

CITY OF YORBA LINDA

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

July 22, 2008

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

RE: Response to Grand Jury Report – “No County for Old Boomers”

Dear Judge Wieben Stock:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05 the City of Yorba Linda (“City”) submits this letter in response to the Grand Jury report “No County for Old Boomers – When Orange County Baby Boomers Retire, Where Will They Live?” (“Report”). The City appreciates this opportunity to provide the following responses to the findings and recommendations contained within the Report:

Responses to Grand Jury Findings:

Finding 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 as it relates to the City individually. The City’s Housing Element is required by State law to address housing for special needs groups. The City of Yorba Linda’s current Housing Element (adopted in 2002) has been certified by the State of California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) as addressing the fair share housing needs for the community, including the senior population. Yorba Linda is continuing its efforts to address senior housing in the City’s 2008-2014 Draft Housing Element. The document identifies the need for affordable senior housing in the community to address the existing and projected numbers in the senior population, and has identified suitable sites for future development of affordable housing projects.

Finding 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 as it relates to the City individually. 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. The State's housing guidelines and the RHNA process, however, are focused on family economic levels. Family economic levels include seniors as well as non-seniors. Until State law is changed to further segment and focus criteria solely on seniors, it is inappropriate to reprioritize local government efforts.

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

Response: Partially disagree. Although unsure of the availability of other agency's housing elements, the City of Yorba Linda's Draft Housing Element is accessible to the public and available for review on the City of Yorba Linda's website.

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

Response: The City disagrees with the finding as it relates to the City individually. The City and Redevelopment Agency have assisted in the development of two senior housing projects, totaling 225 units and have acquired 25 market-rate senior condominium units and converted the units into very low-income rentals. The City of Yorba Linda plans to dedicate 80% of its housing set-aside funds (\$24.7 million) to affordable housing production during the 2008-2014 planning cycle. Of that amount, approximately \$10 million will be allocated towards extremely low and very low income households, which most often include a large segment of the senior population who are on a fixed income. The City of Yorba Linda will continue to provide incentives to developers of affordable housing and will promote development of affordable housing on the sites identified in the Housing Element.

Responses to Grand Jury Recommendations:

Recommendation 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: Although this recommendation has been partially implemented in the past, the City has included an affordable senior housing inventory for existing housing by type, and location in the 2008-2014 Draft Housing Element. The City will amend the inventory exhibit to include the costs associated with the level of assistance on each of the projects.

However, it would be a challenge to project the future affordable senior housing inventory by type, location and cost. The Housing Element identifies a number of sites suitable for future affordable housing development, of which any of those sites may be developed as senior housing. Pursuant to Fair Housing Law, the City does not pre-zone for senior restricted housing. Additionally, without a specific developer for a project, the City would be unable to identify the housing type, whether it might be developed as rental apartments, condominiums, ownership, assisted living, etc. In the same regard, the City would find it difficult to estimate the level of affordability on the units since the actual costs for construction and the use of other funding assistance programs would be unknown.

Recommendation 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: This recommendation has been implemented to the extent possible with available data for the City of Yorba Linda. The 2008-2014 Draft Housing Element provides a detailed demographic profile of our city's population growth and trends, including age and income characteristics. Table II-2 indicates that seniors over the age of 65 make up 8% of the City's population, an increase over the prior decade, although still below the 10% of senior population in the County. Table II-9 identifies the income distribution of senior households in the community, whereby 42% of elderly households in Yorba Linda are below 80% of the area median income. These local demographics are indicative of a nearly built-out community wherein the majority of seniors in the city are homeowners, (82% of the senior population owns a home) showing that the population has aged in place.

Recommendation 3. Put all Housing Elements online on each city's website.

Response: This recommended action has been implemented by the City of Yorba Linda.

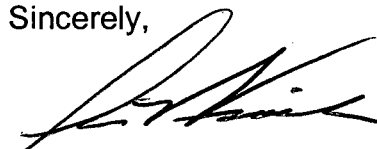
Recommendation 4. Confer with developers to establish the needs for affordable senior housing and to encourage investment in future projects.

Response: This recommended action has been implemented. The City of Yorba Linda has made an effort to meet and confer upon request with developers regarding opportunities for development of affordable senior housing. We will continue to encourage the development of senior housing in our community and will proactively pursue sites within the City that are conducive to the development of affordable senior projects.

The Honorable Nancy Wieben Stock
July 22, 2008
Page 4

Should you have any questions or need additional information regarding the City's responses to the Report please feel free to contact Pamela Stoker, Housing & Redevelopment Specialist at (714) 961-7105.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Winder", written in a cursive style.

Mayor Jim Winder

cc: Members of the Yorba Linda City Council
William R. Kelly, Interim City Manager
Ann Avery Andres, Foreman, Orange County Grand Jury