For decades, our region has failed to provide enough affordable housing to meet the urgent needs of our growing population. On top of this, the state of California has mandated that San Diego needs 171,685 housing units by 2029: 3 out of 5 of those units must be affordable. We aim to address this crisis by helping cities and the County increase the amount of affordable housing being built in areas with more transportation options. This involves providing grants and giving local agencies the technical assistance, data, and resources they need to support housing development and get more housing-related funding.

Our Sustainable Communities Strategy has identified Transportation Investment Areas (TIA) which are neighborhoods with lots of current or planned public transit and other sustainable transportation choices. By supporting housing development in TIAs, we’re encouraging infill development while meeting our region’s climate emission reduction goals and making it easier for residents to get to where they live, work, and play.
How can our region address the housing crisis?

Some strategies include:

- Updating zoning requirements (for example, how tall buildings can be, how many units on a property, etc.) so that more housing can be built near transit stops.
- Helping developers reduce costs and save time by making building guidelines clearer and streamlining permit processes.
- Setting up programs to waive certain fees for affordable housing developments.
- Offering more programs for property owners to build Accessory Dwelling Units (also known as granny flats).
- Using publicly owned land for affordable housing.

What else has SANDAG been working on and what are we considering next?

- Providing templates, toolkits, webinars, and other guidance to support our local jurisdictional staff through our Housing Technical Assistance Program.
- Developing strategies to keep existing residents from being displaced by new development and transportation improvements.
- Hosting educational forums on housing-related topics.
- Advocating for and going after state and federal grants for housing planning and production.
- Studying how local government can reclaim a percentage of increases in land value (due to public investment in things like transportation and other public works) to reinvest in affordable housing.
- Providing grants to local jurisdictions to support housing and transportation planning and infrastructure projects.
- Future work includes developing a tribal housing program in coordination with Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association (SCTCA) to provide up to $2 million to help tribes meet current and future housing needs. We are also collaborating with the two transit agencies in the county, Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and North County Transit District (NCTD), to support activities that advance affordable housing and redevelopment at transit hubs.

Learn more

Visit SANDAG.org/projects-and-programs/regional-initiatives/housing-and-land-use for more information.