

Community questions to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Regarding the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Process

At previous public meetings, the community raised the following issues, questions or concerns regarding the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process, and the role of the state department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) in this process.

These questions were sent to representatives to HCD and ABAG so they could be aware of the issues, questions and concerns of the residents of Novato.

If these questions have not been answered in the presentation by HCD and ABAG, please feel free to ask the speakers these questions.

QUESTIONS FOR HCD

Explain why we have Housing Element Law.

How has this Housing Element process changed?

Have we been in compliance with a Housing Element since 1969?

Can specific sites be designated for senior housing?

Population and the status of the census? Is there another set of numbers (Census? RHNA?) Why is Novato given a “metropolitan” designation?

Can we get credit for existing units that haven’t been counted?

Please explain the need for AH, not just calculations but forecast of seniors vs. options, # of workers live in Novato, etc.

Who decides density? What is the process to challenge the density?

What’s the connection between ABAG planners and interpretation of SB375 vis-a-vis the RHNA?

QUESTIONS FOR ABAG

What is ABAG and what is their authority? How is ABAG funded?

Does Novato have (and historically had) a representative on ABAG's Executive Board? Where and when are ABAG's Executive Board meetings and how can people participate/attend? Can and how can a person access ABAG Board meeting minutes, reports etc?

Who chooses the Novato ABAG rep & what are their responsibilities and accountability?

What is local government's role in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process released by ABAG?

Are there active state, regional or local groups (League of Calif. Cities etc) working to effect ABAG's RHNA allocation process to afford more local control?

What/where are the other regional associations in the state, and what have they done?

How does the character of the City match with the density designation from ABAG?

How does ABAG calculate the formula for housing numbers?

How has ABAG adjusted their housing requirement number to reflect/consider the glut of homes on the market due to mortgage crisis?

Can you explain the real need for affordable housing (not ABAG) but in terms of # seniors forecasted vs. avail # of options, # of workers live in Novato vs. commute, etc. What are the real housing needs in Novato?

What is local government's role in the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) process released by ABAG?

Is ABAG interested in ensuring the construction of housing for moderate and above moderate income households vs. just housing for lower income households?

What is the cost of non-compliance? What if we don't put in affordable housing?

Has ABAG adjusted their required housing numbers to reflect the glut of homes on the market due to the mortgage crisis? Is ABAG responsible to update their quota allocation based on today's population, jobs, etc. data? They are now lower than originally projected = lower quotas.

Does ABAG have a continuous improvement process to make their #'s more relevant with time?

Housing advocates have asked for units to be allocated for teachers. Is that legal? Presumed only senior and affordable under current law.

What has ABAG done to lower the quotas they get from the state?

Do ABAG's mandates have the force of law?

Can Novato challenge ABAG's mandates in court?

What's the connection between ABAG planners and interpretation of SB375 vis-a-vis the RHNA?

Density requirements based on city size: what size population would Novato have to break itself down to avoid this mandate?

If we identify sites for housing, we comply with state law. But if we never actually build these units, what are consequences? Is it noncompliance if we meet the number of units through different methodology?

What were the raw figures that were put into both the ABAG formulas to come up with Novato's affordable housing allocation?

Why does the growth rate that ABAG uses differ so drastically from Marin County's growth rate?

Has ABAG curbed its projections of Novato's housing and employment growth considering that Hamilton was a one time occurrence? Is this reality reflected in Projections 2007 or Projections 2009?

How does the 175% rule, carry out ABAG's concept of social and economic equity?

While our Metropolitan Statistical Area status dictates that all of the 9 Bay Area counties are dubbed metropolitan, and ABAG can see that Marin County is obviously suburban, can ABAG suggest a compromise for us?

Is it actually smart growth to prescribe the format for virtually every affordable housing grouping using the IRS/HCD guidelines for LIHTC?

Could ABAG help Novato develop a community land trust to rehab foreclosed houses for affordable housing?

Why was 3/4 of Marin County's rehabbed apartments rejected despite HCD verbal assurances that the apartments would serve to fill the county's quota?

ABAG's structure countermands the one city one vote rule. It is virtually alone among the Council Of Governments in this. The regional government is not elected by nor accountable to, the people. Many of the people of Marin feel that ABAG has levied a heavy, uneven tax (allocation) on Marin County which can never be revoked by a majority vote in its own defense. What is the constitutional basis for this use of ABAG's authority?