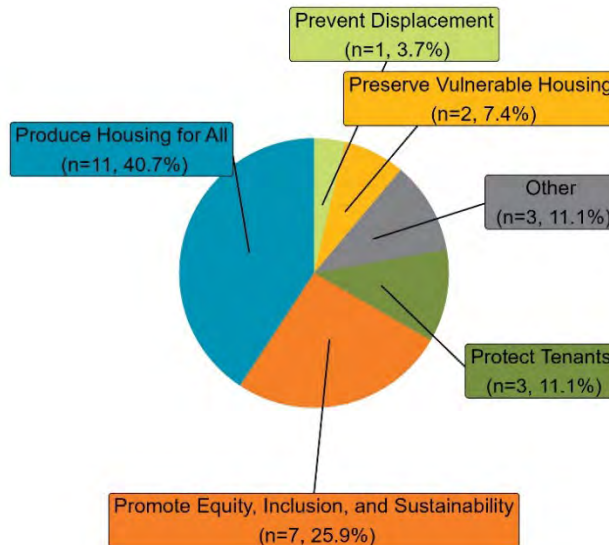
What Participants Said They Like About the Goals

When asked what participants liked about the five goals, most participants took the opportunity to further emphasize the main components of the five goals. Specific attributes of interest listed in no particular order included:

- Acknowledging housing as a human right
- Addressing historic patterns of exclusionary housing
- Advancing equity and inclusion
- Advancing the use of sustainable materials in the development of housing
- Locating affordable housing in proximity to transit, jobs, and amenities
- Eliminating barriers and increasing access to housing for persons with different socioeconomic and diverse backgrounds
- Establishing tenant protections to minimize economic eviction or rent increases
- Investing in the rehabilitation of housing
- Preserving community diversity and existing affordable housing, including deed-restricted homes
- Producing all kinds of housing at every income level
- Promoting climate-resilient communities including pursuit of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction alternatives such as expanded mass transit or placement of housing in proximity to transit
- Reducing displacement and the potential for gentrification

Instead of providing what they liked about the goals, some participants responded to this question with what they believed was missing or should be included as a goal. The most salient themes from these responses were combined with the themes outlined in the following section.

What Participants Said is Missing from the Goals

Participants were asked what concerned them about the goals, including what they thought was missing or should be added. The top 10 themes found within those responses are listed below in no particular order.

1. Sufficient landlord rights and expanded tenant rights
2. Specific population representation
3. Safeguards from the impacts of affordable housing development
4. Reduction of barriers to housing production
5. Increased regulations to promote affordable housing development and environmental protections
6. Expanded considerations for affordable housing locations
7. Assistance with other housing-related costs
8. Promotion of community safety measures and amenities
9. Detailed displacement safeguards
10. Separate equity and sustainability goals

The following is a summary of the 10 salient themes.

1. Sufficient landlord rights and expanded tenant rights

A large portion of the responses related to the rental housing market, specifically landlord and tenant protections. These responses shared the perspective that to have a healthy rental community for all, both tenants and landlords need protection through fair and balanced laws.

Sufficient Landlord Protections

Some participants found that goals were limited to only tenant protections and found the discussion of landlord protections fully absent.

"I do not see any provisions to help at risk landlords. They too are county residents and the smaller landlords lose the ability to pay their mortgages, thus having the bank foreclose or force a short-sale. The tenants AND the landlord lose, the banks win."

These participants outlined that landlords, specifically small, non-corporate landlords, need protections to ensure they can continue to offer affordable housing rental options. Examples of such rights and protections included:

- Ability to evict promptly
- Elimination of tenant support programs developed without landlord knowledge or consent
- Laws against landlord income loss
- Protections against mortgage foreclosure
- Protections against process barriers due to limited court staff
- Protections from abusive or retaliatory tenants
- Protections from squatters

- Protections like those applied to small businesses
- Wider availability of information about landlord rights

Expanded Tenant Protections

While tenant protections are addressed within Goals 3 and 5, some participants shared that they seemed limited to the provision of information and fell short of detailing specific protections they deemed critical, such as:

- Protections from abusive landlords
- Restricted rent increases
- Requirements for lower rents
- Permissions for shared housing opportunities
- Fair housing
- Fair access to housing
- Emergency rental assistance
- Protections from landlord retaliation

As it related to rent control, rent caps, and rent stabilization, participants' responses were mixed with some in favor and others in opposition.

Short-term and Investment Rentals

Respondents also shared concern for short-term rentals and recommended policies to limit or restrict short-term rentals, specifically vacation rentals, in San Diego, citing that the use of housing for short-term rentals was impacting the availability of housing for San Diego residents, "which increases rents and displaces middle and lower income residents." Similarly, some respondents shared concern for investments from outside of the area pricing out many San Diego residents from the ownership market for condominiums and single-family homes purchased as second homes or investment opportunities.

These respondents recommended that the focus be away from rental platforms and instead on facilitating home ownership, specifically for low-income communities of color, and included suggestions to disincentivize second home purchases or limit investment properties owned by "property management firms, investors and hedge funds, and development companies" through higher taxes.

2. Specific population representation

While no one population was the focus of the survey respondents, participants expressed interest in seeing specific populations explicitly reflected and prioritized in programs, policies, and related eligibility criteria. Populations mentioned repeatedly in the responses primarily included:

- Low-income households
- Persons experiencing homelessness
- Working- or middle-class persons who do not qualify for programs but are still priced out of the market
- Veterans
- Seniors
- Persons with disabilities
- Persons with mental illness or substance use disorders, persons in recovery

- Families
  - Childless couples
  - Foster families and kids aging out of the foster system
  - Single parents
  - Women and children

Additional communities and populations included:
- Artists
- Communities of color
- Homeowners
- Individuals involved in the criminal justice system
- Landlords
- LGBTQ+ community
- Local residents/permanent residents
- Persons who have been waiting a long time for Section 8 and other housing assistance
- Persons with HIV/AIDS
- Pet owners
- Public employees
- Registered voters
- Renters
- Retirees
- Service workers
- Single adults/single parents
- Students, recent graduates, young people, and school employees
- Taxpayers
- Unemployed
- Victims of domestic violence, including children exposed to domestic violence

3. *Safeguards from the impacts of affordable housing development*

Many participants cited concerns about the potential impacts of affordable housing production on existing communities and wanted to see goals established to limit or mitigate the impacts, such as:

- Safeguarding the character of existing communities, specifically historic neighborhoods, and communities zoned for single-family including those in rural areas
- Ensuring sufficient parking and limited impacts on traffic
- Ensuring sufficient infrastructure such as roads, water, and wastewater to support additional development and density
- Ensuring a sufficient and affordable supply of potable water, gas, and electricity
- Avoiding the increase of density in wildfire-prone areas and areas more likely to experience landslides or experience flooding

- Safeguarding views, landscapes, and recreational areas
- Ensuring adequate community services such as fire, police, and schools
- Ensuring community safety
- Mitigating impacts to the environment and natural resources, including protections for open space and reduced greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT)

4. *Reduction of barriers to housing production*

Respondents shared that development regulations and related processes need to be revised to reduce barriers to housing production and facilitate the efficient production of housing. Specifically, respondents shared the following:

- Consider the high cost of producing housing in San Diego including high costs related to construction materials and labor as well as limited availability of labor
- Expedite the development process for affordable housing projects
- Expedite the development process for projects in specific infill, Village, and VMT-efficient areas
- Hire more personnel in planning and permitting departments to support the timely processing of the development projects
- Centralize the permitting review process for the full development cycle in one department
- Provide maximum flexibility to allow projects to meet their General Plan densities, and allow multiple uses for the same space (i.e. mixed-use), shared housing, the repurposing of buildings such as underutilized or abandoned commercial spaces and motels, or innovative housing products such as accessory dwelling units or tiny homes
- Reduce development fees including Traffic Impact Fees and consider moving the collection of fees to the end of project construction
- Reduce the prohibitive nature of development regulations, including environmental review regulations such as those related to the California Environmental Quality Act and streamline Class 32 exemptions
- Simplify zoning regulations and rezone more areas to allow for residential development
- Streamline ministerial approvals

While some shared that these efforts should be put in place for all types of development, others specified that they should be limited to "smaller residential homeowners/property owners" and not apply to "large developers." Specific jurisdictions cited in respondent examples included the County of San Diego and the City of San Diego, but many respondents simply referred to more general terms such as "cities" or "planning departments."

5. *Increased regulations to promote affordable housing development and environmental protections*

While many respondents suggested that development regulations should be less restrictive, some respondents instead proposed adding regulations to protect existing affordable housing, promote affordable housing specifically, or mitigate impacts on the environment from all housing development. These included integrating the following into regulations:

Affordable housing development

- Minimum requirements to include affordable housing in all new development, such as "new development should include at least 20% low-income units on-site"
- Protection of shared housing, single-residency occupancy, and other existing affordable housing options
- Promote rehabilitation of housing that is not up to code without displacement
- Limitations on the production of non-affordable housing such as high-end, luxury, or high-priced housing products

Sustainability and environmental impact

- Sustainable materials and practice requirements including solar, double-paned windows, battery storage, and all-electric appliances
- Increased community engagement requirements in the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) development process including additional general virtual meetings "not specific to any one stakeholder group"
- Requirements for all housing developed with assistance from Housing and Community Development Services to promote micro-sustainability living
- Focused development in rehabilitated, urban, and infill areas away from untouched land
- Guardrails on expedited or streamlined development to ensure the development is not promoted at the cost of the environment

6. ***Expanded considerations for affordable housing locations***

Transit Proximity

The goals emphasized locating housing near public transit, yet respondents suggested that the focus of affordable development should not be limited to areas near trolley and bus stops. They cited that this approach would significantly reduce the opportunities for affordable housing production, especially in unincorporated areas, as San Diego's mass transit infrastructure is limited. They also shared that due to limited end-to-end availability and insufficient service that does not "effectively service the entire region," residents are unable to rely on transit service to get to work, school, and other places they need to go and therefore tying affordable housing locations to transit can be problematic.

Regional Availability

Participants shared that opportunities for affordable housing should be available across the region and not concentrated in any one area. Some participants said it is important to avoid a "one-size fits all" approach when considering locations for affordable housing development. There should be options for housing in urban, suburban, and rural areas based on a person's needs and preferences.

Related to development in urban areas, some participants shared that they liked the focus of housing locations in "areas where people can thrive" near transit, jobs, and amenities, while others shared concern for the focus of affordable housing development in highly urbanized, "unsafe, low-cost areas" with overtaxed infrastructure, limited to no access to green/open spaces, and lack of socioeconomic diversity.

In relation to development in rural areas, some cited the lack of transit options, long distances to job centers, limited road infrastructure, and limited amenities such as health services and affordable grocery stores as barriers to effective development in those locations.

7. Assistance with other housing-related costs

Respondents repeatedly cited the cost of living in San Diego as a root cause for the housing affordability crisis stating that the income levels for many communities including working-class people in the service industry and public sector are insufficient to cover the high cost of housing, utilities, and transit.

Additionally, they shared a need to address the cost of services beyond housing, such as utilities, groceries, insurance, taxes, and transit as a critical part of the response to the housing affordability crisis. Respondents shared concern for the displacement of San Diego residents who are forced to leave the county because of the high cost of housing in combination with these services, specifically the "young, educated, skilled workforce." Others recommended that the County focus its resources on researching the root causes of the housing crisis and the reasons behind the high cost of living in California to inform more effective solutions.

8. Promotion of community safety measures and amenities

While Goal 1 refers to the development of housing with access to transit, jobs, and amenities, participants shared that the efforts to pursue this goal need to be more widely emphasized and expanded to include community safety and specific amenities not just in proximity of the housing but within the development themselves. Examples given included:

- ADA accessibility
- Bikeability infrastructure
- Community gardens
- Grocery stores
- Free transit shuttles
- Local free-ride transportation services
- Medical and other health services
- Park space
- Play areas
- Ride share to critical services
- Schools
- Street lighting
- Walkability infrastructure

9. Detailed displacement safeguards

"The emotional problems after being displaced after many years (28 years plus) of renting someplace. and NOT being able to find anything affordable within in a short period of time allowed is super stressful place to be caught in."

Specific to Goal 4 "Prevent Displacement," participants requested the goal be expanded and include additional detail such as:

- Safeguards against displacement resulting from community revitalization and redevelopment efforts beyond transit improvements and open space preservation including displacement resulting from improvements such as renovations, remodels, and building/house upgrades
- Safeguards against displacement resulting from investment purchases
- Assistance for persons who have already been displaced, specifically seniors
- Requirements to assist residents who are displaced because of a code violation/building tear down

Others stated that the strategies outlined in the Goal to study displacement pressures and monitor strategies are insufficient and they would prefer to see specific actions outlined to prevent displacement.

10. *Separate equity and sustainability goals*

Specific to Goal 2 to "Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability," participants suggested that sustainability and equity and inclusion be revised into two separate goals to ensure each goal is adequately addressed. The following issues with the combined nature of the goals were identified in the responses:

- By combining the two, "the County is trying to promote too many priorities" which can often be in conflict and result in little to no progress.
- "Sustainability may be contradictory to affordability" and limit development.
- Developments that adhere to sustainable building practices are often tied to higher costs.
- Sustainability goals need to be separately considered to ensure they move beyond its current description to include indoor air quality and other measures to ensure healthy living.
- Equity and inclusion "require different considerations" than sustainability.

4.3. Feedback on Draft Objectives

The Blueprint's draft eight objectives listed below reflect community input, specific regional priorities, direction from the Board, and State mandates.

1. As mandated by the State (Housing Element Law) and allocated to the County by SANDAG, plan for and facilitate construction of 6,700 units by 2029 across the income categories assigned in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) (very low, low, moderate, above moderate) for the unincorporated area.

    o Finance and incentivize the creation 2,800 Low- and Very Low-Income units (2,800 is the combined number of Low and Very Low-Income units mandated by the State and allocated to the County by SANDAG)

2. As reflected in the Joint City and County of San Diego Housing Resolution, support the production of 10,000 affordable units regionally by 2030 on publicly owned property.

3. Create more available affordable units each year.

4. As directed by the Board, implement sustainability criteria for affordable housing developments funded by the County or developed on County property.

5. Identify and leverage alternative funding sources and cultivate partnerships

6. Advance sustainable housing production by accelerating sustainable housing in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) efficient or infill areas near jobs and transit, in alignment with County's Transportation Study Guide (TSG), Net Zero Carbon Commitment, Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF), and state mandates such as California Air Resources Board (CARB) plans, advancing equity.

7. As mandated by the State (AB 686), advance equity and fair housing by focusing affordable housing production in high opportunity areas, in alignment with State Tax Credit Allocation Committee criteria.

8. Advance housing across the region of San Diego County, including within areas of incorporated cities that are near jobs, amenities, transit, and/or otherwise meet our equity, community, and sustainability objectives

How Well the Objectives Support the Goals

When asked if they felt the objectives reflected what is needed to achieve the goals, respondents to the Expanded Survey were closely split between yes, no, and unsure.

Figure 8. How Well the Objectives Support the Goals (N=171)

Yes (n=62, 36.3%)
I am not sure (n=52, 30.4%)
No (n=57, 33.3%)
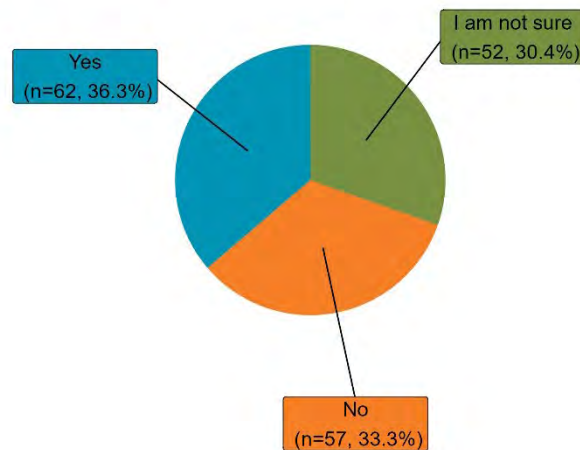
How Participants Ranked the Objectives

Objectives 1, 2, and 7 reflect State and local mandates or resolutions. Participants were asked to rank the five non-mandated objectives with '1' being the most important and '5' the least important. Respondents to the Expanded Survey ranked 'Create more available units each year' as the most important. The objective 'Identify and leverage alternative funding sources and cultivate partnerships' was ranked least important.

Figure 9. Non-mandated Objectives Average Ranking – Expanded Survey Respondents (N=136 to 140)*
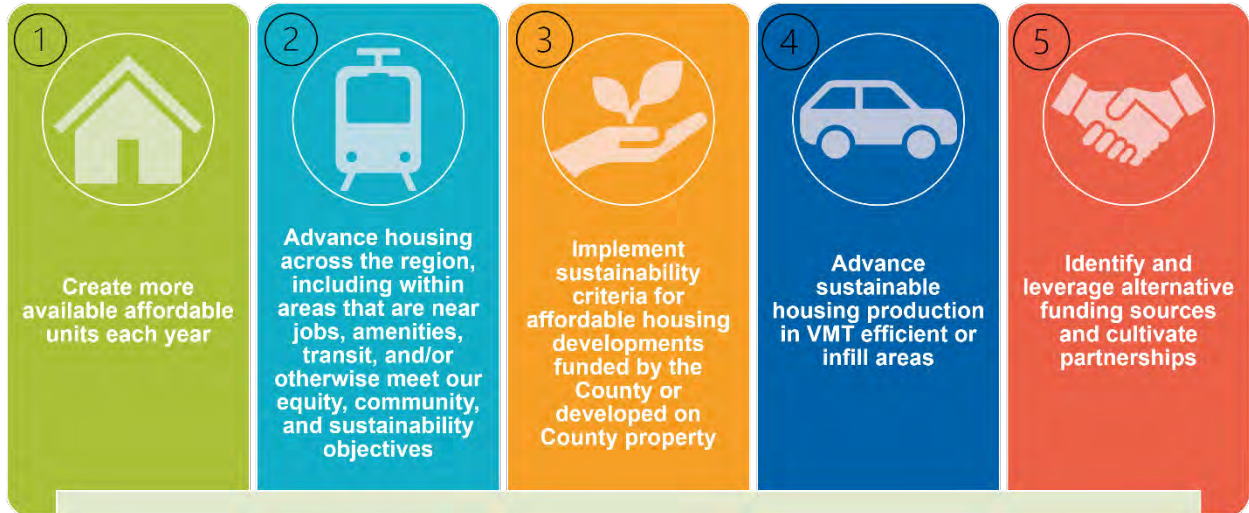
*The data for the objectives rankings were provided separately for each objective by the survey tool. The average rankings were calculated based on the available responses for each objective, ranging from 136 to 140 responses.

Respondents to the Quick Survey ranked the objective topics with '1' being the most important and '5' the least important. The topic 'Locate housing near transit, jobs, schools, and other amenities where people can thrive' was ranked most important, followed by 'Ensure affordable housing is built in a sustainable way'.

Figure 10. Objectives Topics Average Ranking – Quick Survey Respondents (N=209 to 214)*


*The data for the objective topics rankings were provided separately for each objective topic by the survey tool. The average rankings were calculated based on the available responses for each objective topic, ranging from 209 to 214 responses.

The rankings for the objective topics at the Virtual Community Meeting were like the rankings from the community surveys, with 'Locate housing near transit, jobs, schools, and other amenities where people

can thrive' and 'Meet housing goals set by state mandates and regional priorities' being near the top. Participants were allowed to select up to two topics.

Figure 11. Objectives Topics Ranking – Virtual Community Meeting Respondents (59 responses, 29 respondents)
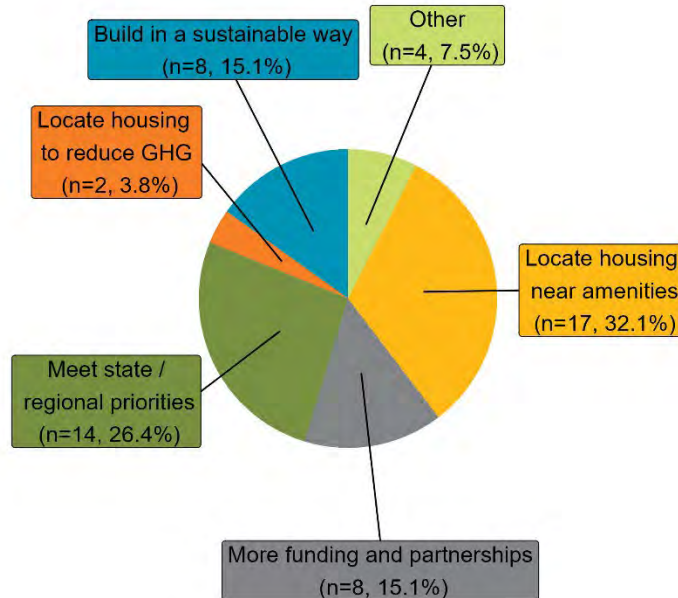
What Participants Said is Missing from the Objectives

When participants were asked what they thought was missing or should be added to the objectives, they shared responses reflective of the topic areas identified as missing for the goals and referenced above in **Section 4.2**. For this reason, those themes are not repeated in this section.

The following seven themes were found more salient within the discussion of objectives:

1. A realistic assessment of the feasibility of the Blueprint
2. Focus on middle-income housing
3. Flexible financing, sufficient funding, and incentives
4. Investments in social services
5. Expanded transit services
6. Improved coordination between agencies
7. Elevated design quality and building standards

The following is a summary of the seven themes.

1.   A realistic assessment the feasibility of the Blueprint

Some participants shared the concern that the target housing numbers will not be enough to adequately meet the current need for housing in San Diego or that targets did not adequately consider the level of need across the region. Others voiced concern that the objectives are not achievable as written and questioned how the County proposes to achieve the objectives requesting implementation details

including timelines and related costs. Some inquired about the County's ability to enforce and operationalize the objectives.

In addition, some participant responses questioned the Blueprint's feasibility based on the potential impacts from the amount of proposed development on existing communities as noted in **Item 3** of the missing Goal topics listed in **Section 4.2**. Others cited the high cost related to achieving the objectives as a reason to consider the objectives as infeasible.

2.   *Focus on middle-income housing*

Feedback included recommendations to promote and incentivize middle-income and workforce housing to complement low-income housing production efforts citing concerns for the needs of the middle/working class that "is often getting missed in much of this." Participants shared that the impact of the region's cost of living is significant for this population and the housing programs or other cost-of-living aid options are limited or wholly non-existent in comparison to what is available for low/very low-income persons. In addition, while developer incentives may exist for low-income, affordable housing projects and the return-on-investment present for high-end, luxury housing, there is little drive for housing developers to pursue middle-income housing developments. Respondents saw this as a root cause for the displacement of many San Diegans, specifically its "young, educated, and skilled workforce."

3.   *Flexible financing, sufficient funding, and incentives*

Recommendations to incentivize housing development through financial incentives such as density bonuses, tax reductions, tax credits, subsidies for land and construction materials including sustainable materials, and the reduction or elimination of development impact fees were shared for both the low- and middle-income development. Some participants shared that to tie into sustainable development, incentives could be applied to developments that align with the County's greenhouse gas reduction goals and located in infill areas. Incentives for labor trades to expand the pool of labor in the region were also suggested. In addition, participants suggested that the County offer developers and landlords flexible financing options with extended repayment periods and that such options be extended to individuals and families to facilitate home ownership and "help more families become homeowners." It was recommended that the County pursue diverse financing sources to implement these efforts.

4.   *Investments in social services*

"In the creation of low-income housing options for vulnerable populations (like seniors), consider including social services, medical, transportation and additional supportive resources within the complexes or close by to help keep people housed, healthy, and avoid homelessness."

Many participants voiced the need for supportive programming including access to physical and mental health, medical, substance abuse, transportation, and other social services available within affordable housing communities. Participants included recommendations for requiring participation in service programs as part of the requirements for eligibility within housing assistance programs. Some participations urged the County to prioritize social services related to access to education and employment support over housing aid citing lack of education and employment as root causes of homelessness and displacement. Suggestions for workforce programs included partnerships with local non-profits such as the Conservation Corps and other trade skill schools, regional and local boards (i.e. Chamber of Commerce) for job development and mentorship programming, and local unions to expand apprenticeship programs.

5. *Expanded transit services*

Participants shared the significant need for public transportation in the region to facilitate affordable commute options and advocated for the expansion of mass transit infrastructure in the region specifically "where there's really bad public transit options like north or east counties." Examples given by participants included Escondido, El Cajon, Casa de Oro, and Rancho San Diego, as well as major San Diego job centers in the central and western portions of the county and along the I-15 corridor. In addition, participants recommended transit improvements such as increased service and reliability on existing routes and lines, the reduction or elimination of fares, and increased safety measures to facilitate and promote increased ridership. While some noted the high cost to pursue such an expansion of service, others noted that without it, the goals and objectives would not be achieved as written.

6. *Improved coordination between agencies*

Participants voiced concerns about the level of coordination between housing agencies and local jurisdictions and suggested considering the centralization of these efforts as critical to success. Participants shared that the "objectives should include some way to centralize and coordinate the goals and objectives of this effort" between agencies, non-profits, and development companies.

7. *Elevated design quality and building standards*

While many participants provided recommendations for expediting the development of affordable housing, others cautioned against doing so without sufficient focus on quality design and sustainable building standards. These participants emphasized that it is not enough to build the housing units as housing is tied closely to mental and physical health; therefore, affordable housing communities should promote livability, safety, and quality of life through architectural design, landscaping, sustainable materials, and building standards. Some participants shared that "uninspired high-rise" projects are not carefully planned could have a "detrimental impact on the whole community."

What Participants Said About Opportunities to Implement the Objectives

When participants were asked about possible opportunities to help implement the objectives, many repeated the recommendations as outlined in the following sections:

Section 4.2 Goals Missing, items:

- 4. Reducing barriers to development
- 5. Increased regulations to promote affordable housing development and environmental protections
- 6. Expanded considerations for affordable housing locations
- 10. Separate equity and sustainability goals

Section 4.3 Objectives Missing, items:

- 3. Flexible financing, sufficient funding, and developer incentives
- 5. Expanded transit services

Salient responses also fell within the following three new categories:

1. Pursue financing and funding solutions
2. Pursue partnerships with differing entities for specific housing development and social service programming goals
3. Allow for property conversions and modifications

The following is a summary of ideas proposed by participants for the three new opportunity categories.

1. *Pursue financing and funding solutions*

- Reduce costs/provide incentives including:

  o Reduced development fees
  o Reduced property taxes
  o Low-cost/no-cost public land leases
  o Tax credits including those facilitated by TCAC (Tax Credit Allocation Committee) for projects in high-opportunity areas
  o Tax incentives for developers and landlords
  o Tax incentives for specific forms of housing and residents, such as shared living for persons with disabilities or small business owners who house the homeless
  o Development incentives including density bonus

- Provide subsidies for:

  o Land including public lands
  o Construction materials
  o Building renovations
  o Development upgrades
  o Building upgrades including sustainable materials
  o Other development-related costs

- Source funds from:

  o Endowments
  o Private contributions/donations of land and funds
  o Mission-driven philanthropies
  o Large areas of employers with a high amount of low-wage workers
  o City and county general funds by setting aside 10% of general fund revenues to build or preserve rent-restricted affordable homes
  o Potential revenue generators, such as beach parking and commercial linkage fees

- Align public funding sources to prioritize affordable housing efforts, including funding from:

  o Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
  o HOME Investment Partnerships Program Grants (HOME)
  o Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

- o   American Rescue Plan Program (ARP)
- o   HOME Investment Partnerships American Rescue Plan Program (HOME-ARP)
- o   Continuum of Care (CoC)

2. *Pursue partnerships with differing entities for specific housing development and social service programming goals, where mentioned:*

- Regional housing agencies including the San Diego Housing Federation to provide informational programs for developers on financing opportunities
- National Parks Service to provide housing for trainees
- Non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, and non-profit-owned rental housing providers (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, Lucky Duck Foundation, Jewish Community Foundation's giv4 Initiative, Funders Together to End Homelessness (FTEH), San Diego Homeless-Experienced Advocacy and Leadership (HEAL) Network, Center for Innovation and Resources)
- Rental property owners' associations
- Realtor associations
- Large employers (i.e. Amazon, Walmart, Qualcomm) to explore modern versions of company housing in addition to job development program opportunities
- Private landowners

  > *"I control 27+ acres in an infill location. I would love to partner with the County to deliver 500+ units in one project. It's a start."*

- Community Land Trusts to explore options for low-income residents to be part of developing city-owned land in pursuit of homeownership
- Limited equity cooperatives
- Conservation Corps and other trade skill schools
- Regional and local boards (i.e. Chamber of Commerce) for job development and mentorship programming
- Local unions to expand apprenticeship programs
- Faith-based organizations (i.e. Catholic ministries and Christian churches) to develop housing on their property
- Providers of solar, renewable energy, water capture, grey water, etc., infrastructure and programming to pursue green building development
- Local school districts to explore surplus property and potential funding sources including Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, (ESSER III), McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and Project SERV funds
- Utility companies including SDGE to explore surplus property and opportunities to streamline utility connections, and the availability and affordability of service
- Other government and public agencies, such as SANDAG and the City of San Diego, specifically related to the use of surplus public land and alignment of policies

3. Allow for property conversions and modifications

- Repurpose surplus public property in the region owned by the following public entities:

    o Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)
    o North County Transit District (NCTD)
    o School district property
    o Caltrans
    o Municipal golf courses
    o US Navy
    o US Marine Corps
    o County and incorporated cities in the region

- Repurpose unused or underused commercial spaces, such as:

    o Office buildings
    o Strip malls
    o Shopping malls
    o Parking lots
    o Warehouses

- Acquire and repurpose other residential properties, such as:

    o Vacant or abandoned property
    o Foreclosed property

- Allow property modifications to better accommodate more housing, such as:
    o Single-family housing to multi-unit housing
    o Construction of Accessory Dwelling Units and tiny homes
    o Upzoning
    o Height modifications

- Allow for more "creative" housing types including:
    "Stop thinking so small and conventional. Create new ideas. Create what works for each individual city or area."
    o Small scale with on-site management and support services
    o Modular units
    o Tiny homes
    o Straw bale homes
    o Shared housing
    o Shared lots

What Participants Said About Barriers to the Objectives

When asked what barriers to achieving the objectives may exist, participants repeated themes already captured within the discussion of areas of concern and missing objectives. That said, one new theme (1 listed below) and three (2,3,4 listed below) topics found within previously listed themes (4. 2 Goals Missing themes 4, 5, 6, and 10 and 5. 3 Objectives Missing 3, and Objectives Opportunities 1) rose further to the top within the discussion of barriers than within the previous responses. The four themes include:

1. Public perceptions of affordable housing
2. Availability of suitable land for development
3. High financial and environmental costs of development
4. Limited financing options and funding as issues

Many responses within these four theme categories were also used by participants to question the feasibility of the goals and objectives stating that as written, the objectives cannot be achieved or fall short of meeting the housing needs of San Diegans (also referred to in Section 4.3, Objectives Missing Item 1).

The following is a summary of the barrier theme categories.

1. *Public perceptions of affordable housing*

Participants noted that affordable housing developments are not desired in all communities. Participants shared that some public perceptions of affordable housing often captured by the term "NIMBY-ism" referring to "Not in My Backyard" will be a likely barrier to the County's pursuit to facilitate affordable housing production. Perceptions cited included:

- Fear of negative impacts on community character, specifically for single-family, low-density neighborhoods
- Fear of negative impacts on parking and area infrastructure such as roads and utilities
- Fear of diminished community and property safety
- Concern for infringement on property rights including the right to own a car
- Concern for negative impacts on existing quality of life
- Concern for limitations to landlord rights
- Reluctancy toward increased density, specifically multi-unit development
- Reluctancy to incorporate affordable housing within wealthier, more expensive neighborhoods
- Concern that affordable housing properties will be mismanaged by third parties, "quickly become deteriorated", and represent sources of community concerns including community safety and building aesthetics

2. Availability of suitable land for development

"Housing is only 1 small part. If you can't afford utilities and there is real risk for SDCounty to have water crisis how can the County justify building more structures. Our County does not have the infrastructure to support who is already here."

Participants cited San Diego County's limited availability of suitable land for the development of the proposed number of units as a significant challenge. From "built out" urban areas whose infrastructure and public services cannot handle the increased density to rural areas with complicated geographies, absent infrastructure, limited amenities and distant location from job centers, and high-priced land across the region, specifically the coastal areas, many participants find it hard to see how the region can adequately pursue affordable housing development. While some participants combined this potential barrier with the opportunity to repurpose existing properties as outlined in the previous section, others consider eminent domain and other mandates for the redevelopment of such spaces critical and not without their own barriers including cost, political will, and high conflict between competing interests.

3. High financial and environmental costs of development

As noted in previous sections, the high cost of living in the region paired with the high cost and long timeline of development was identified by participants as significant barriers to the objectives yet some caution against the risks of incentivizing development, specifically at the cost of the County's sustainability efforts, the environment, and safety of current residents in disaster-prone areas. In addition to the concerns covered in Section 4.2. Goals Missing, Item 4 related to barriers to housing production, and Items 5 and 10 related to sustainability, participants shared that:

- Projects developed by the government compared to the private sector take longer due to governmental inefficiencies. These inefficiencies are reported at all phases of project development from procurement to completion, and for some participants, they represent the root cause of funding loss from investors and developers backing out of otherwise feasible projects. With such high costs for development, participants cited that the reluctance of financial institutions to back development projects is absent considering low profit margins. Without efforts to reduce the cost of development through financial incentives, many participants did not find the objectives as outlined feasible within the current market environment.
- Within the discussion of pro-development incentives and policies, other participants cautioned against the potential for concerning developer practices to lobby for "leapfrog-style" development of "luxury homes in fire-prone areas" and a "disregard for environmental considerations" in direct opposition to the County's sustainability pursuits such as the Multiple Species Conservation Plan.
- New development policies such as the City of San Diego's Sustainable Development Areas (SDAs) were cited as "standing to increase VMT and GHG emissions, not reduce them" and to discourage infill development near transit. Participants shared that such policies will likely lose the City potential funding opportunities.

4. Limited financing and funding sources

"The most crucial barrier is financing. At this point the State and the County needs to start financing these affordable units directly when private developers choose not to."

Limited financing and funding sources were repeatedly mentioned as barriers. Beyond what has been previously noted, participants shared that decreased tax rolls, financing of competing priorities such as police, infrastructure, and capital improvement, in addition to budgets cuts, discontinuance of specific

33

funding sources, interest rate increases, existing funding models specifically single-year funding, and the current economy are all likely to make pursuit of the objectives a significant challenge and would require the assistance of the State and federal governments.

4.4. Overall Need for More Information and Clarity

Of the Expanded Survey participants, 11% responded that they were 'not sure' if the goals reflect what is needed to respond to the affordable housing needs of San Diegans, and 33% responded that they were 'not sure' if the objectives adequately support the goals. In addition, participants shared several comments critiquing the complex language and concepts used in the Blueprint and an insufficient level of detail. This suggests a desire for clear and simple language, easy-to-follow concepts, and sufficient detail to understand how the Blueprint's goals and objectives will be achieved. In addition, some participants cited communication, engagement, and education related to affordable housing topics as critical to the overall success of the Blueprint.

Participant Questions

There were 190 responses across all engagement activities that included questions about the goals and objectives. The main themes for the questions asked included:

1. Blueprint terminology and concepts
2. Current county and state housing policies and programs
3. Blueprint consideration

The following is a summary of the three themes.

1. Blueprint terminology and concepts

Participants asked for clarifications about specific terms, including:
- Definition of terms including:
  - Affordable housing
  - Amenities
  - Equity
  - High opportunity areas
  - Housing affordability
  - Income classifications (very low, low, moderate)
  - Mandate
  - Open space
  - Sustainability
  - Vehicle miles traveled
  - Vulnerable property
  - Vulnerable population
- Clarification of concepts including:
  - Regional Housing Needs Assessment targets
    - How were figures determined?
  - "Housing for All"
    - Who is included?
    - What kinds of housing?

- ▪ Eligibility criteria and applicant processes for proposed new housing and programs
  - o Difference between "housing for all" and "promote equity, inclusion, etc.?"
- • Requests for details related to:
  - o How the goals and objectives were developed, and the sources considered
  - o How goals and objectives will be achieved
    - ▪ Specified funding sources
    - ▪ Responsible parties
    - ▪ Implementation strategies and related timelines
  - o Geographic applicability of the Blueprint (incorporated vs. unincorporated)
  - o Success indicators/metrics
  - o Associated standards for equity, inclusion, sustainability, and affordability

2. *Current county and state housing policies and programs*

Some respondents posed questions regarding current county and state housing policies and programs. These included requests related to the availability, application requirements, and eligibility criteria for programs with some reflecting individual requests for assistance. Questions also dealt with development policies and requirements, some specific to individual interests related to a specific property or development project.

3. *Blueprint considerations*

Respondents also used questions as an opportunity to share topics they believe the County should consider or to inquire if the County had considered certain issues or solutions in the development of the Blueprint. Some examples include:

- • Could increasing the housing supply rapidly benefit our local economy better than raising the minimum wage?
- • How do you resolve VMT with an unincorporated county?
- • What about tiny homes?
- • Where are the rules about not discriminating against the Housing Provider?
- • Why not use a mix of public owned and private owned?
- • Is there infrastructure to support the units?
- • Will they include parks and amenities that make residents happy and proud to care for their homes?
- • Is there community support?

Complexity of Language

Reflected in the salient themes for the questions and additional participant feedback is a focus on the Blueprint's language and structure. Participants often found the goals and objectives to be vague and too complexly worded to adequately comprehend. Some categorized the terminology used as "foreign". In addition, some participants noted that the goals and objectives do not include sufficient information, specificity, or clarity to allow the respondent to provide an informed response. For example, as related to Objective 6, one respondent stated that "No one understands what that paragraph means so how can it be implemented?" Another shared that Objectives 6,7,8 were "practically the same" with insufficient information to help the participant make distinctions between the three. Participants recommended

providing clear definitions for all terms and concepts, avoiding technical jargon, and fully outlining proposed concepts as necessary steps to improving the document.

Ongoing Communication and Engagement

Participants also stressed the importance of ongoing community engagement related to the County's housing efforts. Participants encouraged the County to practice transparency, expand engagement across all communities and in other languages, and increase the representation of communities in housing development discussions. Advanced communication and engagement were reported by some as critical to the Blueprint's efforts. Combined with educational efforts to promote a greater understanding of housing topics, some participants shared that the Blueprint's goals "will mean nothing if the core of the community doesn't understand that the benefits far outweigh their fears."

5. Data Limitations

There were several limitations to the data included in this report, including:

- Results are not generalizable to the County's population and are only reflective of those who participated and contributed feedback through the engagement opportunities outlined in this report.
- The survey prioritized collecting participants' information based on geography, past participation in County housing-related discussions, interests, and associations. Beyond this data, which was limited to a portion of the participants across all engagement activities, the community surveys did not collect additional information about the demographics of the survey respondents.
- Preferred language was collected from respondents if they chose to register on the Engage San Diego County page where the surveys were hosted. Site registration was not required to access and respond to the survey. Most of the survey respondents chose not to register on the site (356/381 or 93%). Of the 25 who did, all indicated English as their preferred language.
- There were many ways to interpret and organize the data.
- All feedback was considered equally, but only the most salient themes could be highlighted due to time and resource constraints.
- Because this report presents the most salient themes, patterns shared by a few are not presented.
- It was difficult to quantify results from open-ended responses due to the similarity of some codes and themes and differences in interpretation by reviewers.
- Some individuals may have participated in more than one method of engagement and may be counted more than once due to some engagement methods being anonymous (unable to identify unique respondents).
- For the open-ended questions, survey participants did not necessarily answer the questions being asked. For instance, if being asked about their likes about the goals, participants expressed their concerns. The researchers did their best to document the themes for these responses as well even when they did not correspond with the question being asked.

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

APPENDIX 3

SURVEY & ZOOM POLLS: QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

## Appendix 3. Survey & Zoom Polls: Questions and Responses

Survey

The County conducted a survey from April 26th to May 12th, receiving input from 99 respondents regarding recommended Strategic Actions and preferences for tracking progress and updates. The term Strategic Action was later revised to Strategy, but the language used in the survey is kept here.

Question 1: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The 8 recommended Strategic Actions outlined above are important to address the county's housing needs.

The survey asked respondents to state their agreement levels on whether the 8 recommended Strategic Actions meet the County's housing needs. As indicated in Figure 4, a majority of respondents definitely agreed (47%) or somewhat agreed (27%) that the recommended Strategic Actions met the County's housing needs.

Figure 1. Agreement Levels that the 8 Recommended Strategic Actions Address the County's Housing Needs (N=97)
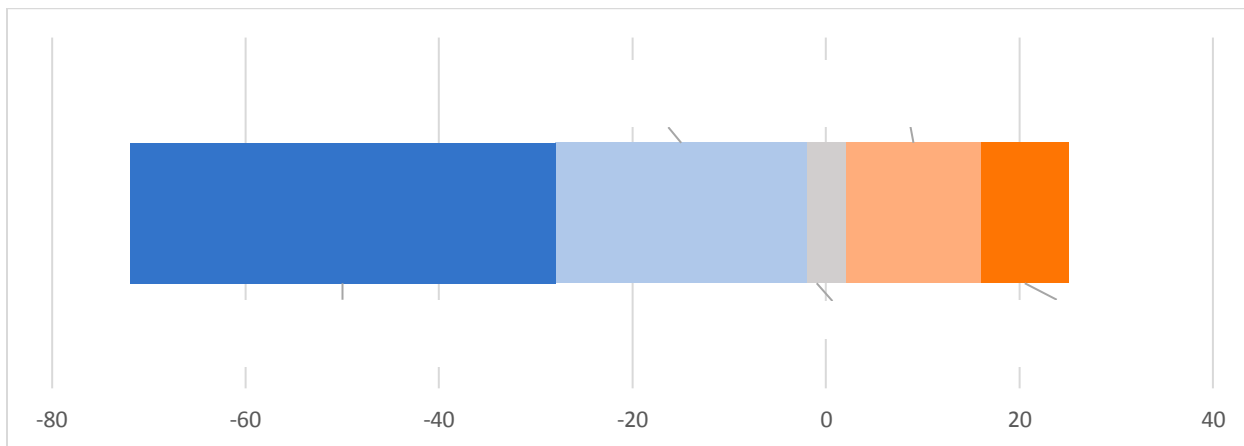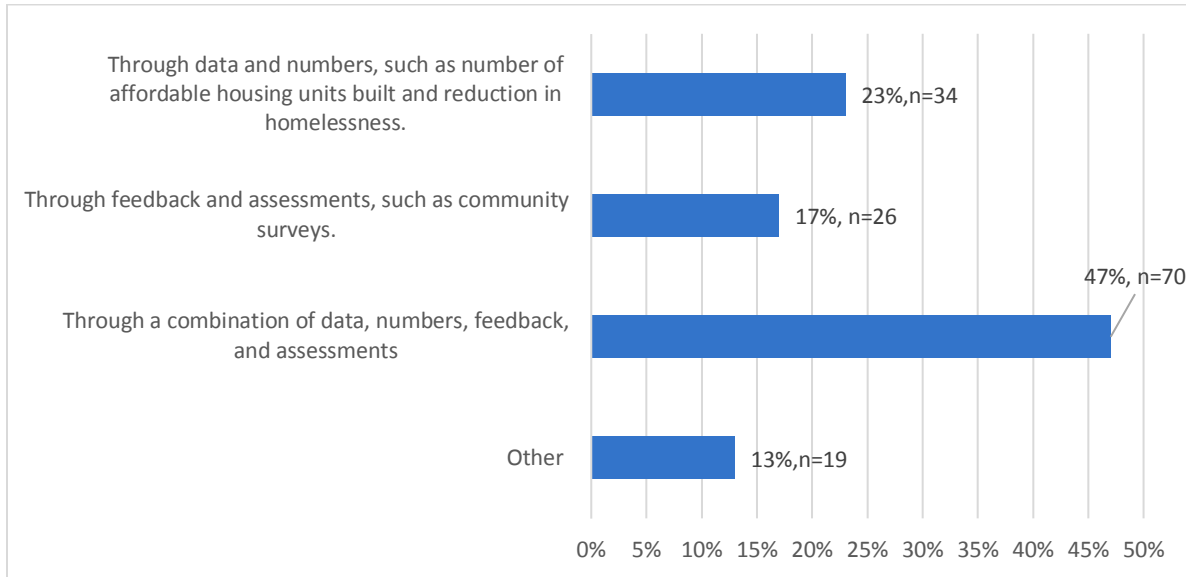

Question 2: Are there any changes to the recommended Strategic Actions that the County should consider? If yes, please specify which recommendation by including the number(s) from above. Leave blank if no changes.

Suggested changes to Strategic Actions (N=34)

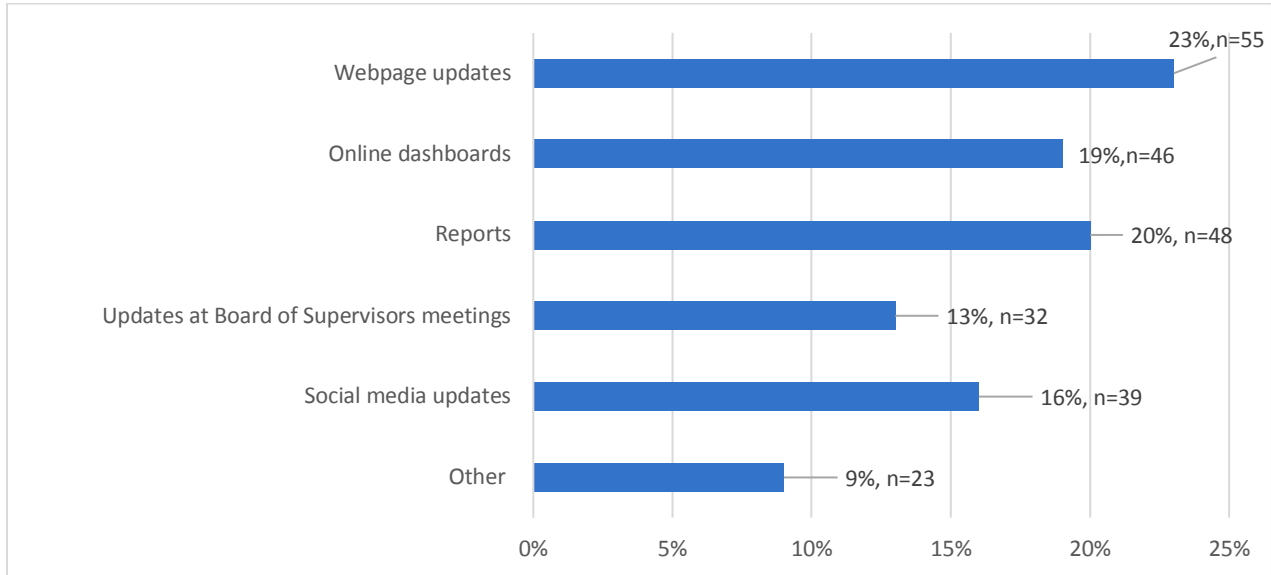Suggestions are included in the overall feedback above in Section IV. Findings.

Question 3: How do you feel the County should be measuring progress of the Housing Blueprint? (Select all that apply)

Figure 2. How the County Should Measure Progress (N=149)

Through data and numbers, such as number of affordable housing units built and reduction in homelessness. — 23%, n=34

Through feedback and assessments, such as community surveys. — 17%, n=26

Through a combination of data, numbers, feedback, and assessments — 47%, n=70

Other — 13%, n=19

Question 4: How would you like to receive updates on the progress of the Housing Blueprint? (Select all that apply)

Figure 3. How to Receive Updates on Progress (N=243)

Webpage updates — 23%, n=55
Online dashboards — 19%, n=46
Reports — 20%, n=48
Updates at Board of Supervisors meetings — 13%, n=32
Social media updates — 16%, n=39
Other — 9%, n=23

Question 5: Is there any other feedback you would like to share regarding the Housing Blueprint? Leave blank if no other feedback.

Other feedback regarding the Housing Blueprint (N=34)

Other feedback included in the overall feedback above in Section IV. Findings.

Question 6: Which of the following statements best describes you?

Of the 99 respondents to the survey, 63% indicated that they reside within an incorporated city in the County, while 9% reported living in an unincorporated area. Analysis of the ZIP Code data collected reveals that participants and respondents were distributed throughout the region.

Figure 4. Participation by Location (N=99)

28% (n=28)

9% (n=9)

63% (n=62)

- ■ I live in an unincorporated area of the county.
- ■ I live in an incorporated city in the county.
- ■ I don't know if I live in an unincorporated area of the county or an incorporated city in the county.
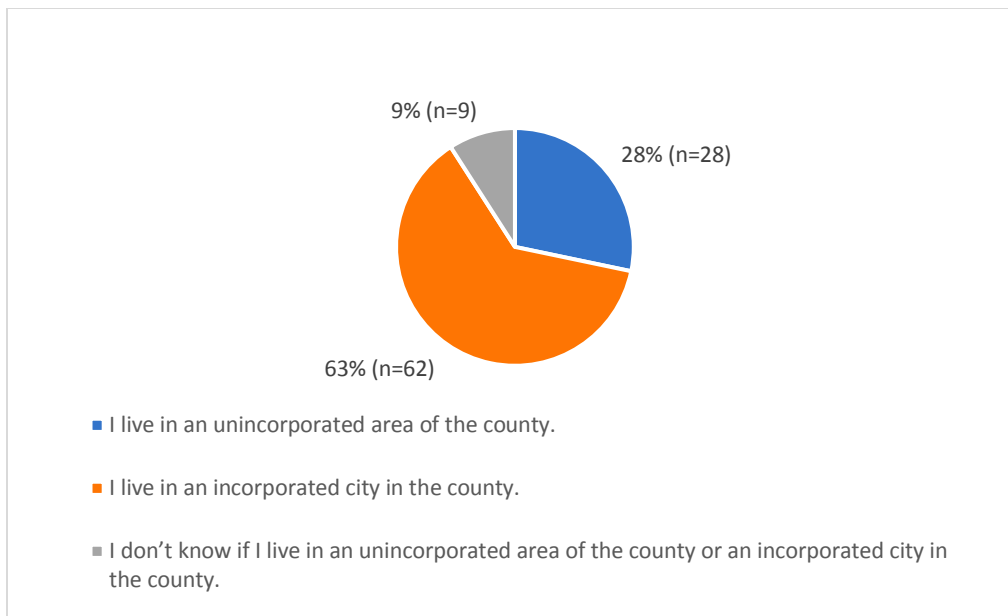
Question 7: Which of the following statements best describes you? Select all that apply.

Respondents to the survey were asked to select all applicable characteristics as listed in Figure 3 to best describe themselves. Survey respondents were able to select multiple characteristics.

Figure 5. Participation by Self-Identified Categories (N=152)
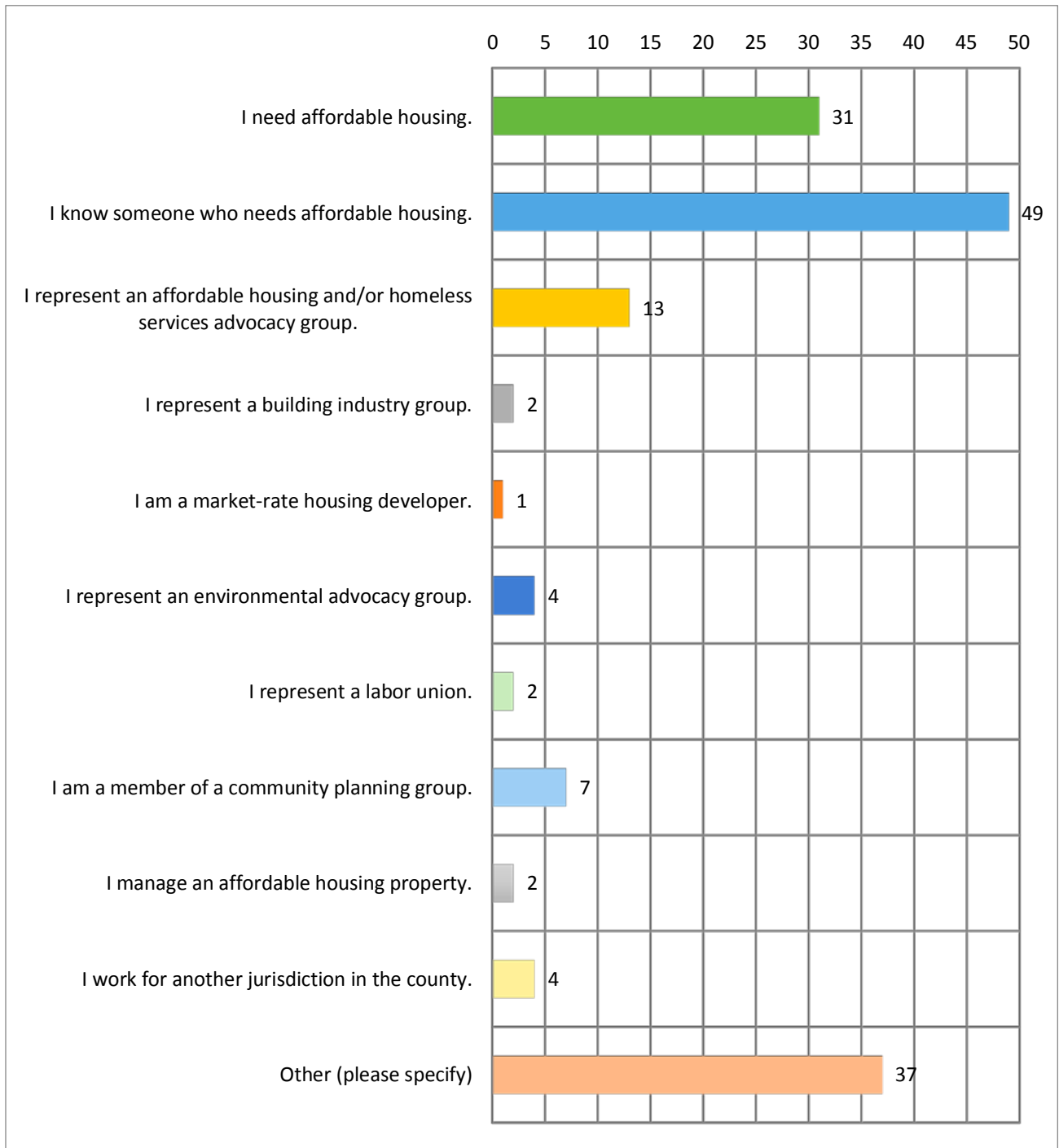
Of the 99 total respondents to the survey, 37% of respondents (N=37) selected at least one "Other'" category when describing themselves.

Table 5. Participation in Self-Identified "Other" Category (N=37)		
"Other" Category	Number	Percent
Citizen/Resident/Community Member	10	27%

Professional or Expert (Example: Homeless Service Provider, Researcher, Developer, Real Estate, etc.)	10	27%
Individual with Specific Needs or Experiences (Single Parent, Veteran, etc.)	7	19%
Homeowner	5	14%
Individual Experiencing Homelessness	3	8%
Housing Advocate	2	5%

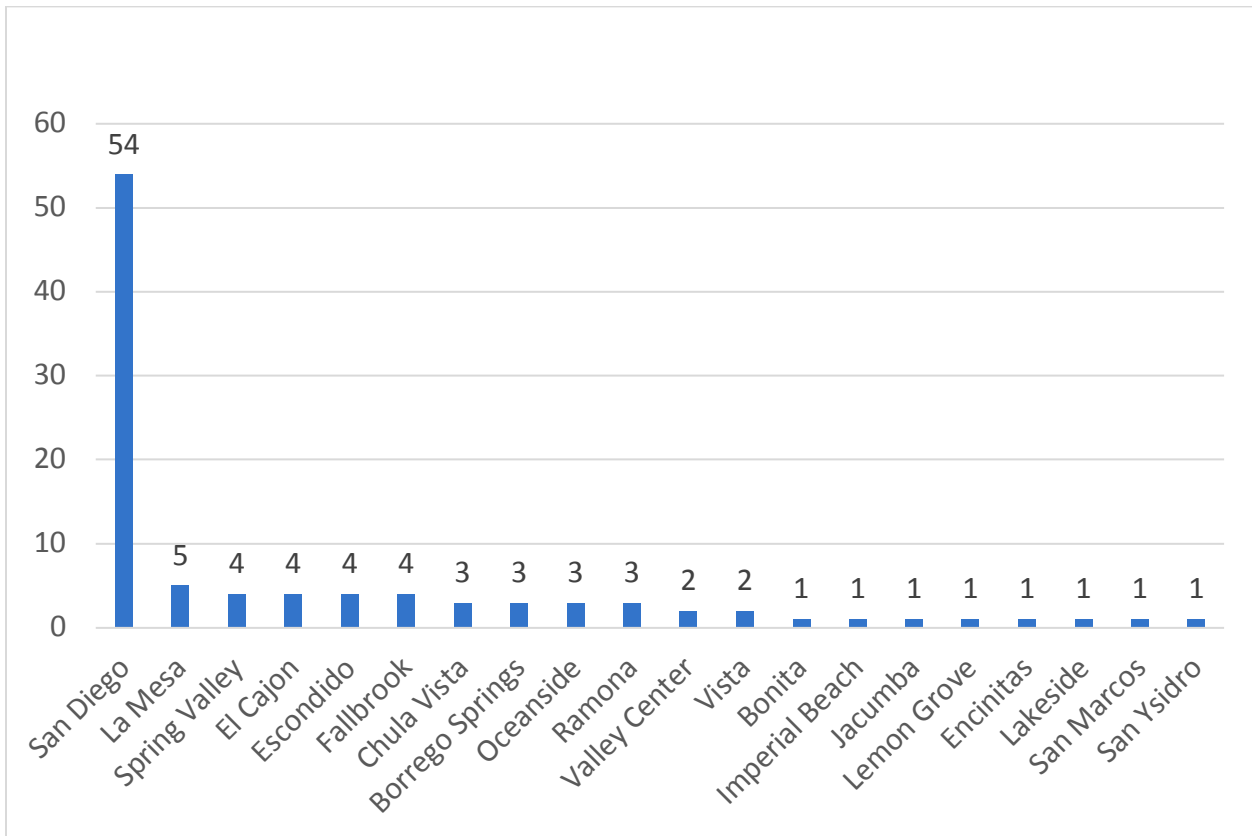*Question 8: Which of the following statements best describes you?*

Survey respondents were asked to select all that applied when asked how they would describe their level of participation in housing discussions with the County. According to the survey, nearly 73% were first-time participants/respondents in public feedback activities related to County housing efforts since January 2019. About 17% had contributed feedback at least one other time, and 10% had contributed three or more times.

Figure 6. Participation in County Housing Efforts (N=99)
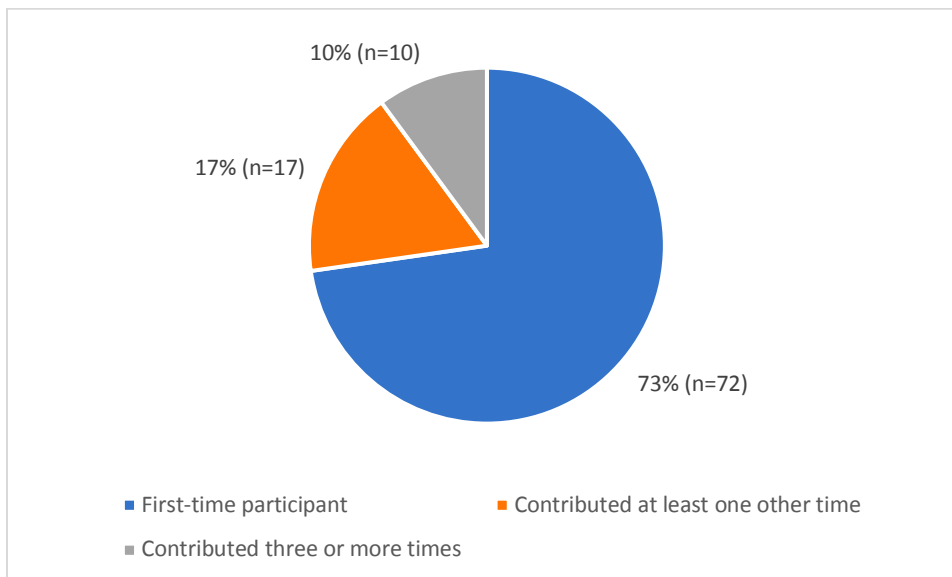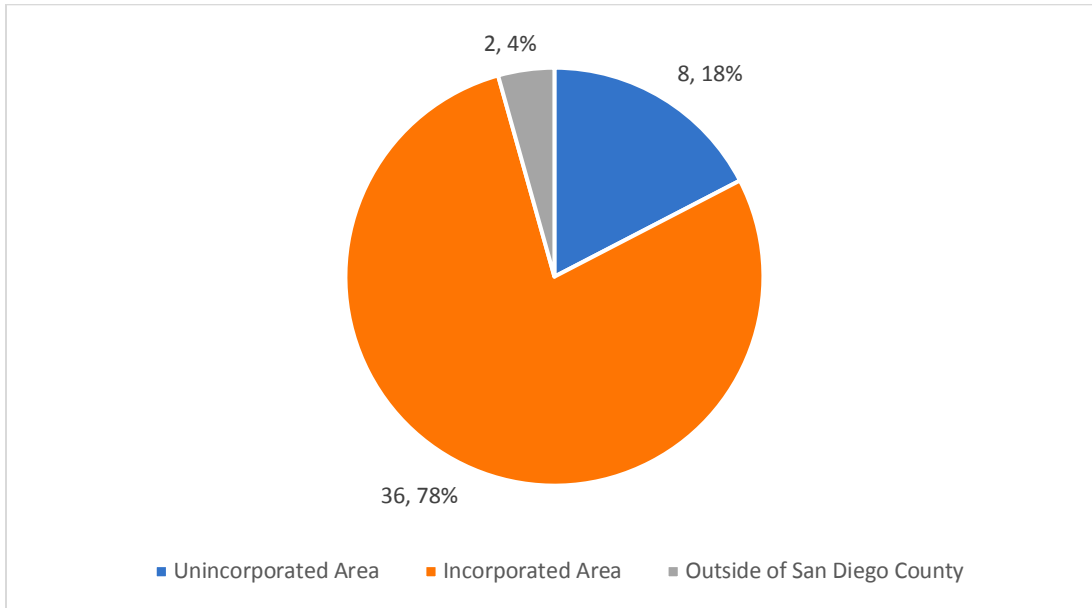

Question 9: Enter your ZIP Code.

Figure 7. Zip Code (N=99)

Zoom Polls

1. *Which of the following statements best describes you?*
   a. I live in an unincorporated area of the County
   b. I live in an incorporated area of the County
   c. I live outside of San Diego County
   d. I don't know

Figure 8. Zoom Poll 1: Geographic Location (N=46)

Of the 46 Community Session participants (N=46) that participated in Zoom Poll 1, 78% (N=36) were from incorporated areas, 18% (N=8) were from unincorporated areas, and 4% (N=2) were from outside San Diego County.

2. *Have you participated or provided feedback in earlier engagement opportunities regarding the Housing Blueprint?*
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

Figure 9. Zoom Poll 2: Earlier Housing Blueprint Engagement (N=42)
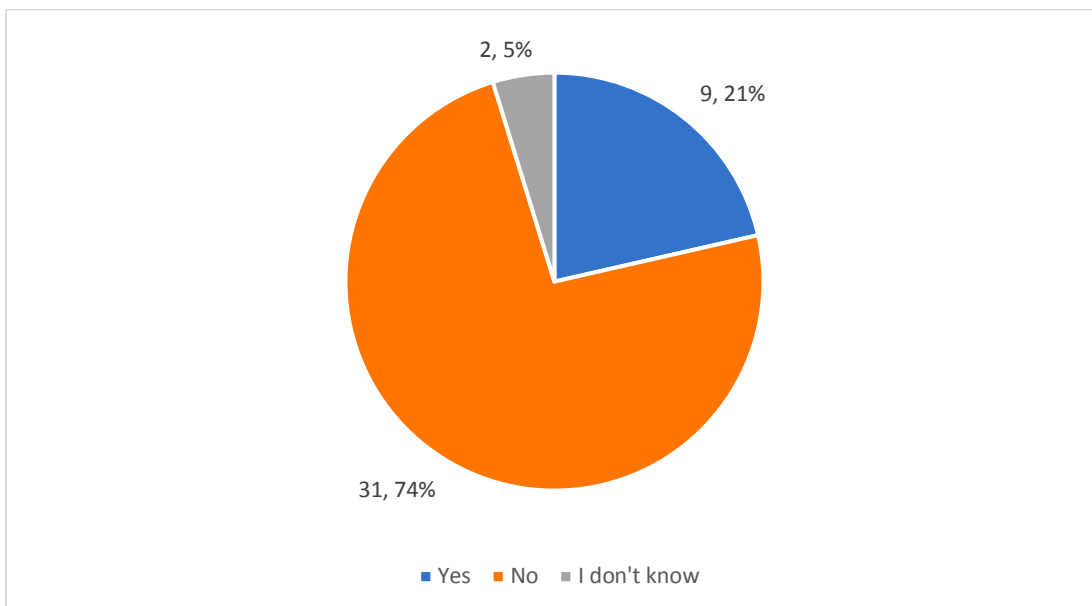
Community Session participants (N=42) were also asked if they had provided feedback in earlier engagement opportunities. 21% (N=9) said they had provided earlier feedback, while 74% (N=31) said they did not provide feedback and 5% (N=2) said they didn't know.

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

APPENDIX 4

METHODOLOGY: ANALYSIS

Appendix 4. Methodology: Analysis

The project team used specific methods to systematically review and interpret the qualitative data gathered from various community engagement activities.

1. Documentation: The project team organized data collected from each method, reviewed notes and transcriptions, and summarized input.
2. Organization: The data was meticulously cleaned up and organized, removing any irrelevant or redundant information and ensuring consistency in formatting and labeling.
3. Identification of Common Themes: The feedback received was analyzed, and themes, topics, patterns, differences, and similarities were identified within and across the data sources.
4. Cross-Reference with Other Sources: The data was compared with other sources of information, such as quantitative data or external reports. Triangulation was used to validate the findings by comparing the results from multiple data sources.
5. Evaluation Against Best Practices: The qualitative data was cross-referenced with industry best practices in the housing sector to assess alignment and identify areas for improvement or innovation.
6. Interpretation of Feedback: The feedback was interpreted in relation to the objectives of the Housing Blueprint, and key insights and recommendations were synthesized for review and consideration by the project team.
7. Incorporation: The feedback was provided to the project team, informing the development of the recommended Strategic Actions and the refinement of the Housing Blueprint. The project team prioritized feedback for incorporation and uplifted Strategic Actions to provide the greatest impact to respond to the housing affordability crisis.
8. Feedback and Findings: The feedback received has been compiled into a comprehensive report. Preliminary findings were shared with participants during some engagement activities, leading to the preparation of a final report documenting the methodologies and feedback received.

APPENDIX 5

METHODOLOGY: DATA LIMITATIONS

Appendix 5. Methodology: Data Limitations

Despite the project team's methodical approach to community engagement, this report contains several data limitations.

- Sampling Bias: The feedback provided may not accurately represent the entire community due to overrepresentation or underrepresentation of certain demographics or identities. Results reflect only those who participated and contributed feedback, and certain engagement activities (Focus Groups, Stakeholder Meetings, Working Groups) weighed heavily toward experts with technical knowledge, lived experience, or direct practice in housing affordability issues. However, it should be noted that the goal for community engagement wasn't to achieve a statistically representative sample of the County population. Instead, the goal was to prioritize input from those with deeper expertise.
- Self-Selection Bias: Participation in surveys and community sessions was likely limited to individuals actively involved in housing issues or connected to County communication channels, potentially affecting the level of responses.
- Digital Divide: Online engagement platforms may exclude those lacking internet access or digital literacy skills.
- Language and Cultural Barriers: While the County promoted public engagement opportunities in English and Spanish, there are likely different levels of engagement for non-English speakers or culturally diverse groups.
- Data Interpretation: Due to time and resource constraints, only the most significant and/or the most frequent themes from the data could be highlighted. While all feedback was considered, not all feedback was included in the development of the Blueprint.
- Duplication of Input: Some individuals may have participated in more than one method of engagement and may be counted more than once due to some engagement methods being anonymous.

APPENDIX 6

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

Appendix 6. About the Participants

To ensure comprehensive feedback, a variety of stakeholders were included throughout all Community Engagement Activities, representing a range of interests and industries, as shown below.

- Construction
- Finance and real estate
- Environmental protection
- Labor and business
- Nonprofits and direct services
- Philanthropy
- Education
- Criminal justice
- Immigration justice
- Tribal entities
- Housing advocacy
- Lived Experience
- Community investment (e.g., churches, community volunteer groups, neighborhood associations)
- County departments and stakeholders including community planning groups, boards, commissions, and committees
- Community members/members of the public
- Other regional and local governments

Demographic information was only collected from survey respondents and Community Sessions. Community Session information was collected via a voluntary Zoom poll.

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK