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# CITY OF SANTA ANA

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July 30, 2008

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

**RE: Response to "No County for Old Boomers – When Orange County Baby Boomers Retire, Where Will They Live?"**

Dear Judge Wieben Stock:

This letter is in response to the 2007-2008 Grand Jury report, "*No County for Old Boomers – When Orange County Baby Boomers Retire, Where Will They Live?*" released to the public on May 2, 2008. The Grand Jury report describes the challenges associated with providing affordable senior housing in Orange County and makes recommendations for Housing Elements to more proactively address housing needs for senior residents. The City of Santa Ana appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations, and the Mayor has authorized me to respond on his behalf.

***Finding 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.**

**Response:** The City disagrees with this finding. The City's Housing Element is required by State law to address housing for special needs groups in its community, including senior populations. The City's current Housing Element identifies 5.5 % of the population of Santa Ana as consisting of persons aged 65 years or older. It also indicates that the majority of senior households are homeowners. The Santa Ana's Housing Element further identifies the City's policies and objectives for addressing both the current and projected housing needs of lower income senior residents.

***Finding F-2* – The Housing Element 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.**

**Response:** The City disagrees with this finding. The Housing Element is required by State law to discuss and analyze population growth and the housing needs of special needs groups, including the senior population. Therefore, although the Housing Element does not specifically mention the term “Baby Boomers” it does discuss the housing needs of the aging baby boomer population.

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

**Response:** Based on the Grand Jury’s report, the City agrees with this finding. However, Santa Ana’s Draft 2008 Housing Element Framework is available for viewing and may be downloaded from the City’s website. The final adopted Housing Element will replace the draft when adopted and certified.

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

**Response:** The City disagrees with this finding. While we can not speak for the other cities and the County of Orange, the City of Santa Ana includes a wide range of senior housing to allow residents to stay within the community. These include age-restricted apartments, mobile homes, and continuing care facilities as described below and in the table that follows:

- **Age-Restricted Apartments.** According to City records, the City of Santa Ana has publicly subsidized affordable apartment projects providing approximately 950 units of housing for lower income seniors.
- **Residential Care Facilities (RCF).** These facilities provide care, supervision and assistance with activities of daily living for persons over 60 years of age. RCFs are also called assisted living facilities, retirement homes, and board and care homes.
- **Senior-Only Mobile Homes.** The City of Santa Ana has a total of five mobile home parks that are age restricted and provide approximately 1,000 units restricted for seniors.
- **Continuing Care Facilities.** The City is home to a large continuing care facility, Town and Country Manor, which provides 240 beds in a variety of settings. In addition, they are proposing the addition of independent apartments.

**Santa Ana Senior Housing Options**

<i>Type of Housing</i>	<i>Number of Facilities</i>	<i>Capacity (beds or units)</i>
Senior Apartments	6	944 units
Senior Mobile Homes	5	961 units
Life Care/Continuing Care Facility	1	240 beds
Residential Care Facility for the Elderly	30	746 beds
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1,905 units 986 beds</b>

Source: California Department of Social Services 2008;  
City of Santa Ana 2005–2009 Consolidated Plan, Table 38.

As described above, Santa Ana includes an array of affordable housing and supportive environments for senior housing needs. The City has and continues to use its financial resources to facilitate the preservation and development of housing opportunities for special needs populations. Some examples include the collaborative effort to convert a motel to 89 low income senior housing units, as well as ongoing efforts to preserve senior housing units that are at risk of converting to market rate during the upcoming Housing Element planning period (through 2014).

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

**Response:** The recommendation will not be fully implemented. The data and analysis requested by the Grand Jury is not currently required under State Housing Element law. Rather, the City will comply with State Government Code Sections 65583 (a)(7), requiring an analysis of any special housing needs for the elderly among other special needs populations, including the following:

- A quantification of the total number of seniors and senior-headed households, including tenure.
- A quantification and qualitative description of seniors’ needs, including a report of potential housing problems, existing resources, and an assessment of unmet needs.
- Identification of potential programs, policies and resources to address the housing needs of seniors.
- The number of seniors living at or below the poverty level.

The analysis of special needs populations, including seniors, will be detailed in the City’s 2008 Housing Element Update as required by State law. Note, as referenced on the table on page 2, the City’s Draft 2008 Housing Element will include an inventory of senior housing options, as well as policies and programs to address housing and support services for the current and projected senior population in Santa Ana.

***Recommendation 2 – Include data in the Housing Element to acknowledge the imminent growth in the county’s aging population. This data is to include the current population and growth trend of the aging baby boomer generation as well as the current median income and the income trend of the senior population.***

**Response:** The recommendation will be implemented in the City’s 2008 Housing Element. Santa Ana’s current senior population is diverse in age, income, and housing needs. During the 1990s, although Santa Ana’s senior population increased by approximately 13 percent, seniors ages 75 years and older increased by 30 percent.

Since the majority of seniors live on fixed incomes, overpaying for housing is a major concern. Adjusted from the census for inflation in 2008 dollars, the median income of a senior household in Santa Ana is \$46,700, which is considered lower income. Lower income senior households overpaying for housing are less able to retain income to spend on food, health care, and transportation. Of the 8,101 senior households, 2,950 overpay for housing (1,290 are renters and 1,660 are owners). Overpayment ranges from 34 to 68 percent among lower income elderly households.

**Recommendation 3 – Put all Housing Elements on line on each City’s website.**

**Response:** The recommendation has been implemented. The City’s Draft 2008 Housing Element Framework is available for viewing and may be downloaded from the City’s website. The final adopted Housing Element will replace the draft when adopted and certified.

**Recommendation 4 – Confirm with developers to establish the needs for affordable senior housing and to encourage investment in future projects.**

**Response:** The recommendation has been implemented. City staff confers with developers regarding affordable housing development, preservation, and rehabilitation opportunities. These collaborative efforts will continue to promote the development of affordable housing, including senior housing, as framed in the City of Santa Ana’s adopted Housing Element housing goals, policies and program objectives.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Grand Jury’s report. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Karen Haluza, Planning Manager, at (714) 667-2700.

Sincerely,



David N. Ream  
City Manager

- c. Foreman, Orange County Grand Jury  
Mayor and City Council  
Assistant City Manager  
Deputy City Manager for Development Services, Community Development Agency  
Executive Director, Planning and Building Agency