

# City of Seal Beach



CITY HALL, 201 EIGHTH STREET  
SEAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90740  
(562) 431-2527 • www.ci.seal-beach.ca.us

July 14, 2008

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

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT - "NO COUNTY FOR OLD BOOMERS"**

Dear Judge Wieben Stock:

This letter is submitted in response to the recent Orange County Grand Jury report "No County For Old Boomers – When Orange County Baby Boomers Retire, Where Will They Live?" The City acknowledges the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations made in the subject report.

The City's responses to each finding and recommendation, indicating agreement or disagreement, either partially or in whole, are noted below.

## **Responses to Findings:**

**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 relative to the housing needs for low income seniors living in Seal Beach. The City has 9,068 persons 65 or over living in the City: 37.5% of the city's population. As is indicated in the Grand Jury Report, Seal Beach is the home of one of "two very large "55 and over" communities." Seal Beach Leisure World comprises 5,934 senior housing units, or 41.4% of all housing units in the City, and provides a regional housing supply at reasonable and affordable prices for seniors over 55 who chose to live in a retirement community.

**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.*

**Response:** The City disagrees with this finding. The Housing Element is required by law to discuss and analyze population growth and housing needs of special needs groups, including the senior population. Therefore, it does discuss the needs of the aging population.

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

**Response:** The City agrees with this finding as to the City of Seal Beach. The Housing Element is not available online.

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

**Response:** The City disagrees with this finding as to the City of Seal Beach. As indicated in the response to finding 1 above, Seal Beach currently provides 5,934 senior housing units, or 41.4% of all housing units in the City, and provides a regional housing supply at reasonable and affordable prices for seniors over 55 who chose to live in a retirement community. Given the large component of existing senior housing in our community, the concerns of the community are focused on providing affordable housing for other special needs groups.

**Responses to Recommendations:**

**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.*

**Response:** The recommendation will not be implemented. The data and analysis requested by the Grand Jury is not currently required under State Housing Element law, would be extremely costly and time consuming to attempt to project, and would be extremely speculative regarding the particular issues of type and cost. The major difficulty of being able to implement this type of speculative analysis would be the response of the private market to construct the desired products at price levels that would be affordable. California continues to struggle with affordability issues for all family, age, and income types and unless state-wide actions are taken a local jurisdiction cannot hope to effectively address the requested items of the Grand Jury.

The City does not agree with the Grand Jury recommendations that would add conditions or requirements to the statutory provisions of State Housing Law. The City will continue to comply with the provisions of State Government Code § 65583(a)(7), which requires an analysis of special needs for the elderly among other special needs populations. The statutory provisions provide sufficient opportunities to address changing demographic situations for all segments of the City's population.

In addition, the Grand Jury does not identify any time frame and the vague nature of the recommendation does not provide adequate guidance in completing the recommended analysis. Therefore, the City respectfully disagrees that this recommendation should be completed due to the reasons cited above.

**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 and the 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 not be implemented. As indicated in the response to Recommendation 1, above, the City will continue to comply with the provisions of State Government Code § 65583(a)(7), which requires an analysis of special needs for the elderly among other special needs populations. The statutory provisions provide sufficient opportunities to address changing demographic situations for all segments of the City's population. Further, in Seal Beach the trend between the 1990 and 2000 Census was a reduction in the number of residents 65 or over residing in the City.

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

**Response:** The recommended action will be implemented upon adoption of the next Housing Element Update.

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

**Response:** The recommendation will not be implemented. As indicated in the response to Finding 1 and 4, above:

- The City has 9,068 persons 65 or over living in the City: 37.5% of the city's population. As is indicated in the Grand Jury Report, Seal Beach is the home of one of "two very large "55 and over" communities." Seal Beach Leisure World comprises 5,934 senior housing units, or 41.4% of all housing units in the City, and provides a regional housing supply at reasonable and affordable

- prices for seniors over 55 who chose to live in a retirement community; and
- given the large component of existing senior housing in our community, the concerns of the community are focused on providing affordable housing for other special needs groups.

If you have any questions regarding the City of Seal Beach's responses to the above matters please contact our Director of Development Services, Mr. Lee Whittenberg, at either (562) 431-2527, ext 1313 or lwhittenberg@ci.seal-beach.ca.us.

Sincerely,



Charles Antos, Mayor  
City of Seal Beach

CC: David Carmany City Manager  
Lee Whittenberg, Director of Development Services  
Planning Commission

Ann Avery Andres, Foreman  
Orange County Grand Jury  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701