



CITY OF FOUNTAIN VALLEY

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July 21, 2008

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

RE: RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT - "NO COUNTY FOR OLD BOOMERS – WHEN ORANGE COUNTY BABY BOOMERS RETIRE, WHERE WILL THEY LIVE?"

Dear Judge Stock:

This letter is submitted in response to the recent Grand Jury report "*No County for Old Boomers – When Orange County Baby Boomers Retire, Where Will They Live?*" Pursuant to the state law, the City of Fountain Valley has prepared a response to the four (4) findings and four (4) recommendations contained in the report. The responses were approved by the City of Fountain Valley City Council at its meeting of July 15, 2008.

Responses for the City of Fountain Valley are as follows:

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 cannot comment on this finding for housing elements in other jurisdictions. However, we disagree with this finding relative to the City of Fountain Valley.

During the last Housing Element cycle, the City identified a need for senior housing due to the growing number of seniors in the community. To address the City's changing demographics, the development of new senior housing was established as a goal of the City Council in its last Housing Element. Since the approval of the last Housing Element, the City approved the development of 666 new senior housing units. All units have been completed and occupied.

They include the following developments:

1. Palm Island, 11300 Warner Avenue; Palm Island is a 456-unit market rate senior apartment community.
2. The Liberty at Founders Village, Talbert Avenue, north of Bushard Street is a 54-unit senior condominiums development for low and moderate income seniors.
3. The Jasmine at Founders Village, Talbert Avenue, north of Bushard Street is a 156-unit senior apartment development for low and very low income seniors.

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 cannot comment on this finding for housing elements in other jurisdictions. However, we disagree with this finding relative the City of Fountain Valley. Consistent with state law, the Housing Element for the City of Fountain Valley analyzes the housing needs of all special needs groups, including seniors.

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

Response: The City cannot comment on this finding for housing elements in other jurisdictions. The Housing Element for the City of Fountain Valley was not previously posted online. Consistent with Recommendation 3, the Housing Element for the City of Fountain Valley is now available online.

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

Response: The City cannot comment on this finding for other jurisdictions; however, we respectfully disagree with this finding for the City of Fountain Valley. As noted in the Response to Finding 1, the City of Fountain Valley assisted with the development of 666 senior housing units. 210 of these units were designated for very low, low and moderate income seniors.

Recommendation R1: 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: This recommendation will not be implemented. The requirements for the content of housing elements are established by state law. Some of the data analysis requested by the Grand Jury goes beyond the requirements of the state. The City of Fountain Valley completed the required analysis for the Housing Element update many months ago in compliance with the General Plan Guidelines approved by the state.

State law requires every city and county in California to update the Housing Element of its General Plan periodically according to a state-mandated schedule. For jurisdictions in Orange County, the due date for the next Housing Element revision was June 30, 2008. While the Grand Jury report raises very important issues related to the future housing needs of senior citizens, the timing of the requested action is problematic for the current Housing Element cycle – the Grand Jury report arrived approximately one month before Housing Element updates were due.

Compliance with this Grand Jury recommendation would require City staff and consultants to expend time and resources researching and revising the analysis that has already been finalized and goes beyond the requirements of the state.

We respectfully disagree that this work should be completed for the current element because it is not consistent with the State Housing Element law mandates, and it is not feasible due to the scheduling and budgetary reasons described above.

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 will not be implemented. The requirement for housing needs analysis and data for inclusion in a Housing Element is established by state law. The Housing Element for the City has analyzed all special needs groups consistent with state law. If adopted at a statewide level, we would include such information in future Housing Element updates.

We respectfully disagree that this additional analysis should be required in the current Housing Element cycle for the reasons described in the Response to Recommendation 1 above.

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

Response: We agree and support this recommendation. The Housing Element has been posted on the City's website.

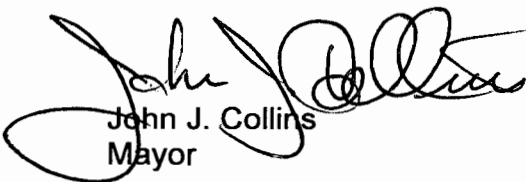
Recommendation 4. Confer with developers to establish the needs for affordable senior housing and to encourage investment in future projects.

Response: The City agrees and supports these recommendations, together with addressing affordable housing needs for all segments of the population. City staff routinely confers with developers regarding development opportunities, and we will continue to encourage the development of affordable housing pursuant to Housing Element policies.

State Housing Element law requires every jurisdiction to accommodate its fair share of the region's new housing need for all economic segments of the community. The process by which jurisdictions' fair-share growth needs is established in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Cities and counties are required to establish specific, quantified objectives for the production of new housing units in each of four income categories – very low, low, moderate, and above moderate – commensurate with their RHNA allocation to accommodate their fair-share housing need at each income level.

Thank you again for bringing this important topic to the attention of local governments in Orange County.

Sincerely,



John J. Collins
Mayor

JJC/ap

c: Ann Avery Andres
Foreman, Orange County Grand Jury
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Planning Commission
City Manager