

Housing

- SANDAG promotes smart growth policies that limit urban sprawl, and better integrate land uses.
- Housing is a key element of the SANDAG smart growth strategy, along with the economy, transportation, the environment, and fiscal reform.
- SANDAG promotes strategies to increase the supply of homes to keep pace with demand.
- New communities must be located close to shopping, transit, jobs, schools, parks, and other facilities.
- Infill development must enhance existing neighborhoods and improve urban infrastructure.

Solving the Region's Housing Crisis

The San Diego region is facing a housing crisis. Construction is not keeping up with demand, home prices are skyrocketing, and rental rates are climbing. At the same time, our roadways are more congested, and our open space is threatened by continued sprawl in rural areas. We can meet these challenges head-on by taking bold steps to maintain our region's livability, while sustaining our economic prosperity.

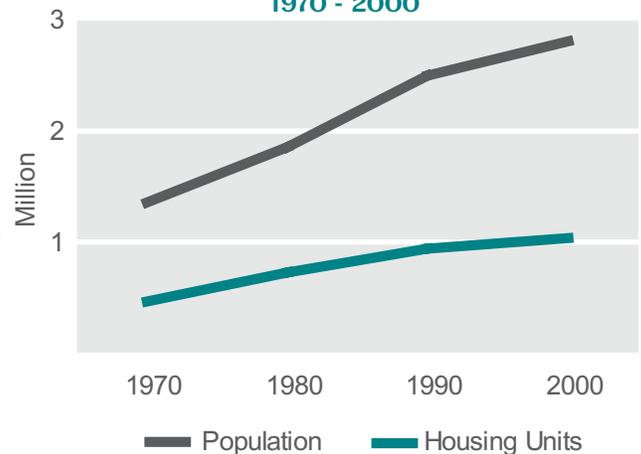
In recent years, the costs of buying and renting homes have increased dramatically, and vacancy rates are at record lows. Only 21.6 percent of homes being sold in the San Diego region are affordable to a family of four earning the median income (\$60,100). To afford the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the region (\$1,000), a worker would need to earn about \$43,000 a year. The rental vacancy rate is less than two percent.

New homes are being built, but the majority of them are single-family homes, and luxury apartments and condominiums. The result is that many residents are commuting long distances to find affordable homes, causing urban sprawl and contributing to increased traffic on our roadways.

A Regional Approach

To help address the region's housing crisis, SANDAG has established a Regional Housing Task Force to promote the need for more homes from a comprehensive, regionwide perspective. This coalition of business leaders, lenders, housing advocates, developers, realtors, elected officials, and others has identified a number of actions needed to increase the supply and affordability of homes in the San Diego region for residents of all income levels.

Increase in Housing Units and Population Growth 1970 - 2000



Implement Smart Growth Land Use Strategies

Jurisdictions should focus on encouraging smart growth projects that integrate housing, jobs, and transportation choices within communities. To increase housing choices, more multi-family homes and mixed-use projects must be built.

- Local jurisdictions should amend their land use plans and zoning codes to allow for additional housing opportunities.
- Cities must encourage construction of multi-family homes and mixed-use projects in areas near jobs and transit.

- Local jurisdictions should ensure the availability of a range of housing opportunities for all income levels.
- Local jurisdictions should promote infill development and the redevelopment of existing urban areas.

Remove Barriers to Housing Development

To successfully increase the supply of homes in the region a number of barriers to housing production must be eliminated.

- Local jurisdictions should streamline development entitlement and permit processes.
- The Regional Housing Task Force should create a strong regional voice to address construction defect litigation.
- Local jurisdictions should review development standards and infrastructure needs in older communities.
- Local jurisdictions should modify development standards and requirements to promote affordable housing.

Create Funding Sources and Incentives for Housing and Smart Growth

Developing and expanding funding sources for housing, especially affordable housing, and smart growth should be a priority.

- The region should develop and expand local funding sources for affordable housing and incentives for smart growth.
- The region should support continued and expanded funding for housing at the state and federal level.
- Private industry and other organizations should develop and contribute resources to assist in the production and financing of housing.

Implement an Education Program

Increasing public awareness on the range of solutions available to meet the region's housing needs is essential. Promoting the benefits of smart growth is a key element in making the changes needed to manage the region's growth.

The Regional Housing Task Force should:

- Implement a public information program that identifies solutions to the region's housing crisis and showcases smart growth solutions.
- Conduct tours of affordable housing developments throughout the region.
- Host public workshops on housing-related topics.
- Establish a Web site with housing-related links and information.

Public Involvement is Essential

SANDAG is developing a Regional Comprehensive Plan to address the region's current sprawl-inducing development patterns, traffic congestion challenges, and lack of housing capacity in local general and community plans. Changing the region's current development patterns to build more homes will require a great deal of effort and public support.

To learn more about the region's housing crisis and the Regional Comprehensive Plan efforts, please visit www.sandag.org, or call (619) 595-5300. SANDAG is available to make a presentation to your group, please give us a call.