

Steering Committee - Item K.

Housing Policy Outline

April 11, 2021

I Justification

The SBCCOG recognizes the threat to humanity and its social structures posed by climate change caused by GHG emissions. Burning fossil fuels for mobility produce 40% to 50% of the GHG emissions in the South Bay Subregion.

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that the safety and security of the planet depends on reducing GHG emissions by half before the end of the decade.

Our commitment to control GHG emissions is the basis for the SBCCOG Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the accompanying city CAPs.

HCD and SCAG have assigned over 34,000 dwelling units (DU) to South Bay cities this decade. Based on travel patterns we have studied, meeting that target will result in 58,000 fossil fueled vehicles being driven by the occupants of those new DUs by the end of the decade -- at the same time GHG emissions must be reduced by 50%.

Recent and proposed legislation has failed to address the need to control carbon produced by new residents' mobility choices.

Worse, housing legislation currently under consideration by the CA legislature is reducing the ability of our cities to plan for housing in a way that will help reduce GHG emissions.

For example:

- Allowing "by-right" development eliminates the ability of local planners to site and size housing projects, both policies are critical to containing GHG emissions. In addition, over-riding local ordinances with state rules is inherently un-democratic since those local ordinances have been adopted through state-mandated public participation
- Bills such as AB 115, SB 6, SB 15, AB 1401 (and others) include development details that are legislative over-reach and are hindering our cities' ability to protect the health and safety of our residents. Parking policies, building height, percent affordable requirements, setbacks, etc. inhibit local planning to conform to our CAPs and should not be required.

We urge you to allow us to implement our interlocking sub-regional and local plans for using housing development coordinated with commercial redevelopment coupled with a zero emission mobility strategy that will reduce GHG emissions in compliance with state goals.

- RHNA establishes the housing volume requirement. No further legislation is needed except for policies that will support implementation of our sub-regional and city CAPs.
- When drafting new housing legislation, do not include details that will inhibit local planning responsibilities.

Implementing the SBCCOG's CAP will use housing to produce "complete neighborhoods" (15 minute city as in Paris, 20 minute neighborhoods as in Portland) with 70% trips taken by zero emission active- or micro-mobility.

II The Ask

Require Zero Emission Mobility Plans

Require developments with 4 or more units to produce a plan that describes the building infrastructure and resident programs that will lead to 50% of trips generated by the new residents being taken by a zero emission mode. Local jurisdiction will approve the plans and monitor their implementation.

Require Telework Practices

Require all employers with more than 20 employees to adopt policies and arrangements so that 50% of its employees are able to work within 3 miles of their home 2 days a week. In two years, increase that to 75% of the work force 3 days per week.

Redevelop commercial districts – Rezone not Upzone

Provide a Path to housing ownership.

Add to Demand Side Affordability

Provide housing vouchers to address lack of affordability (supply side policies will be ineffective – see supply argument below. The number of vacant units in Los Angeles County exceeds the number of homeless.

Address Homeless

Identify available public property suitable for housing; identify low cost construction options such as pre-fabricated modules and 3D printed structures.

III Arguments in Response –

- A. Claim is that GHGs are reduced by eliminating long commutes caused by HHs being forced to locate a long distance from job sites.

Consumer preferences – how to live has replaced where to live. There are options for HHs who wish to live near job sites – they are expensive and relatively small so those families choose to live with a long commute because of how they want to live. Adding density will not produce housing products those families desire. This trend has been accelerated by COVID.

- B. Claim is that density will allow families to live in resource rich neighborhoods

Ensure every community is resource-rich. People should not have to leave their own communities to seek opportunity. We must address historic inequities to ensure that all neighborhoods have sufficient public and private investment.

Employment Rich and Opportunity Areas are cited as a justification for adding housing to already crowded areas in LA and Orange Counties. It will be far more cost-effective to develop opportunity areas where people currently live. See Our Future Los Angeles; Priority #3: Ensure every community is resource-rich.

The outer areas such as Palmdale/Lancaster in north LA County and the Inland Empire currently offer opportunities for low cost housing due to relatively low land values. Riverside County has 200,000 entitlements for housing that have not been developed. The IE (San Bernardino and Riverside Counties) is the 13th largest metropolitan area in the United States with a population of over 4 million people.

Density facts – Boarnet, double density to reduce VMT by 10%; research shows upzoning increases land values and fails to produce new housing.

Supply approach to affordable housing requires monitoring.

Single family neighborhood upzoning diminishes the middle class.

More to add