

Steve



City of Westminster

CIVIC CENTER
8200 WESTMINSTER BOULEVARD
WESTMINSTER, CALIFORNIA 92683
(714) 898-3311

March 30, 2009

RECEIVED
APR 07 2009

MARGIE L. RICE
MAYOR

TRITA
MAYOR PRO TEM

FRANK G. FRY
COUNCIL MEMBER

ANDY QUACH
COUNCIL MEMBER

TRUONG DIEP
COUNCIL MEMBER

RAMON SILVER
CITY MANAGER

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

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

Dear Judge Wieben Stock:

This letter is submitted in response to the Grand Jury Report “No County for Old Boomers – When Orange County Boomers Retire, Where Will They Live.” We appreciate the opportunity to provide the following responses to the findings and recommendations in the Report.

Finding No. 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 to Finding No. 1: Disagree. Although the City cannot comment on housing elements for other jurisdictions, Westminster’s Housing Element has been adopted by the City Council, certified by the State and found to be in compliance with state law, including the provisions for addressing the housing needs of seniors. Furthermore, the City’s zoning code encourages the construction of senior housing by permitting senior housing in every zoning district, subject to a conditional use permit (CUP).

Finding No. 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 to Finding No.2: Disagree. All segments of the City’s population, including baby boomers, are addressed in the City’s Housing Element as required by state law.

Finding No. 3. Not all Housing Elements are available on-line for easy access by the public.

Response to Finding No. 3: Disagree. The City’s adopted Housing Element can be viewed at the City’s Website [http://www.ci.westminster.ca.us/depts/cd/planning/general .asp](http://www.ci.westminster.ca.us/depts/cd/planning/general.asp)

Finding No. 4. Municipalities are not proactive enough in encouraging the development of affordable senior housing.

Response to Finding No. 4: Disagree. The City of Westminster has been and will continue to be proactive in encouraging the development of affordable senior housing. As stated previously, senior housing is permitted in any of the City's zoning districts, subject to a CUP. The City has also adopted a second unit ordinance which permits secondary units in conjunction with a single family home and the City's Housing Element includes a program to encourage additional affordable housing by using a portion of the City's redevelopment revenue for the acquisition of land and off-site improvements.

Recommendation No. 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 to Recommendation No. 1: The City's Housing Element was adopted and certified in 2008 in accordance with state law. The data and analysis requested by the Grand Jury is not currently required under state Housing Element law. Although the City acknowledges the need for preparing an accurate and comprehensive housing needs analysis, the exact nature of such analysis is specified in state statute and the preparation and contents of such analysis is subject to review by the state Department of Housing and Community Development. Therefore, this recommendation cannot be implemented.

Recommendation No. 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 boomer generation as well as the current median income and the income trend of the senior population.

Response to Recommendation No. 3: As stated in the response to Recommendation No. 1, the City's Housing Element was adopted and certified in 2008. Therefore, the analysis and data related to the needs of baby boomers has been completed as prescribed by state law. Although the data and analysis recommended by the Grand Jury (as stated in Recommendations Nos. 1 and 2) are worthy of consideration for future Housing Element updates, such recommendations should be part of a broader Housing Element reform process which includes statewide public input, HCD, the League of California Cities, the California Chapter of the American Planning Association (CALAPA) and other housing stakeholders. Therefore, this recommendation cannot be implemented.

Recommendation No. 3 Put all Housing Elements online at each City's website.

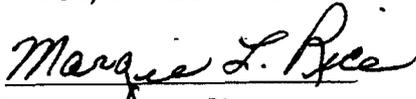
Response to Recommendation No. 3: The Housing Element for the City of Westminster has been and will continue to be posted on the City's website. Therefore, this recommendation has been implemented.

Recommendation No. 4 Confer with developers to establish the needs for affordable senior housing and to encourage investment in future projects.

Response to Recommendation No. 4: The City of Westminster has in the past and will continue to confer with developers to establish the needs for affordable senior housing. In addition, the City has in the past and will continue to confer with local service providers (e.g. non-profit organizations) which provide services to area seniors. During the City's Housing Element update in 2008, the City invited area housing developers and service providers to a community workshop to discuss the contents of the City's Housing Element. In 2008, the City prepared a draft Housing Strategy which examines the City's affordable housing needs for the coming years. A community workshop is planned for 2009 to provide a dialog with developers, residents and other interested parties. In February 2009, the City's Redevelopment Agency issued a Request For Proposal (RFP) to eventually select a private firm to partner with the City on affordable housing projects. Therefore, this recommendation has been implemented.

Thank you again for providing the City of Westminster with this opportunity to address the important issue of providing affordable housing.

The City of Westminster


Mayor Margie L. Rice

cc Westminster City Council

Ray Silver, City Manager

Douglas N. Mclsaac, Community Development Director