

# 5.0 Public Policies and Practices

Public policies established at the state, regional, and local levels can affect housing development and therefore, may have an impact on the range of housing choices available to residents. This chapter discusses the public policies enacted by jurisdictions within the Urban County and their potential impacts on housing development. To identify potential impediments to fair housing choice and affordable housing development, the CDC requested that participating jurisdictions provide zoning-related information via a survey and reviewed housing-related documents (e.g. housing elements, previous fair housing assessments, Consolidated Plans).

## Housing Element Law and Compliance

The housing element is one of seven mandated elements of the local general plan. Enacted in 1969, housing element law requires that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The law acknowledges that for the private market to adequately address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for and do not unduly constrain housing development.

Under state law, jurisdictions must update their housing elements every five years. Jurisdictions in Los Angeles County were required to complete a housing element update by December 31, 2000. State housing element law requires each jurisdiction to evaluate its policies to ensure that they are not constraining to the development, improvement, and preservation of housing. The housing element is also required to include goals, policies, and programs to address fair housing. A housing element found by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to be in compliance with state law is presumed to have adequately addressed its policy constraints.

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 24 of the 49 jurisdictions in the Urban County do not have housing elements that received approval from HCD for compliance with State law.

According to HCD, half of the 49 jurisdictions in the Los Angeles Urban County (48 participating cities and the County) had housing elements that did not comply with state law as of November, 2002. The County's 2000-2005 Housing Element, which addresses housing issues in the unincorporated areas, was determined to be in compliance with State requirements. The HCD compliance status of housing elements for jurisdictions in the Urban County is presented in Table 5-1. As of November, 2002, seven cities had not submitted updated (2000-2005) Housing Elements for HCD review.

**Table 5-1**  
**Review Status of Housing Elements**

Jurisdictions with housing elements found by HCD to be <b>in compliance</b> with state law		Jurisdictions with housing elements found by HCD to be <b>out of compliance</b> with state law	
• Agoura Hills	• Maywood	• Artesia	• La Canada Flintridge
• Arcadia	• Rancho Palos Verdes	• Avalon	• La Habra Heights
• Azusa	• San Dimas	• Bell	• Lomita
• Calabasas	• San Fernando	• Bell Gardens	• Malibu
• Cerritos	• San Gabriel	• Beverly Hills	• Manhattan Beach
• Claremont	• Santa Fe Springs	• Commerce	• Monrovia
• Culver City	• Signal Hill	• Covina	• Rolling Hills
• Diamond Bar	• South El Monte	• Cudahy	• Rolling Hills Estates
• El Segundo	• Walnut	• Duarte	• San Marino
• La Mirada	• West Hollywood	• Hawaiian Gardens	• Sierra Madre
• La Puente	• Westlake Village	• Hermosa Beach	• South Pasadena
• La Verne	• County of Los Angeles	• Irwindale	• Temple City
• Lawndale			

Source: Department of Housing and Community Development, State of California, November, 2002.

## Factors Influencing Compliance

A review of comment letters issued by HCD to the 24 cities with out-of-compliance housing elements indicates the following:

- **Failure to Identify Available Residential Sites:** The most common reason for non-compliance is the failure to identify adequate sites to accommodate a jurisdiction’s share of regional housing needs, especially the needs of lower- and moderate-income households. In most instances, HCD requested jurisdictions to expand the analysis of available sites and demonstrate how they will facilitate housing development on the sites. Specifically, HCD requested a few cities to consider ways to facilitate mixed-use development, infill development, and/or second units. HCD encouraged several cities to pursue rezoning of non-residential areas/sites for housing and provide additional incentives to facilitate land recycling to accommodate the share of regional housing needs.
- **Restrictive Development Standards and Procedures:** For some cities, HCD identified local development standards and procedures as constraining to the development of affordable housing. Development standards including, but not limited to, height and density limits, parking requirements, minimum dwelling unit sizes, and permitting requirements were cited. For instance, three cities do not permit multi-family housing by right and require the approval of a conditional use permit. HCD perceives this requirement as a constraint that negatively affects the timing, cost, and feasibility of multi-family development.
- **Lack of Strong Housing Program Commitments:** Some cities need to strengthen their proposed housing programs and provide greater details specifying how they plan to implement the programs, including the responsible agency, timelines, funding sources, and measurable objectives.
- **Other Non-compliance Issues:** In addition, several issues were cited by HCD: the downzoning of existing multi-family areas in cities that do not have adequate sites to meet future housing needs; the need for cities to analyze constraints on housing for persons with disabilities and evaluate their zoning codes for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; and the need to correct or modify local density bonus and second unit ordinances to be consistent with State law.

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Several recent legislative changes address these specific issues. Refer to later discussions on limitations on downzoning, second units, density bonus, and housing for persons with disabilities.

## Regional Housing Needs - Limitations on Downzoning

As previously mentioned, local governments are required by State housing element law to zone sufficient land to meet their fair share of regional housing needs. As part of the housing element, a jurisdiction is required to identify an inventory of vacant and underutilized sites at sufficient densities to fulfill its share of regional housing needs.

Often, as time progresses, market conditions, development policies, and political directions in a jurisdiction may change, leading to downzoning of properties to lower density categories (e.g. from R-3 to R-2), rezoning of properties from residential to nonresidential uses, or reduction in the permitted density within a zoning category (e.g. from 20 units per acre to 18 units per acre).

Recently passed, Assembly Bill 2292 requires a local government to make a finding that a density reduction, rezoning, or downzoning is consistent with its housing element if that government proposes to require or permit reduction of density of a parcel below the density used in determining housing element compliance. The bill also provides for courts to award attorneys' fees and costs if the court determines that the density reduction or downzoning was made illegally.

## Survey of Jurisdictions

As part of the assessment of how zoning and planning laws affect the location, availability, and accessibility of housing, the 48 participating jurisdictions and the County were asked to complete a written survey. This survey was designed to identify potential governmental constraints to the provision of housing, namely zoning regulations that may constrain the development and availability of a range of housing options. A total of 42 cities and the County responded to the survey. Major findings of the survey are summarized below and presented in Table 5-2.

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See later sections for detailed discussions on these topics.

- About 44 percent of the surveyed jurisdictions have not established procedures for reasonable accommodation.
- Two-thirds of the jurisdictions currently do not provide fair housing and sensitivity training to staff.
- Eight cities do not permit multi-family (two units or more) housing developments by right in any of the zoning districts.

- Contrary to State law, three cities do not permit by-right residential care facilities serving six or fewer persons, including licensed family care homes, foster homes, or group homes.
- Two cities have occupancy standards that limit the number of persons (related or unrelated) that may share a housing unit.
- One city restricts access to housing for relations failing to qualify as a family.

**Table 5-2  
Summary of Survey Results**

Question	Percentage of Cities (Number of Cities)
1. Does your city’s zoning ordinance contain a definition of family as: a) individual; b) two or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption; and/or c) a group of not more than a certain number of unrelated persons as a single housekeeping unit?	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>72% (31)</b>
No	28% (12)
2. Does your city’s zoning ordinance restrict access to housing for relations failing to qualify as a family as defined in Question 1?	
Yes	2% ( 1)
<b>No</b>	<b>98% (41)</b>
3. What is the maximum permitted density (defined as units per acre) in your city’s residential zones?	
10 or fewer units per acre	<b>28% (12)</b>
Up to 15 units per acre	5% ( 2)
Up to 20 units per acre	16% ( 7)
Up to 25 units per acre	21% ( 9)
Up to 30 units per acre	26% (11)
Above 30 units per acre	5% ( 2)
4. Are multi-family (two units or more) housing developments permitted by right in one or more zoning districts in your city?	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>81% (35)</b>
No	19% ( 8)

**Table 5-2  
Summary of Survey Results**

Question	Percentage of Cities (Number of Cities)
5. Does your city have occupancy standards that limit the number of person (related or unrelated) that may share a housing unit?	
Yes	5% ( 2)
<b>No</b>	<b>95% (41)</b>
6. Does your city have a distance requirement between community care facilities?	
Yes	14% ( 6)
<b>No</b>	<b>86% (36)</b>
7. Are residential care facilities serving six or fewer persons, including licensed family care homes, foster homes, or group homes, permitted by right in your city?	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>93% (40)</b>
No	7% ( 3)
8. Are residential care facilities serving seven or more persons permitted in your city?	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>83% (36)</b>
No	17% ( 7)
9. Does your city have established procedures for reasonable accommodation (i.e. permitting certain deviations from development/zoning standards to accommodate accessibility improvements in existing structures, etc.).	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>56% (24)</b>
No	44% (19)
10. Does your city provide fair housing and sensitivity training to staff?	
Yes	35% (15)
<b>No</b>	<b>65% (28)</b>
11. What are the special commissions in your city that have influence over housing policies and development (e.g. senior commission, homeless task force)?	
<i>Responses include the following:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Commission</li> <li>• Design Review Committee</li> <li>• Senior Housing Board</li> <li>• Social Services Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Committee</li> <li>• Senior Citizens Commission</li> <li>• Commission on Aging</li> <li>• Mobilehome Park Rent Stabilization Commission</li> </ul>

Sources: Community Development Commission, County of Los Angeles; Cotton/Bridges/Associates, 2002.

## Definition of Family

A community’s zoning ordinance can restrict access to housing for relations failing to qualify as a “family” by the definition specified in the zoning ordinance. Even if the code provides a broad definition, deciding what constitutes a “family” should be avoided by jurisdictions to prevent confusion or give the impression of restrictiveness. According to the survey, 30 cities have zoning ordinances that contain a definition of family, including 19 cities that specify the number of unrelated persons that can reside in a unit and be considered as a family.

California court cases<sup>1</sup> have ruled that an ordinance that defines a “family” as (a) an individual, (b) two or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption, or (c) a group of not more than a certain number of unrelated persons as a single housekeeping unit, is invalid. Court rulings stated that defining a family does not serve any legitimate or useful objective or purpose recognized under the zoning and land planning powers of the jurisdiction, and therefore violates rights of privacy under the California Constitution. A zoning ordinance also cannot regulate residency by discrimination between biologically related and unrelated persons.

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“Defining a family does not serve any legitimate or useful objective or purpose recognized under the zoning and land planning powers of a jurisdiction.”

-- California Superior Court,  
City of Santa Barbara v.  
Adamson

## Housing for Persons with Disabilities

Persons with special needs such as the elderly and those with disabilities must also have access to housing in a community. Community care facilities provide a supportive housing environment to persons with special needs in a group situation. Restrictions that prevent these types of facilities from locating in a community impede equal access to housing for the special needs groups.

### Licensed Community Care Facilities

The Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Sections 5115 and 5116 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code) declares that mentally and physically disabled persons are entitled to live in normal residential surroundings and that the use of property for the care of six or fewer disabled persons is a residential use for zoning purposes. A state-authorized, certified, or licensed family care home, foster home, or group home serving six or fewer disabled persons or dependent and neglected children on a 24-hour-a-day basis is considered a residential use that is permitted in all residential zones. No local agency can impose stricter zoning or building and safety standards on these homes (commonly referred to as “group” homes) of six or fewer disabled persons than are required of the other permitted residential uses in the zone.

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“Mentally and physically disabled persons are entitled to live in normal residential surroundings.”

-- California Welfare and  
Institutions Code

<sup>1</sup> City of Santa Barbara v. Adamson (1980) and City of Chula Vista v. Pagard (1981), among others.

Group homes of seven or more residents, however, are often subject to special requirements, and the operators of such frequently find it very difficult to obtain land use entitlements. Current housing element law requires local governments to analyze special housing needs, including those of persons with disabilities, but does not require that specific sites be identified for the development of group homes or other types of housing specifically designed for persons with disabilities.

According to the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division, 2,081 licensed community care facilities are located in Los Angeles County (Table 5-3). The majority of community care capacity in the County is provided in elderly residential care facilities, followed by adult day care facilities and group homes.

Within the Urban County, however, the number of facilities and total capacity are much smaller than the County total. Only 382 facilities with the capacity to accommodate 9,758 persons are available within the Urban County. When normalizing the community care capacity per 1,000 population, several cities stand out as containing a large number of community care beds: Claremont, Duarte, La Verne, and San Dimas (Table 5-4). In contrast, some communities have limited capacities to accommodate community care homes: Bell, Bell Gardens, Commerce, Hawaiian Gardens, La Canada Flintridge, Manhattan Beach, and South El Monte (see also Figure 5-1).

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Amendments to zoning  
ordinances may be  
required for some  
jurisdictions to comply  
with the Lanterman  
Developmental  
Disabilities Services  
Act.

As indicated by the survey, three cities have not updated their zoning ordinances to reflect requirements of the Lanterman Development Disabilities Services Act to permit licensed community care facilities serving six or fewer persons by right. Seven cities do not permit facilities serving more than six persons and six cities have adopted distance requirements for the location of such facilities. These factors may constrain the development of housing for persons with disabilities.

**Table 5-3  
Licensed Community Care Facilities**

Type of Facility	Description of Facility	Number of Facilities	Capacity (Beds)
Adult Day Care	Adult Day Care Facilities (ADCF) provide programs for frail elderly and developmentally disabled and/or mentally disabled adults in a day care setting.	143	7,486
Adult Day Support Center	Adult Day Support Centers (ADSC) provide a community-based group program designed to meet the needs of functionally impaired adults in a protective setting on less than 24-hour basis.	25	1,000
Community Treatment Facility	Community Treatment Facilities are designed to provide services for children diagnosed as seriously emotionally disturbed.	2	61
Group Home	Group homes are facilities of any capacity and provide 24-hour non-medical care and supervision to children in a structured environment.	361	4,267
Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly	Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFE) provide care, supervision and assistance with daily living activities to persons 60 years of age and over and persons under 60 with compatible needs.	1,248	35,185
Residential Care Facility for the Chronically Ill	Residential Care Facilities for the Chronically Ill (RCFCI) are facilities with a maximum licensed capacity of 25 that provide care and supervision to adults who have HIV or AIDS.	13	197
Small Family Home	Small Family Homes (SFH) provide 24-hour-a-day care in the licensee's family residence for six or fewer children who are mentally disabled, developmentally disabled, or physically handicapped, and who require special care and supervision as a result of such disabilities.	128	554
Social Rehabilitation Facility	A Social Rehabilitation Facility is any facility that provides 24-hour-a-day non-medical care and supervision in a group setting to adults recovering from mental illnesses who temporarily need assistance, guidance, or counseling.	7	98
Transitional Housing Placement	The Transitional Housing Placement Program provides care and supervision for children at least 17 years of age participating in an independent living arrangement.	9	326
	Total	2,081	49,174

Source: The above inventory of various facilities was obtained from the State of California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division, 2002 and website <http://cclcd.ca.gov>

Note: Social rehabilitation facilities do not include facilities for alcohol and drug rehabilitation facilities. The State Department of Social Services documents only the social rehabilitation facilities that serve people with mental illness.

**Table 5-4**  
**Licensed Community Care Facilities by Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Number of Facilities	Capacity		Jurisdiction	Number of Facilities	Capacity	
		Beds	Beds/1,000 pop.			Beds	Beds/1,000 pop.
Agoura Hills	8	200	9.7	La Puente	10	287	7.0
Arcadia	8	629	11.9	La Verne	18	792	25.0
Artesia	3	97	5.9	Lawndale	9	158	5.0
Azusa	7	91	2.0	Lomita	6	54	1.6
Bell	1	6	0.2	Malibu	5	36	2.9
Bell Gardens	1	40	0.9	Manhattan Beach	3	16	0.5
Beverly Hills	1	100	3.0	Monrovia	5	246	6.7
Calabasas	2	140	7.0	Rancho Palos Verdes	33	382	9.3
Cerritos	10	205	4.0	Rolling Hills Estates	2	12	1.6
Claremont	14	782	23.0	South El Monte	1	6	0.3
Commerce	1	6	0.5	San Dimas	18	828	23.7
Covina	26	520	11.1	San Fernando	5	223	9.5
Culver City	14	512	13.2	San Gabriel	7	255	6.4
Diamond Bar	23	130	2.3	Santa Fe Springs	3	125	7.2
Duarte	5	468	21.8	Sierra Madre	4	108	10.2
El Segundo	2	60	3.7	Signal Hill	3	81	8.7
Hawaiian Gardens	1	6	0.4	South Pasadena	10	191	7.9
Hermosa Beach	4	166	8.9	Temple City	3	162	4.9
Irwindale	1	6	4.1	Walnut	13	282	9.4
La Canada Flintridge	2	12	0.6	West Hollywood	3	59	1.7
La Habra Heights	2	26	4.6	Westlake Village	2	12	1.4
La Mirada	8	156	3.3	Unincorporated	74	1,095	5.2
				Total Urban County	382	9,758	4.3
				Total Los Angeles County	2,081	49,174	5.2

Source: State of California Community Care Licensing Division, 2002

Note: Both Commerce and Irwindale were identified as containing only one facility. However, no capacity was provided by the State database. For purposes of comparison, a small facility with six beds is assumed for both cities.

**Figure 5-1: Licensed Care Community Facilities**

**Figure 5-1: Licensed Care Community Facilities  
(Back)**

## Housing Element Requirements

Recently, Senate Bill 520 added to the list of prohibited housing discrimination and requires the housing element of a general plan to consider housing needs for persons with disabilities. Specifically, this bill:

- Adds "familial status and disability" to the list of prohibited discrimination by a local government entity if it results in denial or hindrance of access to housing.
- Adds "persons with disabilities" to the requirement of an analysis of special needs housing as required by housing element law.
- Adds "familial status" and "disability" to the groups for which housing opportunities shall be promoted by the local housing element.
- Clarifies the existing law requirement that the housing element of a local general plan shall address and seek to remove constraints to the development of housing for all income levels and housing for persons with disabilities.
- Provides that the program shall remove constraints or provide reasonable accommodations for housing for persons with disabilities.

The survey conducted for this AI indicates that 19 of the 42 cities do not have established policies for reasonable accommodation. Jurisdictions that adopted Housing Elements prior to the passage of SB 520 will have to comply with the requirements of this legislation in the next update of the housing elements (year 2005).

## Occupancy Standard

Occupancy standard can be a sensitive issue in a community. Certain cultures tend to have large household sizes due either to the larger family size and/or the practice of accommodating extended family members. A community establishing an occupancy standard that is more restrictive than the Uniform Housing Code or state HCD guidelines may potentially be viewed as violating the fair housing law.<sup>2</sup> HCD and HUD use the following two different occupancy standards to evaluate the appropriate unit size for different housing programs:

- One person per room (excluding bathroom, kitchen, and hallway)
- Two persons per bedroom plus an additional person for the unit

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<sup>2</sup> Briseno v. City of Santa Ana (1992).

# Other Policies

## California Community Redevelopment Law

California Community Redevelopment Law requires redevelopment agencies to set aside a minimum of 20 percent of all tax increment revenue for affordable housing activities. Specifically, the housing set-aside funds must be used for activities that increase, improve, or preserve the supply of affordable housing for lower and moderate-income households. Housing developed with housing set-aside funds must remain affordable to the targeted income group for at least 55 years for rentals and 45 years for ownership housing. Housing funds may be expended throughout the community.

In comparison to federal affordable housing monies, California Redevelopment Law provides redevelopment agencies greater latitude in meeting affordable housing goals. Agencies may exercise all powers of redevelopment, which include land acquisition, leasing, construction, rehabilitation, subsidies, and many other financing tools.

Housing set-aside funds are a major resource for affordable housing programs and projects in many cities. Currently, 30 of the 48 cities in the Los Angeles Urban County have active redevelopment agencies. The CDC serves as the redevelopment agency for unincorporated areas of the County.

## Density Bonuses

California Government Code Section 65915 provides that a local government shall grant a density bonus of at least 25 percent and an additional incentive, or financially equivalent incentive(s), to a developer of a housing development agreeing to provide at least:

- (a) 20 percent of the units for lower income households; or
- (b) 10 percent of the units for very low income household; or
- (c) 50 percent of the units for senior citizens.

According to HCD, a local ordinance must specify which of the following types of incentives will be provided to the developer:

- (a) Reduce site development standards (e.g. street widths or paving, curbs/gutters, landscaping, location of public works improvements);
- (b) Modify zoning code requirements (e.g. open space, minimum lot size, setbacks, parking standards);

- (c) Reduce or eliminate any design requirements exceeding State building code standards (e.g. restrictions on roofing materials);
- (d) Permit mixed use zoning within housing developments if the development will result in lower housing costs; and
- (e) Allow other regulatory incentives, such as an additional density bonus, expedited processing, use of redevelopment funds, or other public financing (direct financial assistance is not required by law).

The Density Bonus Law was recently amended by the passage of Assembly Bill 1866. Under AB 1866, local jurisdictions cannot apply any development standard that would have the effect of precluding an affordable housing development from receiving a density bonus and regulatory concessions. Specifically, AB 1866 provides that:

- Local governments may not apply development standards, such as parking, setbacks, lot coverage, to low- and moderate-income and senior housing that make it impossible to build such housing at the established density.
- If a local government determines that a density bonus is not needed to make a development affordable, this finding must be based on written and objective analysis.
- Developers of common interest developments (condominiums) for moderate-income households may obtain a density bonus.

To ensure compliance with AB 1866, jurisdictions must reevaluate their development standards in relation to the maximum achievable densities for multi-family housing.

## Second Units

Second units can offer affordable rental housing for seniors, college students, and single persons in many communities. These units typically rent for less than apartments of comparable size. California law requires local jurisdictions to adopt ordinances that establish the conditions under which second units are permitted. Second units cannot be prohibited in residential zones unless a local jurisdiction establishes that such action may limit housing opportunities in the region and finds that second units would adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare in residential zones.

The state's second unit law was amended in September 2002. Under AB 1866, local governments are now required to use a ministerial, rather than discretionary, process for approving second units. A ministerial process will result in time and cost savings because proposed second units that are in compliance with local zoning standards can be approved without a public hearing.

Most jurisdictions in the County currently permit second unit development via a conditional use permit process. Amendments to zoning ordinances will be needed for many jurisdictions to comply with AB 1866.

## Article 34 Public Housing Project Law

Article 34 of the State Constitution requires a majority vote of the electorate to approve the development, construction, or acquisition by a public body of any “low rent housing project” within that jurisdiction. In other words, for any projects where at least 50 percent of the occupants are low income and rents are restricted to affordable levels, the jurisdiction must seek voter approval known as “Article 34 authority” to authorize that number of units. Few jurisdictions within the Urban County have obtained Article 34 authority to be directly involved in the development, construction, and acquisition of low-rent housing.

# Community Outreach

## Resident Participation

The CDC recognizes the importance of providing residents with adequate information and affording them the opportunity to give meaningful input. The CDC encourages participation among potential program beneficiaries, including persons of extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income and residents of slum and blighted areas.

Generally, residents are given notice of all hearings and meetings through advertisements in the *Los Angeles Times* and other local publications of general circulation. In areas where the CDC has determined that a substantial non-English speaking population resides within its jurisdiction, the hearing notice will be published in English and in the appropriate language(s). Public hearings and community meetings are advertised at least 14 calendar days in advance.

Additional means of advertising are used as appropriate, including: postings on the CDC website; flyers mailed, distributed, and/or posted at libraries, parks, and other public areas; banners posted outside of the meeting venues; radio public service announcements; press releases; as well as notices to community organizations.

The CDC and participating cities ensure that architectural barriers do not preclude the attendance of disabled persons at meetings and hearings. In addition, accommodations are made, upon request, for attendees who are either visually or hearing impaired. For local meetings in areas with a significant non-English speaking population, translators are provided and meeting materials made available in the appropriate languages.

All residents are given reasonable access to information and records regarding documents prepared by the CDC, including the Consolidated Plan and the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. Such information and records are available at the offices of the CDC and participating cities, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, or within the agencies' normal business hours. Copies of the Consolidated Plan and Analysis of Impediments are available upon request.

Residents are invited to attend community meetings to learn about the programs and services available to them through the CDC and HACoLA. They are also invited to express their views on their neighborhood's housing and community development needs. Community meetings are comprehensive, interactive forums for residents, facilitated by CDC staff.

The CDC, in consultation with HACoLA staff, specifically markets community meetings to public housing residents through direct mailings, fliers, and announcements at resident council meetings. Residents have the opportunity to present oral or written comments by attending a community meeting. Residents unable to attend a community meeting are invited to submit written comments during the meeting period and up to 30 days after the last meeting for inclusion in a summary of the community's input during the County's planning process.

Each participating city in the Urban County program gives its constituency the opportunity to provide resident input on housing and community development needs at a community meeting or public hearing by:

- Holding one or more community meeting or conducting one public hearing with a minimum 14-calendar day notification period;
- Soliciting resident participation through an advertisement published in a local newspaper whose primary circulation is within the city; or
- Soliciting resident participation through notices posted in public buildings within the city at least 14 calendar days prior to the meeting date.

As described above, the CDC and participating cities make diligent efforts in providing residents with adequate information and opportunities to offer input. Nevertheless, the CDC can further its public outreach in a number of ways:

- Providing additional advertising in non-English language newspapers and other media to encourage participation by residents in areas with a significant non-English speaking population.
- Conducting additional outreach to faith-based organizations to solicit their input on housing and community development as well as fair housing issues.

## Community Representation

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Few jurisdictions have commissions that oversee housing policies for the disabled or families with children.

Adequate community involvement and representation are important to overcoming and identifying impediments to fair housing or other factors that may restrict access to housing. Decisions regarding housing development in a community are typically made by the City Council or Board of Supervisors, and Planning Commission. The Council members are elected officials and answer to the constituents. Planning Commissioners are residents often appointed by the Council or the Board of Supervisors and serve an advisory role to the elected officials. In addition to the City Council, Board of Supervisors, and Planning Commission, most jurisdictions have appointed commissions, committees, and task forces to address specific issues. Seniors commissions are most typical; however, few jurisdictions have commissions that address the needs of the disabled or families with children, or have a housing task force that oversees housing-related matters.