



July 18, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Wieben Stock  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO "NO COUNTY FOR OLD BOOMERS" REPORT TO  
GRAND JURY, IN COMPLIANCE WITH PENAL CODE 933.05(a) & (b)

Dear Judge Weiben Stock:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Orange County Grand Jury request of April 25, 2008, regarding the report "No County for old Boomers – When Orange County Baby Boomers Retire, Where will they Live?" The City of Laguna Beach recognizes that the senior citizen population is growing rapidly, and supports the increasing need to provide affordable senior housing and services. In order to address senior citizen housing and service concerns, the City has adopted a number of housing policies and actions, as outlined in Chapter VII of the City's Housing Element. Following are the City's responses to the Grand Jury findings, as requested in the April 25, 2008 letter:

***F-1 The Housing Elements for the cities and County of Orange do not reflect that the number of affordable senior housing units in Orange County will not accommodate the projected population.***

The City has recognized the growing number of senior citizens and the related need for affordable housing and senior services in previous and current Housing Elements. However, there continues to be an inadequate supply of affordable senior housing to accommodate the current and future need. The City's Housing Element identifies senior citizens as a "high priority with regard to housing opportunities," and has assisted in the development of 111 long-term affordable senior citizen housing units. In order to address the existing deficiency of affordable senior housing stock, the Housing Element sets forth policies and actions to encourage and facilitate the development of affordable senior citizen and special needs housing. Policies are also in place to retain market-rate rental housing, which is the City's lower cost housing that is not cost/rent restricted.

***F-2 The Housing Elements for the County of Orange and the cities do not focus sufficiently on or analyze the population growth and housing needs of the aging baby boomer generation.***

Although the primary focus of the Housing Program has been on the current senior population, rather than on the baby boomer population that will be turning age 65 beginning in 2011 through 2029, the policies in place to benefit seniors will extend to the Baby Boomer population. In

addition, the City's Housing Element evaluates the baby boomer population and acknowledges the importance of affordable housing and services for this population.

***F-3 Not all Housing Elements are available online for easy access by the public.***

The City of Laguna Beach Housing Element is available and can be easily accessed on the City's website.

***F-4 Municipalities are not proactive enough in encouraging the development of affordable senior housing.***

The City of Laguna Beach designates affordable senior citizen housing as a "high priority" and has a number of policies and actions in place to encourage and facilitate the development of affordable senior housing. However, the high cost of land, limited land availability, and limited local resources have and will continue to impact the development of new affordable senior housing opportunities in Laguna Beach.

Following are the City's responses to the Grand Jury recommendations, as requested in the April 25, 2008 letter:

***R-1 Include the current and projected affordable senior housing inventory by type, location and cost in the 2008 and future years' development of the Housing Element.***

Recommendation R-1 has been implemented into the Housing Element as summarized in the following: Chapter III of the City's Housing Element lists the senior housing inventory, which currently totals 111 attached residential units. All of these units are designated for independent low or moderate income seniors, as identified on Table 11, within Chapter II. Mermaid Terrace includes 25 median income condominiums which must be occupied by senior citizens within the designated income levels. Mermaid Terrace affordability does not expire until 2046. Vista Aliso, which comprises 71 Section-8 Senior Citizen rental units, is restricted to very-low income seniors and will retain affordability until 2028. Harbor Cove includes 15 Section-8 senior citizen rental units and cannot convert to market-rate units until 2019. Although, Harbor Cove cannot convert to market rate under the current Housing Element planning period, an action is included in the Housing Program to evaluate funding sources to retain long-term affordability of these units for seniors.

In addition to the aforementioned senior citizen housing, seniors may also reside in the other 54 low and moderate income housing units specified in Table 11. No new senior citizen housing projects are currently planned in the City; however, a number of policies and actions are in place, as specified in Housing Element Chapter VII, to encourage the development of low and moderate income housing and expansion of housing opportunities for senior citizens and other special needs individuals.

***R-2 Include sufficient data in the Housing Element to acknowledge the imminent growth in the county's aging population. This data is to include the current population in the growth trend***

*of the aging baby boomer generation as well as the current median income and the income trend of the senior population.*

Recommendation R-2 has been implemented into the Housing Element. Chapter II includes a discussion of the aging population in conjunction with Table 2, Age Distribution Comparison. Discussion of the County's aging population, and the current median income and income trend of the senior population is located in Chapter III(B) Housing Special Needs Populations – Senior Citizens. Chapter VII provides a number of policies and actions to address the affordable housing and service/resource needs of the senior citizen population.

**R-3** *Put all Housing Elements on-line on each city's website.*


As previously noted, the Laguna Beach Housing Element is available on the City's website.

**R-4** *Confer with developers to establish the needs for affordable senior housing and to encourage investment in future projects.*

Recommendation R-3 has been implemented into the Housing Element. Chapter VII contains the City's Housing Program, which includes many policies and actions that provide incentives toward the provision of affordable senior citizen and other special needs housing. Policies and actions that address recommendation R-4 are as follows: **Policy HE-3.4** states "Continue to assess the particular needs and constraints related to housing opportunities for senior citizens and other special needs households, in an attempt to address and resolve such issues." **Action 2.12.1** states "Pursue selection of sites suitable for very-low, low and moderate-income housing units, in conjunction with a non-profit organization and/or private developer. Consideration should also be given to rehabilitating units that are suitable for low-income housing." **Action 2.7.1** states "Encourage the establishment of a community non-profit housing developer or Housing Trust to provide a continuous funding and development source for affordable housing." **Action 2.7.2** states "Solicit involvement of the Laguna Board of Realtors, the Architectural Guild and private and non-profit developers at the Housing & Human Services Committee meetings to advise the Committee of potential low and moderate income housing sites and development opportunities."

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Orange County Grand Jury's concerns regarding the inadequate supply of affordable senior citizen housing. Should additional information be required, please contact Carolyn Martin, Principal Planner at (949) 497-0398.

Sincerely,



Jane Egly  
Mayor