# Orange County Council of Governments Technical Assistance Panel

2022

## *Conversion from Commercial to Housing*

June 21st - 24th, 2022

ULI Orange County/ Inland Empire

OCCOG

Orange County Council of Governments

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# About ULI

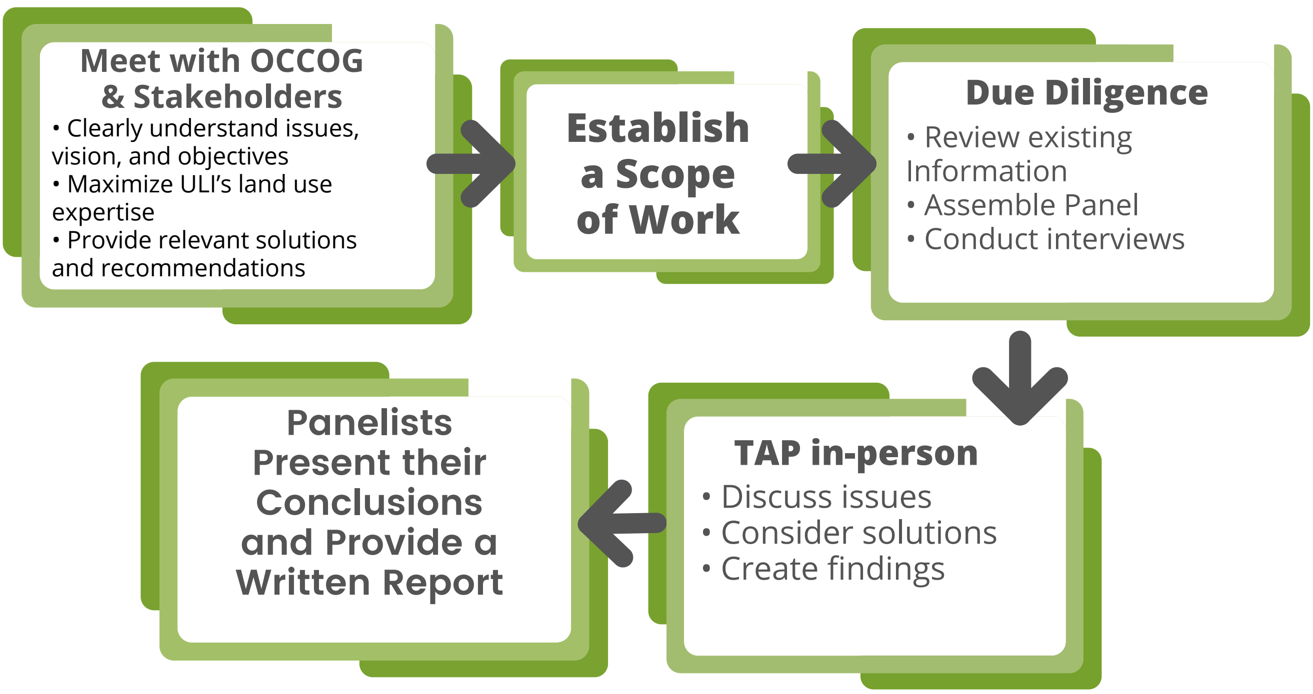
ULI is the oldest and largest network of cross-disciplinary real estate and land use experts in the world. Founded in 1936, ULI now has more than 42,000 members in 81 countries.

**"The Mission of the Urban Land Institute is to shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide.”**

The Orange County Inland/Empire District Council comprises 95 cities and spans three counties in Southern California. With more than 1,000 members, ULI OC/IE is the 13th largest District Council worldwide. ULI OC/IE carries out ULI mission by serving the Orange County and Inland Empire regions with pragmatic land use expertise and education.

# Technical Assistance Panels

TAPs, or Technical Assistance Panels, are part of the ULI Advisory Services program. TAPs are run and implemented by the ULI District Councils. Panelists for these two-day work sessions are selected from the District Council’s membership to address land use challenges that require local knowledge. Seasoned professionals volunteer their time, talent, and expertise to objectively complete a scope of work that is defined by the sponsoring organization. The recommendations of the TAP often build on the organization’s or community’s existing accomplishments.



# Scope of Work

ULI's TAP #1 is focused on the topic most desired by Orange County Cities best practices to select and enable the conversion of underperforming commercial retail and services, industrial, and office properties to residential uses, including evaluating potential tax-revenue loss and, if such losses exist, strategies to make up for them. Topics discussed by the TAP included:

- How to obtain clearance by the California State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on selected non-vacant sites to satisfy Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) obligations.
    - How to identify candidate sites with redevelopment potential.
    - Assessing the potential for various housing types, number of units, mix of income levels (i.e., low, very low, moderate and above moderate-income units).

- Assessing supportive infrastructure required. How to engage the community regarding conversion of uses.
- How to evaluate tax revenue implications.

It is important to note that because current state regulations require "substantial evidence" related to lower-income sites (i.e., very low and low income together), the focus will be on the redevelopment potential for lower-income housing.

# TAP Schedule

The following is the timeline and events leading up to and including the two-day TAP.

**Feb. 2022**
OCCOG contacts ULI re: TAP process to assist OC jurisdictions

**Early June**
Scope of Work drafted, Panel Co-Chairs selected, Panel invitations sent

**Early June**
Co-Chairs interview ULI Commercial Local Product Council - commercial sites to residential

**June 13 & 14**
Panel Co-Chairs conduct stakeholder interviews

**June 21**
Panel convenes for 1st day of TAP

**June 24**
Panel convenes for second day of TAP, initial TAP Presentation to OCCOG staff

**August 2**
Key findings & conclusions outlined in presentation & written report

# TAP Process

## 1. Statement of Problem

The main issue to solve was how to select and qualify (with substantial evidence pursuant to state law and HCD standards) non-vacant sites with existing commercial uses and analyze related considerations of infrastructure, community engagement, and potential sales-tax revenue loss.

### a. Background

California State law requires that all cities and counties have a housing element as part of the legally required general plan. The housing element is the primary planning document for how a jurisdiction will meet community housing needs, and it is required to be updated every eight years. One critical component of the Housing Element is the identification of the precise properties where housing is planned, the number of units on each property or “site,” and the household income levels for the units on each site (i.e., very low, low, moderate or above moderate-income/households based on the county median income). This list of properties is referred to as the ”Site Inventory.”

HCD site inventory guidelines for housing element updates have changed since jurisdictions prepared the 5th cycle housing element updates in 2012 to 2014. It now has very specific requirements and parameters for what sites are allowed for the housing element. Additionally, if a jurisdiction relies on non-vacant sites for more than 50 percent of the lower-income units required by the RHNA, the existing use is presumed to be an impediment to residential development. (Very low and low-income units combined are considered "lower-income units.") In this instance, the jurisdiction must provide substantial evidence that the non-vacant site will redevelop into lower-income housing. It is important to note that HCD’s definition of a “vacant site” is a property with no improvements and no current uses; for instance, a parking lot would be considered non-vacant because it has a current use.

Given the lack of vacant land in the Orange County region, the majority of jurisdictions will rely on non-vacant properties in the site inventory for these units. HCD’s guidance is provided in the Housing Element Site Inventory Guidebook (https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/housing-element/docs/sites_inventory_memo_final06102020.pdf), which states that substantial evidence would include proof of a lease expiring or a property owner letter stating their interest in developing residential uses. This information is considered the “gold standard” of evidence. However, this information is challenging to obtain—lease information is not publicly available and property owners may choose not the respond or be involved in the public/stakeholder outreach process—and many jurisdictions will need to rely on market analysis, county assessment roll data, development trends, and regulatory incentives to provide the evidence.

Additionally, lower income sites must be zoned to allow residential uses with a density of at least 30 units/acre.If the existing zoning for any site identified with lower income units does not allow for residential uses at this density, the jurisdiction must amend the zoning for those sites. For jurisdictions that do not meet the State-mandated deadline (in SCAG region, this deadline was October 15, 2021), rezoning must be completed within one year of the deadline, or October 15, 2022. However, the governor signed SB 197 on June 30, which changed State law to allow 3 years and 120 days from the statutory deadline for the adoption of housing elements in SCAG region jurisdictions and other jurisdictions in the state that adhere to certain requirements.

Moreover, State law changes and HCD guidance/interpretation has made identifying and justifying sites to meet RHNA obligations challenging. In addition, every jurisdiction will be required to complete zoning modifications that will result in residential development as planned in the housing element over the eight-year cycle.

### b. TAP-Identified Topics

The TAP's goal was to provide the jurisdictions with strategies for obtaining certification of their 6th cycle housing elements as well as best practices for site selection. The TAP focused on the following topics:

**Developer Criteria in ID Potential Housing Sites – What Cities Need To Know!**

**How Densities Align to Feasible Housing Products in OC Market**

**Best Practices For Zoning**

**Why Objective Design Standards are Needed**


**Retail Sales Tax Loss Concerns**

## 2. Foundational Requirements For Viable Housing Projects

### a. Developer Criteria


The diagram above illustrates the four cornerstones to a viable development project. During the TAP process, developers were asked what makes a housing project viable and to identify the minimum requirements. The diagram above identifies the four factors all developers assess about a property to determine if they will move forward with a project and whether the subject property involves a conversion from commercial to residential. Because development projects take years from the planning phase to completion, a number of risk factors are involved with this assessment. Will the residential market be in the same place in two or three years? Will the demand be there for this housing type? In addition to appropriate zoning to reduce risk, other factors are important to understand the viability of a site, the return on investment of a project, and whether the risk is worthwhile. These four requirements need to fall into place for a development of any type to happen.

## Financial Feasibility

Housing developers have to show a return on a project unless it is funded with public housing tax credits or some other source that does not need a return. When private or institutional investors are involved, a project must show a return, and a number of considerations drive that return. A formula is used to underwrite deals to determine what that return will be. The issue that developers currently face is that typical benchmarks such as construction costs are unsteady, so it's hard to accurately assess the return on investments. Other data typically considered includes:

- Is there surplus publicly owned land available?
- Do funds need to be borrowed or through an investment partner?
- What kind of return is needed?
- What other cost can be expected, including infrastructure, roads, grading, site working, and environmental clearance?

Land cost is a big issue in Orange County, so looking at surplus or former redevelopment land, particularly the former housing assets of the redevelopment agency, can really increase project feasibility.

When the process is unpredictable, a site will sit idle, and costs will likely increase, making it harder to achieve the needed return on investment. These issues can also impact a developer's ability to get a deal financed and underway.

## Willing Seller

As obvious as it sounds, there needs to be a willing seller. (This can be overlooked by a city when considering suitable sites to meet RHNA obligations). More importantly, there needs to be a seller that will agree to a sale in line with market conditions.

## Zoning

Assessing risk is part of a developer's analysis. The zoning risk occurs when a parcel does not have the necessary zoning regulations in place to enable a housing project that is feasible. Those regulations go beyond allowable use and density to include regulations that support the type of housing that is feasible for the site. General plan or zoning amendments or a specific plan process can delay the entitlement and create greater uncertainty for the developer. Shorter entitlement and permit times really do help in that process because time is money in the development world. When that process can be expedited, it lowers risk. When the housing market is strong, as it is now in Orange County, processing a general plan or zoning amendment that is supported by a jurisdiction may be an acceptable risk. In these situations, the leadership of elected officials is also part of the risk analysis.

Parking requirements are also an important issue. Though reduced parking requirements are helpful to the financial feasibility of a project (the cost can be as high as $50,000 per parking space), lenders will not provide financing to projects that are under-parked based on market demand. Therefore, understanding repercussions of lowering parking requirements to align with what lenders are looking for is an important consideration. Doing outreach with local developers may truly offer assistance with this matter.

In addition to zoning, other local or State policies can impact the viability of a project. These include rent control, inclusionary housing policies, prevailing wage requirements, and other community benefit expectations.

## Parcel Considerations

Parcel considerations include the size and configuration of the site, site improvements needed, potential site remediation, adjacent uses, access, and other improvement costs. Developers want as much certainty as possible on each of these cornerstones so they can deliver the expected project and return on investment.

The following chart summarizes the key feasibility factors from the perspective of the development community, and these are the determining factors when deciding whether to pursue a residential development project.

**Lender requires a certain amount of parking (care with lowering parking requirement)**

**Investors require minimum rate of return**

**Developers have less control over construction and soft costs – land cost an issue. Surplus or former RDA land increases feasibility.**

**Lower risk = greater probability of housing development**

**Shorter entitlement / permit times**

**Cost < Revenues**

# 3. Detailed Checklist for Identifying Suitable Housing Sites

Cities have been tasked with a challenge to provide a site inventory for housing sites to meet their RHNA numbers. The following checklist was developed through the TAP based on developer experience in the Orange County housing market. This “Institutional Developer Certified” checklist is intended to assist jurisdictions with their site inventory exercise. The TAP suggested that each of these checklist items be considered when deciding if a parcel is a good candidate for residential development or future conversion to residential development.

A general note: this checklist primarily applies to properties of 1.5 acres or more. With that said, the panelists fully understand that many jurisdictions need to include smaller sites than that, when that is the case, examples of similarly sized parcels with completed projects can help provide evidence to HCD of site viability (see item noted in red). However, when including sites smaller than 1.5 acres, an important evidence point would be a table listing all completed redevelopment projects during the 5th cycle where commercial uses converted to residential uses on properties smaller than 1.5 acres.

These projects can be entirely within the jurisdiction or they can include properties in the county to demonstrate that conversion of smaller properties is possible and viable. An additional option would be to focus on parcel assemblage —multiple contiguous parcels under common ownership.

One-and-a-half acres was chosen as the ideal minimum because according to the developer panelists, that acreage or greater accommodates product types that have been successful in Orange County. That is not to say that other innovative ideas will not work, but when providing analysis to HCD, proven/fact-based data help with Housing Element site inventory approval.

- Year built (older building)
- Improvement/Land Ratio < 1.0
- Land Utilization/ Coverage (low)
- Property Owner interest (initial interest, meeting or letter)
- Ownership Pattern (Single or Multiple owner? Same zoning?)
- Leases (month to month best but no more than 3 or 4 years)
- Lack of Business License activity
- Rent/SF (lower than City average)
- Vacancy rate
- Deteriorated Building/Lot Conditions
- 6 rejected sites
- Engagement with local developers

**Parcel size < 1.5 acres: examples of completed projects**

Other considerations when determining if a commercial or industrial site is ripe for residential conversion is building age, vacancy rate, business license activity, or lack thereof. A shortfall of business license activitymay indicate that there is a lack of investment or long-term viability. Vacancy rates as well as rents per square foot can be compared to city averages to understand the condition of the commercial/industrial property. If such metrics are below city averages, then a legitimate reason may be given for including that particular parcel on the inventory list. Similarly, leases that are month-to-month, invalid, or soon expiring can be indicators for the viability of a parcel's current use.

A jurisdiction should also consider whether the assessed value of the property is a fraction of the land value and also examine if the lot or building is showing deterioration. Both of these criteria can offer practical reasoning for selecting a parcel.

Another suggested strategy for the housing element inventory is to include six sites that were rejected from the site inventory for various reasons. This will demonstrate to HCD that a thoughtful analysis took place to identify appropriate sites. In addition, engagement with local developers is necessary to really understand what product types will work, given the attributes of your particular community.

# 4. Tips on Zoning

The TAP identified what jurisdictions need to consider when amending their zoning codes to accommodate the RHNA sites or modernize residential zones overall.

Not all densities will work on all lots or in all jurisdictions. Jurisdictions should look at their local markets to understand the housing types that can be feasible. Densities can be set too high for the market and will discourage development. There is a “sweet spot” for affordable housing and market rate “missing middle” housing that needs to be understood. In addition, if densities are set too high for the market or parcel size, landowners begin to believe that their property is worth more than it is, given what is feasible based on rents or sales price. This results in protracted negotiations that are potentially go nowhere.

**Not all densities will work on all lots.**

**Mandatory vertical mixed use can be tricky– certain conditions and policies required for success.**

**Understand feasible housing product types in your community and zone accordingly.**

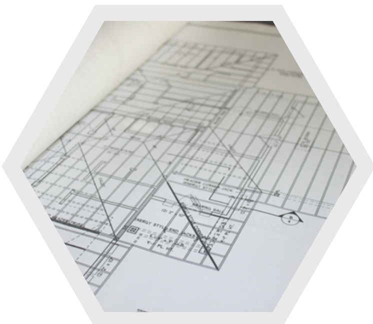
**Zoning with densities 18–25 units/acre will encourage missing middle ownership housing (Density Bonus).**

**Zoning with densities 30–50 units/acre encourages very low/ low Income Housing (Density Bonus).**

- Developers like this range–anything higher will not incentivize density bonus that developers want.

**Densities can be too high**

- Barriers to development (SB 330)
- Hold-out Landowners



**Reduce Zoning requirements for certain things (parking, open space, etc.).**

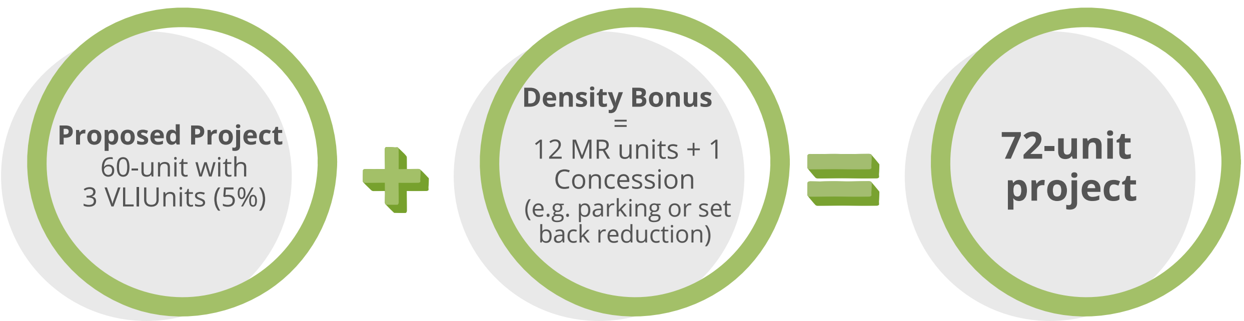
# 5. Density Bonus

California law allows all developers to obtain higher densities than a jurisdiction's zoning code allows if affordable units are proposed as part of a project. The law contains a sliding scale on density bonuse —the more affordable units proposed as part of a project, the more density and development concessions are received.

A density bonus applies to rental projects with units that are income restricted to very low-and/or low-income households—moderate income set-aside units for rental projects are not eligible. For ownership units, density bonuses can be received for income-restricted units for very low-, low-, and/or moderate-income households. It is important to note that jurisdictions must have an adopted density bonus ordinance and can allow higher density bonuses than those specified under state law. A density bonus can be an incredibly useful tool for strategic solutions on any given site. It can give developers the ability to build higher-density projects inclusive of affordable units. There is flexibility inherent in the incentives, and concessions, and development standard waivers can be very powerful in increasing unit count and making a constrained site much more available to a robust variety of unit types.

***The results of the TAP indicate that in Orange County currently, zoning for densities at 30 to 50 units per acre maximum will encourage for-profit developers to include very low-and low-income units through use of the Density Bonus.***

Developers like to use density bonuses, especially because of the concessions. Therefore, if the zoning is slightly less dense than what a project would dictate, a density bonus can create the opportunity to include affordable units, especially if the developer needs a concession of some type. For example, if the maximum density is 50 units per acre and a developer would like to do a 70- or 80-unit project, they can utilize density bonus law that would include both market-rate units and affordable units. Zoning with higher densities will likely not incentivize affordable housing development in the current market, resulting in developers not choosing to go forward on that site. See the example below




Lastly, it is important to note how the density bonus law is anticipated to be used by a developer. Industry professionals have found that some cities have cultivated the expertise on how best to use density bonus law to help get proposed projects over the finish line and achieve affordable housing goals. All jurisdictions are strongly encouraged to dig into it to density bonus law and not be shy about wielding it from the city side to a developer with some suggestions. An excellent resource on this topic is a report by Meyers Nave: https://www.meyersnave.com/california-density-bonus-law-2022-update/.

# 6. Housing Product Types: What Works in OC?

Translating density to a real housing type being built in the marketplace was found by the TAP to be an important topic to include in this report. There is often a lack of understanding that results in density ranges that have no relationship to real world solutions for what's feasible in a jurisdiction. Because housing is a top priority, jurisdictions should also consider what character impacts such designations may have. Therefore, the TAP panelists put together a matrix illustrating what product types are typically found in certain densities. Furthermore, the red, yellow, and green colors indicate what currently works best in Orange County, with green being the best and red being the hardest to develop based on stated reasons.

It is important to note that these could change based on market conditions and that just because it is designated "red" today, it is not absolutely infeasible depending on the location and time frame .

### 2022 Housing Products in Orange County

| Dwelling Units/ Acre | Product Type | Parking | Lot Size | | Works in OC? | Other Observations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Min. | Pref. | | |
| 12-25 | 2 Story (12-16 units)<br>3 Story (16-25 units) | 2 car attached (tandem) | 0.5 | 2+ | Yes | For sale or rental |
| 22-28 * | 3 Story Garden | At grade or tuck-under | 3 | 4+ | Yes | Works best at min. 100 units |
| 30-40 | 4 Story Garden | At grade or tuck-under | 3 | 4+ | Maybe | Expensive - works when low parking and land costs |
| 50-60 | 4 Story Wrap | Above grade structure | 2.5 ** | 4+ | Yes | |
| 65-80 | 5 Story Wrap | Above grade structure (1/bdrm + .1 guest) | 2.5 ** | 4+ | Maybe | Structural engineering required - works if rents support costs. |
| 80-200 | Podium | Below grade + above grade structure | 0.75 | 1.5+ | Seldom | Expensive to build - only in few OC locations with highest rents (Newport |
| 200+ | Tower | | | | Rare | Most expensive to build, only works when rents very high |

** - Density dependent on parking requirements and setbacks.*
** not irregularly shaped sites.*

The following are examples in Orange County that help illustrate what these product type and density ranges look like. In addition, these provide *evidence* of the conversion of non-vacant lots to residential uses.

# Orange County Case Studies: Conversions

## Cypress (2017)

**Replaced Obsolete Commercial Building On 3.7 Acres**

**52 For-Sale 2-Story Townhomes (14 Du/Ac)**

# Orange County Case Studies: Conversions

## La Habra (2018)

**Replaced Obsolete Commercial Building On 3.7 Acres**

**52 For-Sale 2-Story Townhomes (14 Du/Ac)**

# Orange County Case Studies: 4-Story Garden

## Huntington Beach (2015)


**Former Levitz Furniture Site on 12.5 acres**

**487 units (39 du/ac) Plus Retail**

# Orange County Case Studies: 5-Story Wrap

## Fullerton (2021)


Vacant Car Dealership on 4.8 acres Next To a Residential Neighborhood

290 Luxury Units Plus Retail (60 du/ac)

# Orange County Case StudiesL5-Story Wrap

## Santa Ana (2021)

**Former Light Industrial Building on 4.5-acre site**

**Mixed-Use Project, 403 Units**

# 7. Why Are Objective Design Standards Needed?

State housing law requires local jurisdictions to have clear and objective zoning standards when processing a housing development. Gone are the days of relying on ambiguous design guidelines in decision-making to approve, deny, or reduce the density of a housing application. Furthermore, recent state housing laws also require that housing development applications be processed administratively, which means that most jurisdictions need to modernize their zoning regulations to address the fullrange of concerns related to site planning, building form and orientation, and other design aspects of a housing project. The TAP panelists suggest adopting "objective design standards" (ODS) for streamlining development projects and help further remove developer risk and uncertainty.

Design standards are "objective" if they are measurable, verifiable, and knowable to all parties prior to project submittal. Therefore, a planning review process that utilizes ODS removes subjective judgment by a public official.

Objective design standards are defined in Government Code Sections 65913.4and 66300(a)(7) as standards that:

***"involve no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official before submittal."***

The main points that jurisdictions should understand about objective design standards include:

- Retain local control & legal compliance
    - By-right projects
    - Clear and transparent approval basis (HCD enforcement)
- Expedite approval process

Objective design standards for multifamily are now being prepared by organizations throughout the state. Each should be tailored to the locations where new multifamily housing is expected in order to address the following:

- Location-specific issues.
- Typical lot sizes and configurations.
- Possible architectural styles deemed desirable by a jurisdiction.
- More detailed standards related the design, function, and type of open space provided.
- Other aspects of a housing project to ensure quality and livability.

# 8.What to do About the Loss of Retail?

The loss of retail sales tax is a concern for many jurisdictions, and with the additional focus on converting underutilized retail and commercial properties into housing sites, public officials are concerned about how to fill that economic gap. The retail industry has been changing for years, with the loss of brick-and-mortar retail in favor of on-line shopping. In addition, many cities have been over-retailed in hopes of capturing as much sales tax as possible. The pandemic only accelerated the trend to online shopping, resulting in vacant stores and commercial centers in every jurisdiction.

The TAP panelists acknowledge the concern about the loss of sales tax and recommend that a jurisdiction seek to strengthen remaining retail by adding amenities to improve performance and longevity. Sales tax is not generated by the store, but by consumers, particularly residents in an area. Infill housing around retail and services can result in higher sales taxes per square foot, particularly if thecenter becomes more of an experience or destination. And finally, because the value of new residential is so high in Orange County, the conversion of vacant or underperforming retail centers will result inhigher property tax revenues to a jurisdiction.

**Ecommerce Has Changed Consumer Preferences — Experiential Retail & Restaurants**

- Adding To Residential Base Supports Retail

**Add Residential To Larger Retail Centers—Right Sizing Retail Can Result in Higher Sales/Sq. Ft.**

**Converting Underperforming Retail/Commercial = Higher Property Taxes**

- Sales Price/Appraised Value =Assessed Value Property Tax Revenue A Portion Of 1% Of AV

A future TAP is suggested to study this concern more comprehensively.

# 9.Recommendations for Advocacy

TAP panelists were asked to identify potential topics that OCCOG may want to advocate related to the impacts of all the housing element laws that primarily involve increased state funding. The following are suggestions from the private-sector perspective:

1. Continue to look for grants to assist with general plan updates, modernizing zoning regulations and covering associated environmental review.

2. Advocate for more State funding to assist in implementing the host of new programs agreed to in the housing element. Many cities are challenged with staff constraints, which is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Additional grants can assist in supplementing staff to accomplish housing objectives.

3. Advocate for State funding to enable local jurisdiction to assemble small sites so they become more desirable for developers to acquire and build.

Other advocacy topics are noted.

- LEAP And Other Grants For General Plan Updates/Right-size Zoning/Environmental Review
- State Funding For Housing Element Implementation (Programs And Actions)
- State Funding/Local Tool For Assembling Small Sites
- State Funding to Fill Retail Sales Tax Gap/Fund Services For New Housing Residents
- Outreach Plan Toolkit (NIMBYS)
- SCAG Recommendations for RHNA/CEQA Reform

# Summary/Conclusion

In conclusion, the TAP recommendation includes the following recommendations to jurisdictions in Orange County related to achieving housing element compliance and implementation:

**Use ULI/Developer Certified Checklist to Find and Qualify Sites (Substantial Evidence)**

**Right-Size Zoning to Support Financial Feasibility (Product Types that Work in OC)**

**Adopt Objective Design Standards to Retain Local Control**

**Advocate for State Funding to Backfill Retail Sales Tax Gap and Fund Services For New Housing Residents**

# TAP Participants
## Co-Chairs

A wide cross-section of seasoned development, planning, real estate, and financial professionals with deep experience in the Orange County market area were involved in this TAP. A complete listing of participants is provided below.

### Hitta Mosesman, Harris & Associates
*Vice President*

Hitta Mosesman has spent decades building a better California. In her 20 years of consulting experience, she has worked with cities, counties, special districts, and other entities in the areas of municipal finance, housing, real estate, and economic development—always with the goal of helping communities thrive. Hitta brings to Harris a keen understanding of the unique issues different communities face and how to find sustainable solutions. Her expertise across multiple service areas allows Hitta to understand how legislation and municipal financing affects desired public agency initiatives, such as general fund sustainability/revenue opportunities, affordable housing and economic development. The strong relationships she has cultivated with city managers and agency department heads has established Hitta as a highly trusted advisor to public sector clients.

### Karen Gulley, PlaceWorks
*Managing Principal*

Karen Gulley has a talent for strategy and innovative problem solving that has been honed by 30 years of experience in community planning and design. As a Managing Principal at PlaceWorks, she leads an immensely talented team of urban designers, site planners/designers, landscape architects, and planners to imagine and produce highly creative plans and designs that are as workable and implementable as they are unique. She has led more than 40 specific plans, including two prominent specific plans in Orange County: Beach Boulevard Specific Plan for Anaheim and the Tustin Legacy Specific Plan for the City of Tustin. Over the years, Karen has developed a solid practice and portfolio in transit-oriented development (TOD), urban infill development, and corridor revitalization projects. Her work ranges from vision plans to implementation strategies, each developed in a collaborative effort with city staff, regional agencies, and the public. Karen's an active member of the Urban Land Institute, including: ULI Women's Leadership Council; co-chair of ULI/IE Technical Advisory Committee; and ULI National Product Council for Urban Revitalization.

### Julia Malisos, WHA
*Principal*

Julia is a planner with 15 years of progressive experience across a range of professional functions in the development industry. She has proven ability to obtain jurisdictional approvals, manage large-scale multi-faceted projects, and lead teams of both internal and external personnel. Julia is experienced in physical and policy planning for infill development as well as greenfield master-planning. From 2012-2019, Julia was a Planning and Transportation Commissioner for the City of Mission Viejo and served as the Chair and Vice Chair as well as a Traffic Subcommittee and Design Review Subcommittee member. Julia's unique experience in both the private and public sector has tremendously contributed to her success in the planning industry from both sides of the process.

# TAP Participants

## Planning and Financial Consultants

### Alan Loomis, PlaceWorks

*Principal, Urban Design*

An award-winning urban designer, planner and educator with over 25 years of experience, Alan recently joined PlaceWorks as Principal of Urban Design. Based in the firm's Los Angeles office, he is responsible for growing PlaceWorks' urban design practice and plays a key role in high-profile design projects throughout California. From 2017 to 2020 Alan was the City Urban Designer for Santa Monica. In this role, he was the City's lead for Promenade 3.0 a strategic design plan to re-envision the iconic Third Street Promenade. Alan is a frequent commentator and tour guide on Los Angeles urbanism and history. He has served on juries for APA Awards, the "LA Lights the Way" street light design competition, and on interview panels to select new planners, urban designers and architects for the Cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, Santa Monica, and Santa Ana, among others. From 2014 to 2022 he served on the Pasadena Design Commission, and since 2019 on the Board of Advisors to the Woodbury University School of Architecture, where he previously taught for ten years.

### Richard Gollis, The Concord Group

*Co-Founder & Principal*

Richard M. Gollis is a Co-Founder and Principal of The Concord Group based in the Newport Beach office. Richard's expertise in strategic market analysis, development programming, transaction due diligence and valuation extends across all real estate asset classes. With a career beginning in Atlanta and spanning the country Richard offers an exceptional breadth of experience that makes him a trusted advisor. He works frequently with investors, developers and public agencies solve complex development challenges. Across the country, Richard has led TCG teams on projects that have positively influenced infrastructure and development patterns including transit-oriented nodes and corridor plans; new redevelopment in the urban core; redevelopment of suburban retail to mixed use; and master planned communities.

### Cecilia Kim, Harris & Associates

*Senior Planner*

Cecilia Kim blends the disciplines of planning, design, and engineering with an analytical, detail-orientedapproach to leadership and problem solving. She has provided technical expertise in urban planningand design for more than 15 years—both in the United States and in her native South Korea. As a project manager, urban designer, and policy planner, Cecilia is skilled at coordinating projects across diverse professional disciplines, mediums, and departments. From land use and community engagement to development regulations and sustainability policies, Harris clients benefit from Cecilia'swide range of knowledge and experience. She also excels at creative design and translating theessence of a project into engaging visual graphics.

### Genevieve Sharrow, MIG

*Senior Project Manager*

Genevieve Sharrow is a highly versatile urban planner whose experience encompasses a diversity of award-winning projects, including zoning codes, housing policy, general plans, specific plans, parks and recreation master plans, and environmental impact analyses. Genevieve's work as a Senior Project Manager at MIG, Inc. focuses on viable implementation, responding to immediate issues while planning with the fluidity and flexibility to adapt to change. Genevieve has a B.A. in Social Anthropology from the University of Michigan and a M.A. in Urban Planning from the University of California, Los Angeles.

# TAP Participants

## Public Sector | Developers

### Sergio Ramirez, City of Anaheim

*Director of Economic Development*

Sergio Ramirez is director of Economic Development for the city of Anaheim, where he has serviced since August 2021. Ramirez plays a leading role in once-in-a-generation investment and development planned around Honda Center and throughout the Platinum Triangle, and in and around the Disneyland Resort. He is leading revitalization of Beach Boulevard, the economic heart of west Anaheim, with new shopping, dining spaces, and homes. Ramirez is also focused on revitalizing Brookhurst Street, Euclid Street, State College Boulevard, and other major corridors and retail centers across the city. In the Anaheim Canyon, Ramirez is enhancing the 2,600-acre business park with a diverse range of business clusters focused around industry and innovation.

### Ryan Aeh, City Ventures

*Senior Vice President*

For nearly 20 years Ryan's efforts has led to the development over 2,500 homes in Southern California's supply constrained coastal infill markets. Ryan is responsible for land acquisition, asset management, project design, entitlement, and permitting. Ryan and his team work closely with local public agencies and private landowners to transform underutilized sites into vibrant new homes and mixed-use communities. Ryan currently serves as a Board member on the Irvine Community Land Trust, a nonprofitorganization dedicated to creating permanently affordable housing in Orange County. In 2019, Ryan was promoted to Partner at City Ventures and was named "40 Under 40" in Orange County by the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce.

### Andrew Nelson, Red Oak Investments

*Principal*

Andrew B. Nelson is a principal with Red Oak Investments, an urban real estate development company focused on infill neighborhoods in Los Angeles and Orange County. The firm creates value by redeveloping and converting obsolete commercial property into multi-family and mixed use projects. The firm has special expertise in project entitlements requiring general plan updates, zone changes, and adaptations addressing sensitive neighborhood and contextual concerns. Prior to his work at Red Oak, Andrew managed the orderly liquidation of bank-owned properties for Lehman Brothers Bank, asset-managed a Class A multifamily portfolio for Irvine Company Apartment Communities, and directed a wide range of acquisitions, financing and development activities for affordable housing developer Wasatch Advantage Group.

### John Santry, Ledcor Development

*Senior Vice President*

John Santry is the Senior Vice President, California and leads the Costa Mesa office within Ledcor Development LP. He has over 26 years of real estate investment experience and his depth of experience includes all facets of real estate development and acquisition, including site selection, due diligence, market research analysis, contract negotiation, financial modeling and development analysis, project entitlement, design consultant team management, and project financing. His expertise also includes construction oversight, property managementoversight, asset management, and property dispositions.

# TAP Participants
## Attorneys

### Susan Hori, Manatt
*Partner, Land Use*

Susan Hori's practice focuses on obtaining land use development entitlements for landowners and developers, including local land use approvals, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance, and state and federal regulatory agency permits for real estate development projects. The hallmark of Susan's practice is her track record of success in navigating the complex process of multiagency permits and approvals. Her clients include landowners, financial institutions, developers and builders in the residential, retail, hotel/resort, and commercial and industrial development industries. Susan has represented clients on issues involving CEQA, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the California Coastal Act, Section 404 permitting under the Clean Water Act, National Historic Preservation Act compliance and Endangered Species Act permitting, including work on habitat conservation plans.

### David Smith, Manatt
*Partner, Land Use*

David Smith counsels land developers, conservation companies, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and individuals at the intersection of law and government on land use entitlement,real estate development and regulatory compliance. He is frequently engaged in entitlement and permitting matters for development projects that are, or have the potential to be, particularly contentious and complicated. David is a skilled negotiator with local and state jurisdictions, as well as federal agencies. His practice includes California's climate change law (SB 375, AB 32, et al.) andwater supply law (SB 211, SB 610), and state and federal endangered species acts. Other specific areas of focus are the McAteer-Petris Act, the federal Clean Water Act and Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and  California Environmental Quality Act, and California's planning and zoning laws.

## ULI Staff & Support

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