



## RESOURCES

### Availability of Sites for Housing



The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process assigned unincorporated Riverside County 30,677 units in new construction need with about 80% of this total allocated to the western county. With its proximity to surrounding counties, infrastructure capability, and available land, it is anticipated that the majority of growth during the next five years within the sphere of influence areas of incorporated cities, and in areas for which Specific Plans or tract maps have been prepared. These properties include vacant and undeveloped lands presently in the unincorporated County that are adjacent to, or within service hookup distance from public sewer, water and street systems. The County's policy is to promote compact development in strategically located activity centers, along with infill opportunities within existing urban areas, in order to minimize development pressures on vacant land on the urban fringe. An analysis of residential development potential demonstrates that there is ample vacant land within these areas that is designated for residential uses to satisfy the RHNA new construction need.

State law requires that zoning be consistent with adopted general plans. The County's undeveloped lands will be rezoned if necessary to the appropriate residential designation to assure consistency with the newly updated General Plan land use designations and any applicable Specific Plans. In a limited capacity, infill projects throughout unincorporated communities will also contribute to the County's future housing stock. County policy recommends that growth be concentrated near or within existing urban and suburban areas to maintain the rural and open space character of Riverside County to the greatest extent possible. Under the newly updated General Plan land use designations, higher density residential areas are sited near employment nodes, commercial cores, and major transportation corridors, and in conjunction with resort, recreation and tourist areas.

### Vacant Land Analysis

The land analysis demonstrates that the unincorporated County contains over 2.3 million acres of vacant land that allows residential development. It is estimated that approximately 396,000 additional dwelling units could be accommodated at build out under the draft 2001 General Plan residential land use designations. This includes lands for which Specific Plans have been processed under the County's jurisdiction. The Land Use Element provides a mix of unit types and densities, and land use designations which will accommodate residential development affordable to a range of income categories. A summary of residential development potential by income category for the eastern and western portions of the county is presented in Table H-41.

The RHNA allocation is divided into four income categories: Very Low; Low; Moderate and Above Moderate. Most of the potential for Very Low and Low income housing is found in the High Density Residential, Very High Density Residential, and Community Centers categories which allow densities over 14 dwelling units per acre. Units in these categories are assumed to be primarily rental units. As well, there are opportunities for ownership units affordable to



Very Low income households to be developed in conjunction with subsidies or assistance in lower density residential designations, or mobile homes which are permitted in a number of residential designations. These assumptions regarding density and affordability category are supported by recent projects built in Riverside County (see Table H-44). The Moderate income category will generally be served by market rate residential development in land use designations which accommodate 5-14 du/ac, which encompasses the Medium Density Residential and the Medium High Density Residential land use designations, as well as potential within the Community Centers designation. Above Moderate income households will be served by market rate development generally under 5 du/ac in the VDLR and LDR designations, as well as the Rural designations with limited, very low density residential potential.

**Table H-41  
Summary of Residential Development Potential  
by Income Category**

| <b>Area Plan Designation</b>           | <b>Density Range</b> | <b>Vacant Acreage</b> | <b>Remaining Unit Potential</b> | <b>VL/ Low</b> | <b>Mod</b>   | <b>Above Mod</b> |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| <b>Western Riverside County</b>        |                      |                       |                                 |                |              |                  |
| Open Space - Rural                     | 0-0.1 du/ac          | 135951                | 3409                            | 0              | 0            | 3409             |
| Agriculture (A)                        | 0-0.1 du/ac          | 14710                 | 736                             | 0              | 0            | 736              |
| Rural Residential (RR)                 | 0-0.2 du/ac          | 109543                | 16431                           | 0              | 0            | 16431            |
| Rural Mountainous (RM)                 | 0-0.1 du/ac          | 140983                | 7049                            | 0              | 0            | 7049             |
| Rural Desert (RD)                      | 0-0.1 du/ac          | 2735                  | 137                             | 0              | 0            | 137              |
| Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)    | 0.4 - 2 du/ac        | 50444                 | 60533                           | 0              | 0            | 60533            |
| Low Density Residential (LDR)          | 2-5 du/ac            | 32571                 | 113999                          | 0              | 0            | 113999           |
| Medium Density Residential (MDR)       | 5-8 du/ac            | 5427                  | 35276                           | 0              | 35276        | 0                |
| Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) | 8-14 du/ac           | 1922                  | 21142                           | 0              | 21142        | 0                |
| High Density Residential (HDR)         | 14-20 du/ac          | 1455                  | 24735                           | 24735          | 0            | 0                |
| Very High Density Residential (VHDR)   | 20+ du/ac            | 61                    | 1830                            | 1830           | 0            | 0                |
| Community Centers                      | 5-40 du/ac           | 2316                  | 6674                            | 3337           | 3337         | 0                |
| <b>Western County Subtotal</b>         | <b>--</b>            | <b>498118</b>         | <b>291951</b>                   | <b>29902</b>   | <b>59755</b> | <b>202294</b>    |



**Table H-41  
Summary of Residential Development Potential  
by Income Category**

| Area Plan Designation                  | Density Range | Vacant Acreage | Remaining Unit Potential | VL/ Low      | Mod          | Above Mod     |
|--|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Eastern Riverside County</b>        |               |                |                          |              |              |               |
| Open Space - Rural                     | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 1785167        | 44629                    | 0            | 0            | 44629         |
| Agriculture (A)                        | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 42085          | 2104                     | 0            | 0            | 2104          |
| Rural Residential (RR)                 | 0-0.2 du/ac   | 19198          | 2880                     | 0            | 0            | 2880          |
| Rural Mountainous (RM)                 | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 849            | 42                       | 0            | 0            | 42            |
| Rural Desert (RD)                      | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 17507          | 875                      | 0            | 0            | 875           |
| Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)    | 0.4 - 2 du/ac | 4068           | 4882                     | 0            | 0            | 4882          |
| Low Density Residential (LDR)          | 2-5 du/ac     | 6502           | 22757                    | 0            | 0            | 22757         |
| Medium Density Residential (MDR)       | 5-8 du/ac     | 2088           | 13572                    | 0            | 13572        | 0             |
| Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) | 8-14 du/ac    | 701            | 7711                     | 0            | 7711         | 0             |
| High Density Residential (HDR)         | 14-20 du/ac   | 265            | 4505                     | 4505         | 0            | 0             |
| Very High Density Residential (VHDR)   | 20+ du/ac     | 0              | 0                        | 0            | 0            | 0             |
| Community Centers                      | 5-40 du/ac    | 33             | 172                      | 86           | 86           | 0             |
| <b>Eastern County Subtotal</b>         | --            | <b>1878463</b> | <b>104129</b>            | <b>4591</b>  | <b>21369</b> | <b>78169</b>  |
| <b>Riverside County Total</b>          |               |                |                          |              |              |               |
| Open Space - Rural                     | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 1921118        | 48038                    | 0            | 0            | 48038         |
| Agriculture (A)                        | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 56795          | 2840                     | 0            | 0            | 2840          |
| Rural Residential (RR)                 | 0-0.2 du/ac   | 128741         | 19311                    | 0            | 0            | 19311         |
| Rural Mountainous (RM)                 | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 141832         | 7092                     | 0            | 0            | 7092          |
| Rural Desert (RD)                      | 0-0.1 du/ac   | 20242          | 1012                     | 0            | 0            | 1012          |
| Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)    | 0.4 - 2 du/ac | 54512          | 65414                    | 0            | 0            | 65414         |
| Low Density Residential (LDR)          | 2-5 du/ac     | 39073          | 136756                   | 0            | 0            | 136756        |
| Medium Density Residential (MDR)       | 5-8 du/ac     | 7515           | 48848                    | 0            | 48848        | 0             |
| Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) | 8-14 du/ac    | 2623           | 28853                    | 0            | 28853        | 0             |
| High Density Residential (HDR)         | 14-20 du/ac   | 1720           | 29240                    | 29240        | 0            | 0             |
| Very High Density Residential (VHDR)   | 20+ du/ac     | 61             | 1830                     | 1830         | 0            | 0             |
| Community Centers                      | 5-40 du/ac    | 2349           | 6846                     | 3423         | 3423         | 0             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                           | --            | <b>2376581</b> | <b>396080</b>            | <b>34493</b> | <b>81124</b> | <b>280463</b> |

Source: County of Riverside Draft Land Use Element; The Planning Center

It is not realistic to assume that all of the vacant land suitable for development at densities which accommodate housing at prices affordable to lower income households will develop during this planning period. Given the lead time required to submit and process residential applications, the multiplicity of property owners in the City spheres of influence or proposed Specific Plan areas where the majority of the development activity is anticipated to occur; the fact that the majority of projects already in the pipeline are designed as single family detached subdivisions catering to households with moderate and above moderate



incomes, complete build-out of higher density designated parcels is an unrealistic objective.

### Specific Plan Potential

Over 300 Specific Plans have been processed in the County since 1973. The Specific Plan is an important planning tool within the County as it establishes the permitted number of dwelling units and accommodates a variety of housing types which may include densities which are higher than the underlying base zone upon which the Specific Plan is applied. This in turn fosters the clustering concept and allows for attached and multi-family uses in areas designated by the Land Use Map for lower density residential uses, as long as the overall density and dwelling unit capacity is not exceeded. As well, legal Specific Plan requirements call for Infrastructure Plans (water, sewer, drainage and circulation) to be prepared to support the proposed development, thereby ensuring that the community will be adequately served by infrastructure systems. The majority of the approved Specific Plans have been built out over the years per their approvals, or have had selected phases, neighborhoods, or tract maps processed and constructed under the umbrella of the Specific Plan. In some instances, Specific Plan applications have been withdrawn, abandoned, or the terms of approval expired. Other Specific Plans processed under the County's jurisdiction have been annexed into the incorporated boundaries of one of the cities in the County, and no longer provide potential for additional units within the unincorporated area. At this point in time, it is difficult to determine the remaining Specific Plan dwelling unit capacity of all of the active Specific Plans. As mentioned previously, it is anticipated that a large proportion of future development during the 2000-2005 planning cycle will occur within specific plans.



*A specific plan combines policy statements with development regulations, often to address the development requirements for a single project or a planned community. As a result, its emphasis is on concrete standards and development criteria. Zoning, subdivisions and public works must be consistent with the specific plan and the specific plan must be consistent with the general plan.*

### Underutilized Land

The potential for recycling of residential land typically involves the redevelopment of sites which currently are built out at densities far lower than those designated, such as a single family home on a lot zoned for multi-family, or the development of land currently utilized for agricultural purposes which has been determined, based on a number of factors, not to be retained as a permanent agricultural resource. It may also entail the replacement of existing lower density multi-family units with higher density residential products, or a more creative product type such as small lot detached configurations.

Determining the potential for recycling of underutilized residentially or agriculturally designated lands is a highly speculative, difficult process. The draft 2001 General Plan incorporates the concept of recycling of lands previously designated for low densities for higher density products into the recommended Land Use Concept. This potential, although not specifically calculated separately, is accounted for in the General Plan build-out potential forecasts. Although there are existing areas of the County which are currently developed with lower densities than allowed by the draft General Plan or zoning designations, the primary focus of development is infill in targeted urbanized communities of the unincorporated areas of the County, and development of sizeable parcels of vacant land under the new General Plan designations through Specific Plan or Tentative Tract applications.