



Sustainable Communities Working Group Agenda

**Thursday, September 5, 2024
2 p.m.**

Welcome to SANDAG. The Sustainable Communities Working Group meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 5, 2024, will be held in person in the SANDAG Board Room. While Working Group members will attend in person, members of the public will have the option of participating either in person or virtually.

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Vision Statement: *Pursuing a brighter future for all*

Mission Statement: *We are the regional agency that connects people, places, and innovative ideas by implementing solutions with our unique and diverse communities.*

Our Commitment to Equity: *We hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve. We acknowledge we have much to learn and much to change; and we firmly uphold equity and inclusion for every person in the San Diego region. This includes historically underserved, systemically marginalized groups impacted by actions and inactions at all levels of our government and society.*

We have an obligation to eliminate disparities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive opportunities are available to everyone. The SANDAG equity action plan will inform how we plan, prioritize, fund, and build projects and programs; frame how we work with our communities; define how we recruit and develop our employees; guide our efforts to conduct unbiased research and interpret data; and set expectations for companies and stakeholders that work with us.

We are committed to creating a San Diego region where every person who visits, works, and lives can thrive.

Sustainable Communities Working Group

Thursday, September 5, 2024

Comments and Communications

1. Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments

Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Sustainable Communities Working Group (SCWG) on any issue within the jurisdiction of SCWG that is not on this agenda. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. Public comments under this agenda item will be limited to five public speakers. If the number of public comments under this agenda item exceeds five, additional public comments will be taken at the end of the agenda. SCWG members and SANDAG staff also may present brief updates and announcements under this agenda item.

Consent

+2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Information

Tessa Lero, SANDAG

The SCWG is asked to approve the minutes from its June 20, 2024, meeting.

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Reports

+3. Regional Housing Needs Allocation Reform: SANDAG Proposed Legislative Principles

Discussion

Stacey Cooper, SANDAG

The Executive Committee (EC) directed SANDAG staff to work with the SCWG to update a draft letter outlining legislative principles for RHNA reform based on comments provided at the July 12, 2024, EC meeting and return to them for approval. Staff will present an overview of the comments received from EC and seeks additional feedback from the SCWG members.

[Regional Housing Needs Allocation Reform: SANDAG Proposed Legislative Principles Att. 1 - Draft Letter to Senate and Assembly Housing Chairs from the SANDAG Board Supporting Materials](#)

4. Adjournment

The next SCWG meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment

* next to an agenda item indicates that the Board of Directors also is acting as the San Diego County Regional Transportation Commission for that item

September 5, 2024

June 20, 2024, Meeting Minutes

[View Meeting Video](#)

Councilmember Joy Lyndes (Encinitas) called the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Working Group (SCWG) to order at 1:32 p.m.

1. Public Comment/Communications/ Member Comments

Member Comments: Rob Efird (Carlsbad).

Public Comments: The OriginalDra.

Staff Comments: Senior Regional Planners Sara Toma and Stacey Cooper.

Consent

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The SCWG was asked to approve the minutes from its April 18, 2024, meeting.

Public Comments: The OriginalDra.

Action: Upon a motion by Joseph Lim (Solana Beach), and a second by Todd Philips (Chula Vista), the SCWG voted to approve the Consent Agenda.

The motion passed.

Yes: Robb Efird, Todd Philips, Jesse Brown (Coronado), Karen Brindley (Del Mar), Noah Alvey (El Cajon), Patty Anders (Encinitas), Meagan Openshaw (Imperial Beach), Carlos Aguirre (National City), Heidi Vonblum (City of San Diego), and Joseph Lim.

No: None.

Abstain: Tara Lieberman (County of San Diego) and Darlene Nicandro (Oceanside).

Absent: Escondido, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Poway, San Marcos, Santee, and Vista.

Reports

3. Smart Growth Incentive Program: Cycle 6 Call for Projects

Grants Program Manager Jenny Russo and Senior Regional Planner Stacey Cooper presented an overview of the Smart Growth Incentive Program and requested feedback on evaluation criteria and other items for use in the Cycle 6 Call for Projects.

Public Comments: The OriginalDra.

Action: Discussion.

4. Regional Housing Needs Allocation Overview

Deputy Director of Sustainable Communities Tuere Fa'aola and Regional Planner Thomas DeFranco presented a high-level overview of Housing and Community Development's Report *California's Housing Future 2040: The Next Regional Housing Needs Assessment*.

Public Comments: The OriginalDra.

Action: Information.

5. Housing Acceleration Program and Regional Early Action Planning Grants Updates

Thomas DeFranco presented an update on the Housing Acceleration Program funded through the state's Regional Early Action Planning grants of 2019, and Regional Early Action Planning grants of 2021.

Public Comments: The OriginalDra.

Action: Information.

6. Adjournment

The next meeting of the SCWG is scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.

Chair Lyndes adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Confirmed Attendance at Sustainable Communities Working Group Meeting

Jurisdiction	Name	Attended
Chair (non-voting)	Joy Lyndes	Yes
	Jeff Murphy	No
City of Carlsbad	Eric Lardy	No
	Robb Efird	Yes
City of Chula Vista	Todd Philips	Yes
	Laura Black	No
	Desmond Corley	No
City of Coronado	Richard Grunrow	No
	Jesse Brown	Yes
	Jasmine Bridges	No
County of San Diego	Rami Talleh	No
	Tara Lieberman	Yes
	Julie Marlett	No
City of Del Mar	Karen Brindley	Yes
	Clem Brown	No
	Amanda Lee	No
City of El Cajon	Noah Alvey	Yes
	Mike Viglione	No
City of Encinitas	Patty Anders	Yes
	Crystal Najera	No
City of Escondido	Veronica Morones	No
	Oscar Romero	No
City of Imperial Beach	Meagan Openshaw	Yes
	Reyna Ayala	No
	Ryan Pua	No
City of La Mesa	Lynnette Santos	No
	Vacant	N/A
City of Lemon Grove	Michael Fellows	No
	Vacant	N/A
City of National City	Angelita Palma	No
	Carlos Aguirre	Yes
	Martin Reader	No

Jurisdiction	Name	Attended
City of Oceanside	Sergio Madera	No
	Darlene Nicandro	Yes
City of Poway	Julie Procopio	No
	Stann Donn	No
City of San Diego	Heidi Vonblum	Yes
	Alyssa Muto	No
	Seth Litchney	No
	Coby Tomlin	No
City of San Marcos	Saima Qureshy	No
	Joe Farace	No
	Scott Nightingale	No
City of Santee	Michael Coyne	No
	Sandi Hazelwood	No
City of Solana Beach	Joseph Lim	Yes
	Corey Andrews	No
City of Vista	Patsy Chow	No
	Michael Ressler	No
	Joseph Vacca	No
Advisory Members	Name	
Air Pollution Control District	Mike Watt	No
	Kathy Keehan	No
	Eric Luther	No
Caltrans	Reece Allen	No
	Maurice Eaton	No
San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission	Keene Simonds	No
	Priscilla Mumpower	Yes
North County Transit District	Lillian Doherty	No
	Katie Persons	No
Metropolitan Transit System	Denis Desmond	No
	Beverly Neff	No
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority	Sydney Noyce	Yes
	Ralph Redman	No
San Diego County Water Authority	Jeff Stephenson	No
	Tim Bombardier	No

Jurisdiction	Name	Attended
Port of San Diego	Heather Carroll	No
	Walden Kiker	No
SoCal Tribal Chairman's Association	Vacant	N/A
	Vacant	N/A

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September 5, 2024

Regional Housing Needs Allocation Reform: SANDAG Proposed Legislative Principles

Overview

AB 101 (2019) directed the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to develop recommendations related to the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process and methodology that promote and streamline housing development and substantially address California's housing shortage. From March to September 2023, HCD solicited ideas and feedback from stakeholders for ways to improve the RHNA methodology and process. Throughout this process, SANDAG provided feedback to HCD through their sounding board listening sessions, hosted a webinar with local jurisdiction staff, provided ongoing updates to local jurisdiction staff, and presented an overview of the HCD stakeholder engagement process to the Executive Committee on [July 14, 2023](#).

On [March 22, 2024](#), HCD provided an update to the SANDAG Board of Directors on their efforts to develop recommendations related to the RHNA process and methodology. At this meeting, SANDAG Board members shared concerns regarding the RHNA process related to the lack of transparency, funding, flexibility, and consideration for local context/control, including the inability to adjust allocations mid-cycle. The Board also asked questions about HCD's plan to incorporate the [State's Auditor recommendations](#) in the next RHNA cycle.

On April 18, 2024, HCD released the *California's Housing Future 2040: The Next RHNA* [full report](#) and [executive summary](#) which includes recommendations and policy considerations to the legislature and outlines planned administrative changes to be adopted under existing HCD statutory authority. HCD's Audit Action Plan can also be found on their [website](#).

On [June 20, 2024](#), staff presented an overview of the HCD report to the Sustainable Communities Working Group (SCWG). Initial comments from the SCWG were on the lack of detail and clarity on next steps and expectations, lack of funding, and the need for HCD to provide more clarity and more timely guidance well in advance of the Regional Housing Needs Determination (RHND) and housing element preparation.

On [July 12, 2024](#), staff presented a high-level overview of the HCD report, including the initial comments from the SCWG, to the Executive Committee, and also presented a draft letter addressed to the senate and assembly housing committee chairs (attachment 1) summarizing Board feedback from the March 22, 2024, Board meeting. The letter outlines guiding principles to be considered during upcoming legislative cycles.

One of Executive Committee's board delegated responsibilities is to review and act on state and federal legislation. The Executive Committee directed staff to work with the Sustainable Communities Working

Action: Discussion

The Executive Committee (EC) directed SANDAG staff to work with the SCWG to update a draft letter outlining legislative principles for Regional Housing Needs Allocation reform based on comments provided at the July 12, 2024, EC meeting and return to them for approval. Staff will present an overview of the comments received from EC and seeks additional feedback from the SCWG members.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

Schedule/Scope Impact:

None.

Group to update the legislative letter based on the additional comments provided at the meeting and return to them for approval.

Key Considerations

The draft letter presented to the Executive Committee outlined five legislative principles (Attachment 1) focused on: Sustainable Funding, Local Context, Greater Transparency, Regional Approach, and Prioritizing the Number of People Housed. The Executive Committee voted to approve the proposed legislative principles and provided direction to staff regarding revisions to the letter. This included adding language that jurisdictions in our region who have a certified housing element and are approving and building housing do not lose land use authority for multifamily projects if their 50% goal is not met; allowing the region to adjust RHNA allocations among jurisdictions; and to consider preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing to help meet RHNA allocations. Staff was directed to work with the Sustainable Communities Working Group to incorporate these objectives and other related feedback into the letter and bring the revised letter back to the Executive Committee for approval.

Staff will share the detailed feedback provided by the Executive Committee for discussion and input from members of the SCWG.

Next Steps

Staff will present the revised letter to the Executive Committee in October for approval to send to Chairs of the Senate and Assembly Housing Committees. Staff will continue to monitor legislation related to housing and RHNA reform and bring additional information to working groups and committees as it becomes available.

Antoinette Meier, Senior Director of Regional Planning

Attachment: 1. Draft Letter to Senate and Assembly Housing Chairs from the SANDAG Board



July 12, 2024

The Honorable Chris Ward
Chair of the Housing and Community Development Committee
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 6350
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Housing Committee
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 8630
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Ward and Chair Skinner,

Subject: Assembly Bill 101 (2019) Implementation of Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Reform

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) has been closely participating in the RHNA reform process under Assembly Bill 101 (2019) and appreciate your leadership on addressing the ongoing housing challenges throughout the state. As you take on RHNA reform in the upcoming legislative cycles, we encourage you to consider the following principles.

Sustainable Funding

More funding is needed to support affordable housing. Local jurisdictions need funding to enact policies and processes that encourage housing development, and developers need funding to make non-market rate projects financially viable. The Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grants provided by the State furthered jurisdictions' ability to implement the sixth cycle RHNA, however ongoing state and federal funding is necessary to meet housing goals.

Local Context

Local jurisdictions are responsible for planning and developing policies that encourage housing development, but do not control market conditions or the building industry. An 8-year cycle is not enough time to make up for the decades-long housing shortage. New policies and processes take time to take effect. When assessing each jurisdiction's progress towards RHNA, HCD should consider comprehensive efforts taken throughout the cycle to encourage housing development.

Greater Transparency

The HCD RHNA report recommends implementing procedural and informational enhancements to the current process, but there is a lack of information on how and when these changes will be made. We request timely guidance and greater transparency on changes to the Regional Housing Need Determination process and any changes that will be required in housing elements.

Regional Approach

Future RHNA cycles should include a more collaborative regional approach to solving the housing crisis. When more housing is built in the right places, the entire region benefits, but currently just one jurisdiction gets credit in their Annual Progress Reports. A regional approach would also ensure that housing gets developed in locations that support state climate goals.

Prioritize the Number of People Housed

Currently, RHNA focuses on the number of housing units produced rather than the number of people housed. This approach does not encourage housing types that support families and multigenerational households. To better address the diverse housing needs of our population, we urge HCD and state legislators to consider housing people a priority within the RHNA process.

We thank you for your consideration and welcome the opportunity for further collaboration with your offices as we work towards meeting the housing needs of existing and future San Diego residents.

Sincerely,

Nora Vargas
SANDAG Chairwoman

SCOO



Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Reform: Proposed Legislative Principles

Sustainable Communities Working Group | Item 3
Stacey Cooper, SANDAG
September 5, 2024

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RHNA Reform Timeline

March – September 2023



HCD and SANDAG outreach efforts

March 2024



HCD Listening Session with SANDAG BOD

April 2024



HCD releases CA Housing Future 2040 Legislative Report

July – September 2024



SANDAG presents overview of HCD's report to SCWG, EC, and RPC

September – October 2024



Staff works with SCWG on legislative principles letter for EC approval

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Board Member Feedback

- Lack of transparency for Regional Housing Needs Determination (RHND)
- Lack of funding to implement Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)
- Lack of flexibility and consideration for local context
- Inability to adjust allocations mid-cycle
- Loss of local control
- Incorporate State Auditor recommendations in the next cycle

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Feedback Received from Sustainable Communities Working Group

- More involvement of local jurisdictions in the RHND and RHNA development process
- More funding for implementing RHNA
- Greater transparency in the RHND process (and digestible information for the public)
- More clarity and more timely guidance from the state (well in advance of RHND and housing element preparation)
- More clarity on data and methodology used to account for short-term rentals
- Prioritize the number of people housed vs. number of housing units built
- Concerns with data availability and ability to implement AB 3093
- Preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing as an affordability solution missing from RHNA

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Draft Legislative Principles

- Sustainable Funding
- Local Context
- Greater Transparency
- Regional Approach
- Prioritize Number of People Housed

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Sustainable Funding

More funding is needed to support affordable housing. Local jurisdictions funding to enact policies and processes that encourage housing development, and developers need funding to make non-market rate projects financially viable. The Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grants provided by the State furthered jurisdictions' ability to implement the sixth cycle RHNA, however ongoing state and federal funding is necessary to meet housing goals.

Executive Committee Feedback

- Requested stronger language that there is not adequate funding available to meet housing goals.
- Include the estimated amount needed to fulfill our region's 6th cycle need of ~70,000 low and very low units, with an average cost of \$700,000 per unit, will cost approx. \$49 billion.

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Local Context

Local jurisdictions are responsible for planning and developing policies that encourage housing development, but do not control market conditions or the building industry. An 8-year cycle is not enough time to make up for the decades-long housing shortage. New policies and processes take time to take effect. When assessing each jurisdiction's progress towards RHNA, HCD should consider comprehensive efforts taken throughout the cycle to encourage housing development.

Executive Committee Feedback:

- Requested stronger language reiterating that jurisdictions don't build the housing.
- Include deadline that ½ way through 6th cycle is June 2023 and request that jurisdictions putting forth good faith efforts not lose land use authority of multi-family projects (not be subject to SB 35 & SB 423 mandates)

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Greater Transparency

The HCD RHNA report recommends implementing procedural and informational enhancements to the current process, but there is a lack of information on how and when these changes will be made. We request timely guidance and greater transparency on changes to the Regional Housing Need Determination process and any changes that will be required in housing elements.

Executive Committee Feedback:

- Agreement on this request

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Regional Approach

Future RHNA cycles should include a more collaborative regional approach to solving the housing crisis. When more housing is built in the right places, the entire region benefits, but currently just one jurisdiction gets credit in their Annual Progress Reports. A regional approach would also ensure that housing gets developed in locations that support state climate goals.

Executive Committee Feedback

- Revise to allow for a regional approach in the 6th and future RHNA cycles and allow jurisdictions to make allocation adjustments.
- Requested stronger language that jurisdictions lacking space cannot build housing but working together as a region we can identify and build housing in the right places and provide the supportive transportation options.

Prioritize Number of People Housed

Currently, RHNA focuses on the number of housing units produced rather than the number of people housed. This approach does not encourage housing types that support families and multigenerational households. To better address the diverse housing needs of our population, we urge HCD and state legislators to consider housing people a priority within the RHNA process.

Executive Committee Feedback:

- Agreement on this request

Additional Principles/Concerns

Preservation of Affordable Housing

- Encourage preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), such as tax incentives to landlords of these units (request for separate legislation)

Vacation & Short-term Rentals (in response to HCD's future implementation effort of accounting for housing lost to vacation homes and short-term rentals)

- Coastal cities need the ability to regulate vacation and short-term rentals. They currently lack authority to place restrictions on short-term vacation rentals without approval by the Coastal Commission.

Reducing housing allocations in unincorporated areas (in response to HCD's future implementation effort of reducing housing allocations in unincorporated areas outside of census designated places).

- Encourage that HCD does not limit or reduce where housing can be built and that region supports these areas with transportation options

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Next Steps

- Work with the Sustainable Communities Working Group on the letter outlining legislative principles and pending EC approval, submit a letter to the state
- Actively monitor legislation related to housing and RHNA and HCD's implementation efforts
- Continue to provide updates on RHNA reform to jurisdiction staff, the Regional Planning Committee, Executive Committee and Board

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