What is SCAG’s role in the RHNA process?

As the regional Council of Governments (COG) for Southern California, State law requires SCAG to “determine the existing and projected housing need for its region”. SCAG’s region encompasses the counties of; Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura. SCAG takes the lead in overseeing the assessment by identifying measures to gauge housing demand and comparing those numbers against socioeconomic factors throughout the region. Upon request, SCAG’s role in the process may be delegated to a sub-region.

The RHNA consists of two measurements: 1) existing need for housing, and 2) future need for housing.

- The existing need assessment examines key variables from census data, to measure ways in which the housing market is not meeting the needs of current residents. This includes the number of low-income households paying more than 30% of their income for housing, as well as how many people occupy overcrowded housing units.

- The future need assessment is determined by SCAG’s growth forecast and public participation process. Each new household (created by a young adult moving out of a parent’s home or a family moving into a community for employment), creates the need for more housing. The anticipated need is then adjusted to account for an ideal level of vacant units.

How is RHNA implemented?

The State’s Housing Element law requires local governments to make plans to adequately address their share of existing and projected population growth, taking into consideration affordability of available and future housing.

Recognizing that the most critical decisions regarding housing development, occur at the local level, through a city’s General Plan, the Housing law seeks to adequately address housing needs and demands. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) enforce State Housing Element Law by requiring certified Housing Elements as part of every city’s General Plan.

Who pays for RHNA?

COG’s are no longer eligible for state reimbursement for RHNA costs; therefore RHNA is paid for by SCAG through its General Fund.

For more information please visit the SCAG Web site at: www.scag.ca.gov/housing/rhna/index.htm or contact Ma’Ayn Johnson at (213) 236-1975 or via email at: johnson@scag.ca.gov