

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DIVISION OF HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

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October 15, 2019

Kome Ajise  
Executive Director  
Southern California Association of Governments  
900 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1700  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Dear Executive Director Ajise,

**RE: Final Regional Housing Need Assessment**

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has received and reviewed your objection to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)'s Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) provided on August 22, 2019. Pursuant to Government Code (Gov. Code) section 65584.01(c)(3), HCD is reporting the results of its review and consideration, along with a final written determination of SCAG's RHNA and explanation of methodology and inputs.

As a reminder, there are several reasons for the increase in SCAG's 6<sup>th</sup> cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) as compared to the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle. First, as allowed under Gov. Code 65584.01(b)(2), the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle RHNA applied housing need adjustment factors to the region's total projected households, thus capturing existing and projected need. Second, overcrowding and cost burden adjustments were added by statute between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> cycle; increasing RHNA in regions where incidents of these housing need indicators were especially high. SCAG's overcrowding rate is 10.11%, 6.76% higher than the national average. SCAG's cost burden rate is 69.88% for lower income households, and 18.65% for higher income households, 10.88% and 8.70% higher than the national average respectively. Third, the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle RHNA for the SCAG region was impacted by the recession and was significantly lower than SCAG's 4<sup>th</sup> cycle RHNA.

This RHNA methodology establishes the minimum number of homes needed to house the region's anticipated growth and brings these housing need indicators more in line with other communities, but does not solve for these housing needs. Further, RHNA is ultimately a requirement that the region zone sufficiently in order for these homes to have the potential to be built, but it is not a requirement or guarantee that these homes will be built. In this sense, the RHNA assigned by HCD is already a product of moderation and compromise; a minimum, not a maximum amount of planning needed for the SCAG region.

For these reasons HCD has not altered its RHNA approach based on SCAG's objection. However, the cost burden data input has been updated following SCAG's objection due to the availability of more recent data. Attachment 1 displays the minimum RHNA of **1,341,827** total homes among four income categories for SCAG to distribute among its local governments. Attachment 2 explains the methodology applied pursuant to Gov. Code section 65584.01.

The following briefly responds to each of the points raised in SCAG's objection:

#### Use of SCAG's Population Forecast

SCAG's overall population estimates for the end of the projection period exceed Department of Finance's (DOF) population projections by 1.32%, however the SCAG household projection derived from this population forecast is 1.96% lower than DOF's household projection. This is a result of SCAG's population forecast containing 3,812,391 under 15-year old persons, compared to DOF's population projection containing 3,292,955 under 15-year old persons; 519,436 more persons within the SCAG forecast that are anticipated to form no households. In this one age category, DOF's projections differ from SCAG's forecast by 15.8%.

Due to a greater than 1.5% difference in the population forecast assessment of under 15-year olds (15.8%), and the resulting difference in projected households (1.96%), HCD maintains the use of the DOF projection in the final RHNA.

#### Use of Comparable Regions

While the statute allows for the council of government to determine and provide the comparable regions to be used for benchmarking against overcrowding and cost burden, Gov. Code 65584.01(b)(2) also allows HCD to "accept or reject information provided by the council of governments or modify its own assumptions or methodology based on this information." Ultimately, HCD did not find the proposed comparable regions an effective benchmark to compare SCAG's overcrowding and cost burden metrics to. HCD used the national average as the comparison benchmark, which had been used previously throughout 6<sup>th</sup> cycle prior to the addition of comparable region language into the statute starting in January 2019. As the housing crisis is experienced nationally, even the national average does not express an ideal overcrowding or cost burden rate; we can do more to reduce and eliminate these worst-case housing needs.

#### Vacancy Rate

No changes have been made to the vacancy rate standard used by HCD for the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle RHNA methodology.

#### Replacement Need

No changes have been made to the replacement need minimum of adjustment .5%. This accounts for replacement homes needed to account for homes potentially lost during the projection period.

#### Household Growth Anticipated on Tribal Lands

No changes have been made to reduce the number of households planned in the SCAG region by the amount of household growth expected on tribal lands. The region should plan for these homes outside of tribal lands.

#### Overlap between Overcrowding and Cost Burden

No changes have been made to overcrowding and cost burden methodology. Both factors are allowed statutorily, and both are applied conservatively in the current methodology.

### Data Sources

No changes have been made to the data sources used in the methodology. 5-year American Community Survey data allows for lower margin of error rates and is the preferred data source used throughout this cycle. With regard to cost burden rates, HCD continues to use the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy, known as CHAS data. These are custom tabulations of American Community Survey requested by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. These custom tabulations display cost burden by income categories, such as lower income, households at or below 80% area median income; rather than a specific income, such as \$50,000. The definition of lower income shifts by region and CHAS data accommodates for that shift. The 2013-2016 CHAS data became available August 9, 2019, shortly prior to the issuance of SCAG's RHNA determination so that data is now used in this RHNA.

### Next Steps

As you know, SCAG is responsible for adopting a RHNA allocation methodology for the *projection* period beginning June 30, 2021 and ending October 15, 2029. Pursuant to Gov. Code section 65584(d), SCAG's RHNA allocation methodology must further the following objectives:

- (1) Increasing the housing supply and the mix of housing types, tenure, and affordability in all cities and counties within the region in an equitable manner, which shall result in each jurisdiction receiving an allocation of units for low- and very-low income households.
- (2) Promoting infill development and socioeconomic equity, the protection of environmental and agricultural resources, the encouragement of efficient development patterns, and the achievement of the region's greenhouse gas reductions targets provided by the State Air Resources Board pursuant to Section 65080.
- (3) Promoting an improved intraregional relationship between jobs and housing, including an improved balance between the number of low-wage jobs and the number of housing units affordable to low-wage workers in each jurisdiction.
- (4) Allocating a lower proportion of housing need to an income category when a jurisdiction already has a disproportionately high share of households in that income category, as compared to the countywide distribution of households in that category from the most recent American Community Survey.
- (5) Affirmatively furthering fair housing.

Pursuant to Gov. Code section 65584.04(e), to the extent data is available, SCAG shall include the factors listed in Gov. Code section 65584.04(e)(1-12) to develop its RHNA allocation methodology. Pursuant to Gov. Code section 65584.04(f), SCAG must explain in writing how each of these factors was incorporated into the RHNA allocation methodology and how the methodology furthers the statutory objectives described above. Pursuant to Gov. Code section 65584.04(h), SCAG must consult with HCD and submit its draft allocation methodology to HCD for review.

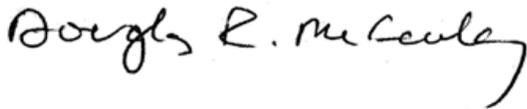
HCD appreciates the active role of SCAG staff in providing data and input throughout the consultation period. HCD especially thanks Ping Chang, Ma'Ayn Johnson, Kevin Kane, and Sarah Jepson.

HCD looks forward to its continued partnership with SCAG to assist SCAG's member jurisdictions meet and exceed the planning and production of the region's housing need. Just a few of the support opportunities available for the SCAG region this cycle include:

- SB 2 Planning Grants and Technical Assistance (application deadline November 30, 2019)
- Regional and Local Early Action Planning Grants
- Permanent Local Housing Allocation

If HCD can provide any additional assistance, or if you, or your staff, have any questions, please contact Megan Kirkeby, Assistant Deputy Director for Fair Housing, at [megan.kirkeby@hcd.ca.gov](mailto:megan.kirkeby@hcd.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas R. McCauley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "D" and "M".

Douglas R. McCauley  
Acting Director

Enclosures

## ATTACHMENT 1

## HCD REGIONAL HOUSING NEED DETERMINATION

SCAG: June 30, 2021 – October 15, 2029 (8.3 years)

| <u>Income Category</u> | <u>Percent</u> | <u>Housing Unit Need</u>      |
|------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Very-Low*              | 26.2%          | 351,796                       |
| Low                    | 15.4%          | 206,807                       |
| Moderate               | 16.7%          | 223,957                       |
| Above-Moderate         | 41.7%          | 559,267                       |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>1,341,827</b>              |
| * Extremely-Low        | 14.5%          | Included in Very-Low Category |

Notes:

Income Distribution:

Income categories are prescribed by California Health and Safety Code (Section 50093, et.seq.). Percents are derived based on ACS reported household income brackets and regional median income, then adjusted based on the percent of cost-burdened households in the region compared with the percent of cost burdened households nationally.

## ATTACHMENT 2

**HCD REGIONAL HOUSING NEED DETERMINATION  
SCAG: June 30, 2021 – October 15, 2029 (8.3 years)**

**Methodology**

| SCAG: June 30, 2021-October 15, 2029 (8.3 Years)<br>HCD Determined Population, Households, & Housing Need |   |   |                                       |  |                  |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| 1.  | <b>Population: DOF 6/30/2029 projection adjusted +3.5 months to 10/15/2029</b>                  |   |                                       |  | 20,455,355       |
| 2.  | <i>- Group Quarters Population: DOF 6/30/2029 projection adjusted +3.5 months to 10/15/2029</i> |   |                                       |  | -363,635         |
| 3.  | <b>Household (HH) Population: October 15, 2029</b>  |   |                                       |  | 20,079,930       |
|   | <b>Household Formation Groups</b>   | <b>HCD Adjusted<br/>DOF Projected<br/>HH Population</b> | <b>DOF HH<br/>Formation<br/>Rates</b> | <b>HCD Adjusted<br/>DOF Projected<br/>Households</b> |                  |
|   |   | 20,079,930  |                                       | 6,801,760  |                  |
|   | under 15 years  | 3,292,955   | n/a                                   | n/a  |                  |
|   | 15 – 24 years   | 2,735,490   | 6.45%                                 | 176,500  |                  |
|   | 25 – 34 years   | 2,526,620   | 32.54%                                | 822,045  |                  |
|   | 35 – 44 years   | 2,460,805   | 44.23%                                | 1,088,305  |                  |
|   | 45 – 54 years   | 2,502,190   | 47.16%                                | 1,180,075  |                  |
|   | 55 – 64 years   | 2,399,180   | 50.82%                                | 1,219,180  |                  |
|   | 65 – 74 years   | 2,238,605   | 52.54%                                | 1,176,130  |                  |
|   | 75 – 84 years   | 1,379,335   | 57.96%                                | 799,455  |                  |
|   | 85+   | 544,750   | 62.43%                                | 340,070  |                  |
| 4.  | <b>Projected Households (Occupied Unit Stock)</b>   |   |                                       |  | 6,801,760        |
| 5.  | + Vacancy Adjustment (2.63%)  |   |                                       |  | 178,896          |
| 6.  | + Overcrowding Adjustment (6.76%)   |   |                                       |  | 459,917          |
| 7.  | + Replacement Adjustment (.50%)   |   |                                       |  | 34,010           |
| 8.  | <i>- Occupied Units (HHs) estimated (June 30, 2021)</i>   |   |                                       |  | -6,250,261       |
| 9.  | + Cost Burden Adjustment (Lower Income: 10.63%, Moderate and Above Moderate Income: 9.28%)      |   |                                       |  | 117,505          |
| <b>6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Regional Housing Need Assessment (RHNA)</b>                                       |   |   |                                       |  | <b>1,341,827</b> |

**Explanation and Data Sources**

- 1-4. Population, Group Quarters, Household Population, & Projected Households: Pursuant to Government Code Section 65584.01, projections were extrapolated from Department of Finance (DOF) projections. Population reflects total persons. Group Quarter Population reflects persons in a dormitory, group home, institution, military, etc. that do not require residential housing. Household Population reflects persons requiring residential housing. Projected Households reflect the propensity of persons, by age-groups, to form households at different rates based on Census trends.
5. Vacancy Adjustment: HCD applies a vacancy adjustment based on the difference between a standard 5% vacancy rate and the region's current "for rent and sale" vacancy percentage to provide healthy market vacancies to facilitate housing availability and resident mobility. The adjustment is the difference between standard 5% and region's current vacancy rate (2.37%) based on the 2013-2017 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) data. For SCAG that difference is 2.63%.
6. Overcrowding Adjustment: In region's where overcrowding is greater than the U.S overcrowding rate of 3.35%, HCD applies an adjustment based on the amount the region's overcrowding rate (10.11%) exceeds the U.S. overcrowding rate (3.35%) based on the 2013-2017 5-year ACS data. For SCAG that difference is 6.76%.

*Continued on next page*

7. Replacement Adjustment: HCD applies a replacement adjustment between .5% & 5% to total housing stock based on the current 10-year average of demolitions in the region's local

government annual reports to Department of Finance (DOF). For SCAG, the 10-year average is .14%, and SCAG's consultation package provided additional data on this input indicating it may be closer to .41%; in either data source the estimate is below the minimum replacement adjustment so the minimum adjustment factor of .5% is applied.

8. Occupied Units: Reflects DOF's estimate of occupied units at the start of the projection period (June 30, 2021).
9. Cost Burden Adjustment: HCD applies an adjustment to the projected need by comparing the difference in cost-burden by income group for the region to the cost-burden by income group for the nation. The very-low and low income RHNA is increased by the percent difference ( $69.88\% - 59.01\% = 10.88\%$ ) between the region and the national average cost burden rate for households earning 80% of area median income and below, then this difference is applied to very low- and low-income RHNA proportionate to the share of the population these groups currently represent. The moderate and above-moderate income RHNA is increased by the percent difference ( $18.65\% - 9.94\% = 8.70\%$ ) between the region and the national average cost burden rate for households earning above 80% Area Median Income, then this difference is applied to moderate and above moderate income RHNA proportionate to the share of the population these groups currently represent. Data is from 2013-2016 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS).