

M E M O R A N D U M			
TO:	Paul Stamper Ventura County	DATE:	May 12, 2017
FROM:	Roger Dale, Managing Principal The Natelson Dale Group, Inc. (TNDG)	FILE:	#4059
SUBJECT:	EVSP Summit Meeting #4 – Group Discussion Summary		

As part of the stakeholder input process for the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (EVSP), the County of Ventura hosted a special workshop on May 4, 2017 focused on the topic of affordable housing. This workshop was included as an added (fourth) meeting in the EVSP Summit process. During the course of the three initial Summit workshops, it became increasingly clear that housing affordability is an urgent and defining issue for Ventura County's economic vitality. As such, the County Executive Office determined that the overall EVSP process would be substantially enhanced by adding a Summit workshop specifically devoted to defining potential housing-related strategies for the EVSP.

The meeting included the following background presentations:

- TNDG provided a brief summary of an online survey addressing the challenges of affordable housing in Ventura County, conducted in April 2017 as part of the EVSP process (see Attachment B of this memorandum);
- Chris Stephens, Director of the County's Resource Management Agency discussed local housing, land use and SOAR issues, and summarized examples of current approaches (at the local, state and federal levels) for facilitating an expanded supply of affordable housing; and
- Christy Madden (County of Ventura Deputy Executive Officer) and Denise Wise (Chief Executive Officer of the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura) described the efforts of local housing authorities and affordable housing developers.

Group Discussion Summary

A total of eight tables / small groups participated in the discussion portion of the meeting. Each group was asked to:

- Develop a list of potential housing-related strategies for the EVSP (starting with an initial list provided as part of the meeting agenda – see below);
- Identify their "Top 5" priority strategies from the master list; and
- Identify public/private organizations that should be participants in future EVSP efforts related to affordable housing.

To facilitate the development of “master lists” of potential EVSP housing strategies, the participants were provided with the following outline (and asked to add items and/or insert comments to elaborate on the listed points):

1. Expand multi-jurisdictional coordination/collaboration on housing affordability issues

- Raise awareness (among policymakers and the public) of the importance of housing affordability
- Promote uniformity among affordable housing developers
- County/city coordination on specific housing development projects

2. Address issues that affect the cost/feasibility of housing development

- Development impact fees
- Development permitting/entitlement process and fees
- Flood insurance rates
- Publicly-financed infrastructure investments (e.g., Regional Transportation, Roads, Watershed Protection, Water Storage & Infrastructure, Broadband)

3. Other potential County actions to facilitate expanded supply of affordable housing

- Master-leasing agreements (e.g., partner with nonprofit organization to reduce risk for property owners willing to consider “high risk” tenants)
- Identify older hotels, similar properties suitable for single-room occupancy (SRO) units
- Build policymaker support for non-traditional housing products (e.g., “tiny houses,” domes, modular construction, etc.)
- Evaluate County-owned property (in unincorporated area or cities) potentially suitable for housing development projects or sale to generate money for a housing trust fund (cities could share credit for housing production numbers)
- Revisit affordable housing design standards
- Continue to advance existing farmworker housing initiatives

4. Improve integration of housing issues with other County social services

- Continuum of Care
- Whole Person Care (connections to permanent housing)
- Field-based case management
- Dedicate new / turned-over HUD vouchers to homeless
- Project-based HUD vouchers attached to new or repurposed housing

Top Priorities – Potential EVSP Housing Strategies

Attachment A of this memorandum provides a combined summary of the discussion notes from the eight small groups (the attachment is provided on the form used at the discussion tables; the groups' notes are listed in [blue font](#) on the form).

Six of the strategy items were rated by multiple groups as “top priorities.” These six strategies are listed below, along with a condensed summary of the groups' comments related to each strategy (the full list of comments is provided in Attachment A).

Strategy: Raise awareness (among policymakers and the public) of the importance of housing affordability issues	# of votes as Top Priority: 6
Abbreviated summary of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness is important, but commitment and political will are ultimately needed to make meaningful progress on these issues • Awareness campaign needs to start with a focus on the public; the public will then influence policymakers • Need to establish coalition/advocacy group(s) to address NIMBYism • Awareness of affordable housing issues needs to be based on an ongoing dialogue and education process (for both the public and policymakers) 	
Strategy: Address the cost of affordable housing development through improvements in permitting/entitlement process and fees	# of votes as Top Priority: 6
Abbreviated summary of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement flexible, expedited approval processes for affordable housing projects • Remove uncertainties from the approval process – clarity and speed are critical to development feasibility • Expand use of ministerial approvals • Standardize pre-approval and design requirements • Incentivize innovative housing products/projects with streamlined approvals and density bonuses 	
Strategy: Improve County/City coordination on specific housing development projects	# of votes as Top Priority: 3
Abbreviated summary of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include planning directors and VCOG in coordination • Improve coordination among housing authorities • Build a regional “voice” 	

Strategy: Build policymaker support for non-tradition housing products (e.g., “tiny houses,” domes, modular construction, etc.)	# of votes as Top Priority: 3
Abbreviated summary of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and other innovative programs • Encourage conversion of existing housing units (i.e., single-family to multi-family) • Flexible zoning for mixed-use projects 	
Strategy: Address the cost of affordable housing development through reductions in development impact fees	# of votes as Top Priority: 2
Abbreviated summary of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce and waive when possible • Reduce fees for infill housing projects • Adopt flexible payment schedules 	
Strategy: Publicly-funded infrastructure investments (to reduce costs to developers)	# of votes as Top Priority: 2
Abbreviated summary of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address in General Plan policy • Identify dedicated (county-level) funding sources for housing-related infrastructure 	

ATTACHMENT A

COMBINED SUMMARY OF SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Theme 1: *Expand multi-jurisdictional coordination/collaboration on housing affordability issues*

Potential Strategy	Check if “Top 5” Strategy
<p>Raise awareness (among policymakers and the public) of the importance of housing affordability</p> <p>ADDED COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness already exists – commitment is lacking • Build political will • Prioritize public awareness (public will then influence policy makers) • Overcome the “no growth” mindset/strategy • Organize advocacy group to address NIMBYism • Continue to meet; collaborate and articulate the issues (considering both short- and long-term “trajectories”) • Change the dialogue to raise awareness • Bring together a coalition of advocates to convert NIMBY-based opponents and to speak publicly in support of affordable housing projects, increased density, infill, etc. • Establish coalition focused on public awareness <u>and</u> policy development • Public input carries weight; general level of acceptance is low • Need more public education/support for: workforce housing, entry-level housing, farm worker housing, and housing affordable to first-time buyers • Need united story/framing for public awareness campaign; position affordable housing as a countywide quality of life / livability / sustainability issue • Who should lead public outreach? County should support overall message • Communicate implications of SOAR relative to affordable housing development • Expand communications with housing developers/contractors and share this information with public boards/councils • Survey businesses on the impacts associated with lack of affordable housing • Organize a new housing coalition to bring together all of the various entities to work on common issues, communication, policy advocacy, etc. • Engage millennials in the discussion 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an “ongoing study session” for elected officials – form advisory group(s) to provide regular updates on affordable housing issues at City Council / BOS meetings 	
Promote uniformity among affordable housing developers (and developments)	✓
County/city coordination on specific housing development projects ADDED COMMENT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include planning directors and VCOG in coordination • Improve coordination among housing authorities • Build a regional “voice” 	✓ ✓ ✓
List other ideas:	
Free up land	
Funding for affordable housing	
Resurrect redevelopment funding (State issue)	
Increase local “buy in” for affordable housing	
Reduce NIMBYism; Organize advocacy group to address NIMBYism – educational efforts should target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public • Policymakers • Business leaders (“Housing Opportunities Made Easier”) • P-20 Council (workforce development focus) 	
Increase development density; Density bonus for smaller/micro units	
Multi-jurisdictional coordination on transportation concerns	
Bring employers to the table – “How do we bridge the gap” [in affordable housing]? Evaluate jobs leaving Ventura County and determine the extent to which these jobs losses are attributable to housing costs.	
Encourage diversity of housing types	✓
Conduct housing needs assessment for <u>each city/community</u>	

Theme 2: Address issues that affect the cost/feasibility of housing development

Potential Strategy	Check if "Top 5" Strategy
<p>Development impact fees</p> <p>ADDED COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce and waive when possible • For infill projects, revise impact fees to reflect true (lower) impacts on public infrastructure • Policy adjustments to cross-the-board fee reductions for affordable housing projects • Conduct county-wide survey of impact fees • Flexible payment schedules for fees • Address inequities in fee schedules ("last in" pays for past deficiencies) 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
<p>Development permitting/entitlement process and fees</p> <p>ADDED COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardize pre-approval requirements • Standardized design for affordable high-density projects • Incentivize innovative housing products with streamlined approvals and density bonuses • Consider both incentives and development standards • Expedited, predictable approval processes for affordable housing projects • Encourage ministerial approvals whenever possible • Fast-track approvals for affordable housing projects • Remove uncertainties (timing and cost) from the process • Clarity and speed to market • Conduct study of costs of entitlement process • Expand use of ministerial approvals 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
Flood insurance rates	
<p>Publicly-financed infrastructure investments (e.g., Roads, Broadband, Flood Control)</p> <p>ADDED COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City infrastructure investments • Address in General Plan policy • Dedicated county-level funding source 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
List other ideas:	
Public funding can reduce developer cost of impact fees	
Speed up permitting process	

Local flexibility (on project approvals, fees, etc.)	
Trust funds to support affordable housing development	
Investigate using land trusts to preserve housing affordability	
Larger incentives for projects that are 100% affordable (compared to incentives for projects that are, e.g., only 20% affordable)	
Address the high cost of land	✓
Encourage infill development	

Theme 3: *Other potential County actions to facilitate expanded supply of affordable housing*

Potential Strategy	Check if “Top 5” Strategy
<p>Master-leasing agreements (e.g., partner with nonprofit organization to reduce risk for property owners willing to consider “high risk” tenants)</p> <p>ADDED COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use to incentivize <u>new</u> development since existing inventory is a challenge • Public-private partnership (and land trusts) • CDFI to “insure” tenants with no credit 	✓
<p>Identify older hotels, similar properties suitable for single-room occupancy (SRO) units</p> <p>ADDED COMMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities can help by pressuring “high call” motels (i.e., high volume of police service calls) to convert 	
<p>Build policymaker support for non-traditional housing products (e.g., “tiny houses,” domes, modular construction, etc.)</p> <p>ADDED COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility in requirements and approval processes • Include accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and other innovative programs • ADU programs • Encourage conversion of existing housing units • Flexible zoning for mixed-use projects 	✓ ✓ ✓
Evaluate County-owned property (in unincorporated area or cities) potentially suitable for housing development projects or sale to generate	✓

money for a housing trust fund (cities could share credit for housing production numbers)	
<p>ADDED COMMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage entrepreneurialism in the market 	
Revisit affordable housing design standards	✓
<p>ADDED COMMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage ministerial approvals 	
Continue to advance existing farmworker housing initiatives	✓
List other ideas:	
Conversion of other existing land uses (commercial/industrial)	
Dedicated source of funding for affordable housing	✓
Affordable housing financing districts	
Incentivize owner-occupied housing (in existing housing stock)	
Encourage inclusion of affordable rental units while also provide a range of (ownership) options	
Examine spheres of influence	
Senior housing	
Incentivize conversion of single-family units (in existing stock) to multi-family, and encourage multi-family townhomes in new developments	
Establish local-lender lending package for conversions, ADU and non-traditional housing products	
Density bonuses	
Convert underutilized retail properties (vacant big box stores and shopping malls) to housing	✓

Theme 4: *Improve integration of housing issues with other County social services*

Potential Strategy	Check if “Top 5” Strategy
Continuum of Care ADDED COMMENT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match non-profit service providers with existing “aging in place” residents 	
Whole Person Care (connections to permanent housing)	
Field-based case management	
Dedicate new / turned-over HUD vouchers to homeless	
Project-based HUD vouchers attached to new or repurposed housing	✓
List other ideas:	
The theme of integrating housing issues with social services is complex and dynamic – it warrants a whole additional workshop session!	✓

List other potential strategies not specifically tied to one of the 4 themes above

Potential Strategy	Check if “Top 5” Strategy
Incentivize priority populations outside of other funding requirements.	
Encourage development of live-work units	
Private developers provide most of the housing stock and need to be “at the table” in scoping and implementation of affordable housing strategies. Process should also include Building Industry Association (BIA), employers, contractors’ associations, chambers of commerce, and realtors.	✓

List public/private entities that you believe should participate in implementing the EVSP action items related to housing

Housing authorities	
Veterans services groups	
Senior agencies/groups	
Peoples' Self-Help Housing	
Many Mansions	
House Farm Workers!	
VCOG	
Health Care (Gold Coast Healthcare, Kaiser, Blue Shield, Blue Cross)	
Businesses (Amgen, Patagonia, etc.)	
Universities and community colleges	
Elected officials and policymakers	
Building Industry Association (BIA)	
Contractors associations	
Chambers of Commerce	
Realtors	

ATTACHMENT B
SUMMARY OF ONLINE SURVEY (APRIL 2017)

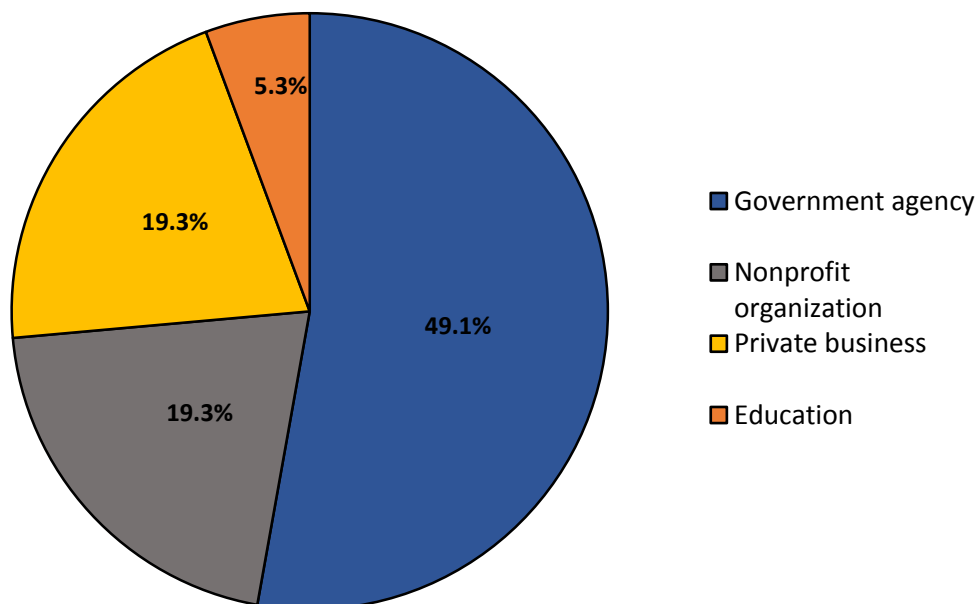
County of Ventura questionnaire on addressing the challenges of affordable housing

This document summarizes the results of an online survey taken during the month of April, 2017, by a group of invited stakeholders who had an interest in the affordable housing challenge in Ventura County. The survey questionnaire was prepared in coordination with Ventura County officials, as part of the Ventura County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (EVSP). The survey exercise reflects the importance of affordable housing to the County's continued prosperity – an observation that became increasingly evident in the course of other ongoing EVSP proceedings.

The survey findings are presented below in preliminary form; that is, without analysis and with minimal editing addressing, for example, responses to several open-ended questions in the survey. Where practical, some of these additional comments were consolidated into categories, to simplify the presentation of findings, and some were edited for content and/or held for inclusion in subsequent versions of this document.

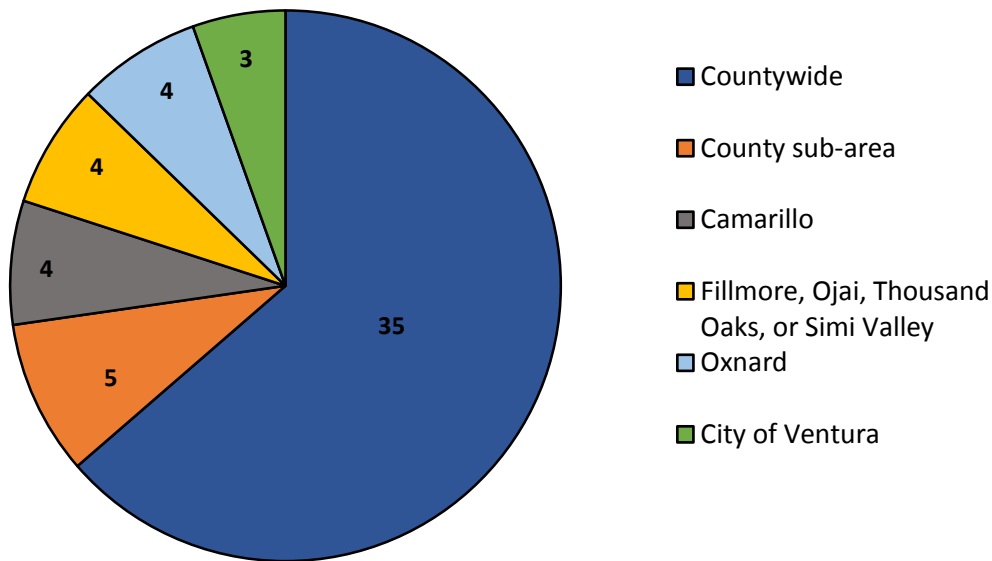
Question 1: Which of the following do you represent?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Government agency	49.1%	28
Nonprofit organization	19.3%	13
Private business	19.3%	13
Education	5.3%	3
Answered Question		57
Skipped Question		0



Question 2: What geographic area do you serve/represent? [List name(s) of city(ies) or indicate "countywide"]

Answer Options	Response Count
[Answers to open-ended question were consolidated]	55
Answered Question	55
Skipped Question	2



Question 3: Has Ventura County's housing affordability issue (lack of affordable units and/or high home prices generally) directly impacted businesses or economic development in your community/jurisdiction? [Note that references to your community/jurisdiction throughout this survey refer to places that you represent in your official capacity, rather than places of residence; or you may note any exceptions to this in the comment boxes.]

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	97.7%	43
No	2.3%	1
Answered Question		44
Skipped Question		13

If yes (to Question 3), how? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Recruitment of new businesses	55.8%	24
Recruitment of new workers	83.7%	36
Retention of businesses	53.5%	23
Retention of workers	65.1%	28
Changes in customer base	25.6%	11
Upward pressure on salaries/budgets	46.5%	20
<i>Adds to homelessness; swells waiting lists for subsidized units including for disabled</i>	7.0%	3
Other	7.0%	3
Answered Question		43
Skipped Question		14

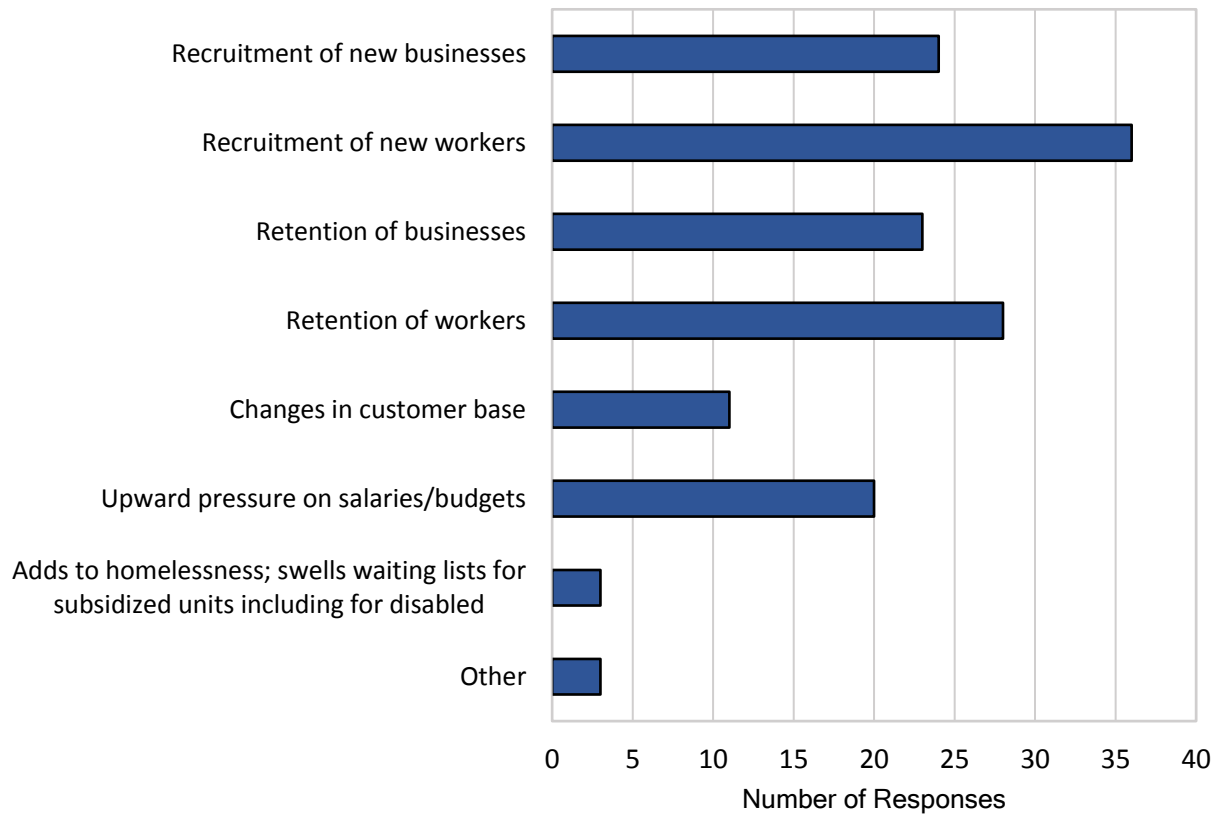
Note: Entries in *italics* are from respondents' additions, and represent "Other" in the chart, or other entries as shown below.

Other entries by respondents:

Recruitment of students; retention of graduates in the county

Commute times have increased and child care costs increased for workers

Expansion opportunities depleted

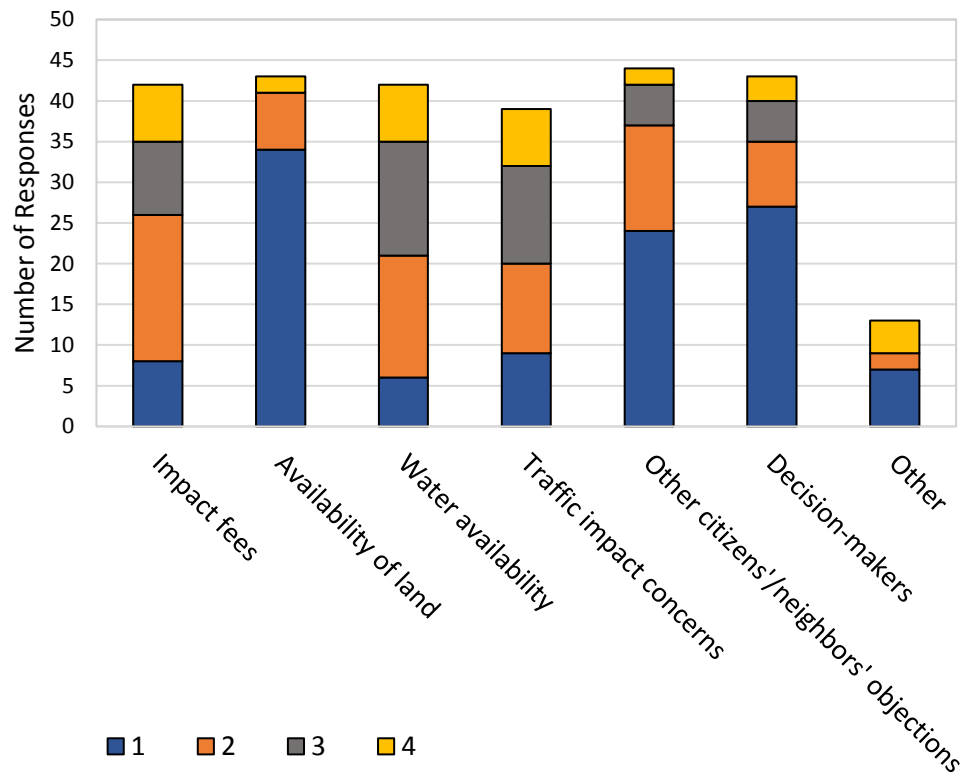


Question 4: Of the following items that are assumed to contribute to Ventura County's housing affordability challenges, how extensive do you believe the level of influence of each to be? (1 = One of most important influences, 2 = Somewhat influential, 3 = Less influential than most others, 4 = Minor or no influence)

Level of Influence					
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	Response Count
Impact fees	8	18	9	7	42
Availability of land	34	7	0	2	43
Water availability	6	15	14	7	42
Traffic impact concerns	9	11	12	7	39
Other citizens'/neighbors' objections	24	13	5	2	44
Decision-makers	27	8	5	3	43
<i>High demand; area is attractive</i>	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Other infrastructure</i>	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Development approval burdens, uncertainty</i>	2	1	0	4	7
<i>Lack of funding</i>	2	1	0	0	3

<i>Performance of developers of affordable housing</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>
Answered Question					43
Skipped Question					14

Note: Entries in *italics* are from respondents' additions, and represent "Other" in the chart.



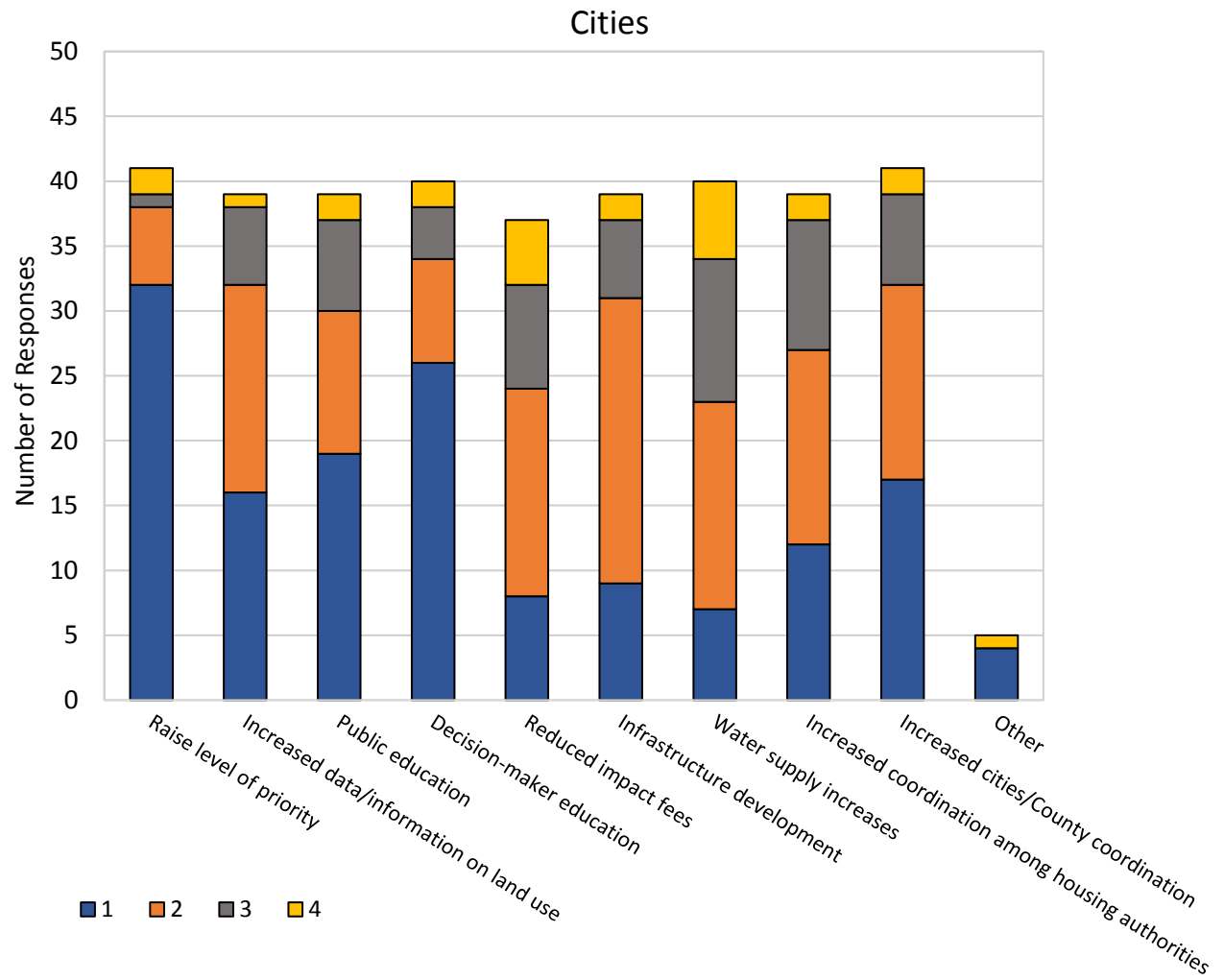
Question 5: How important are each of the following in terms of their potential for addressing the current housing affordability issue in the county, with respect to possible actions by both the cities and the county government? (1 = One of most important, 2 = Somewhat important, 3 = Less important than most others, 4 = Not important)

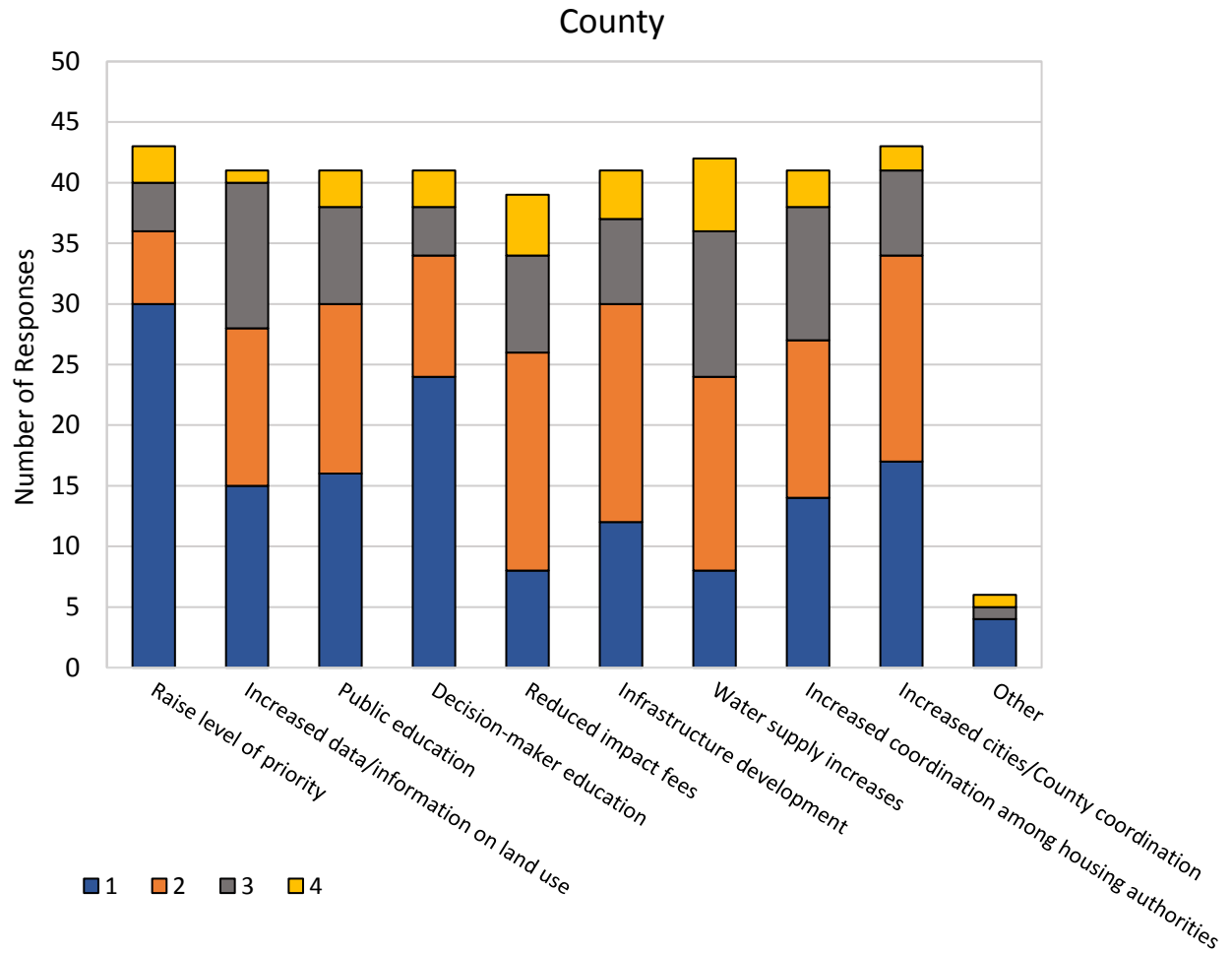
Cities					
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	Response Count
Raise level of priority	32	6	1	2	41
Increased data/information regarding existing and planned land use, in relation to housing affordability	16	16	6	1	39
Public education	19	11	7	2	39
Decision-maker education	26	8	4	2	40
Reduced impact fees	8	16	8	5	37

Cities					
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	Response Count
Infrastructure development	9	22	6	2	39
Water supply increases	7	16	11	6	40
Increased coordination among housing authorities	12	15	10	2	39
Increased cities/County coordination	17	15	7	2	41
<i>Acceptance by all jurisdictions of the importance of allowing increased density & streamlining approval process</i>	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Reduce time and expense of development process</i>	0	0	0	1	1
<i>Upgrade quality of affordable units</i>	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Inclusionary Housing</i>	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Find a dedicated source of funding for affordable housing within the County.</i>	1	0	0	0	1

County					
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	Response Count
Raise level of priority	30	6	4	3	43
Increased data/information regarding existing and planned land use, in relation to housing affordability	15	13	12	1	41
Public education	16	14	8	3	41
Decision-maker education	24	10	4	3	41
Reduced impact fees	8	18	8	5	39
Infrastructure development	12	18	7	4	41
Water supply increases	8	16	12	6	42
Increased coordination among housing authorities	14	13	11	3	41
Increased cities/County coordination	17	17	7	2	43
<i>Acceptance by all jurisdictions of the importance of allowing increased density & streamlining approval process</i>	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Reduce time and expense of development process</i>	1	0	0	1	2
<i>Upgrade quality of affordable units</i>	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Inclusionary Housing</i>	0	0	1	0	1
<i>Find a dedicated source of funding for affordable housing within the County.</i>	1	0	0	0	1
Answered Question					44
Skipped Question					13

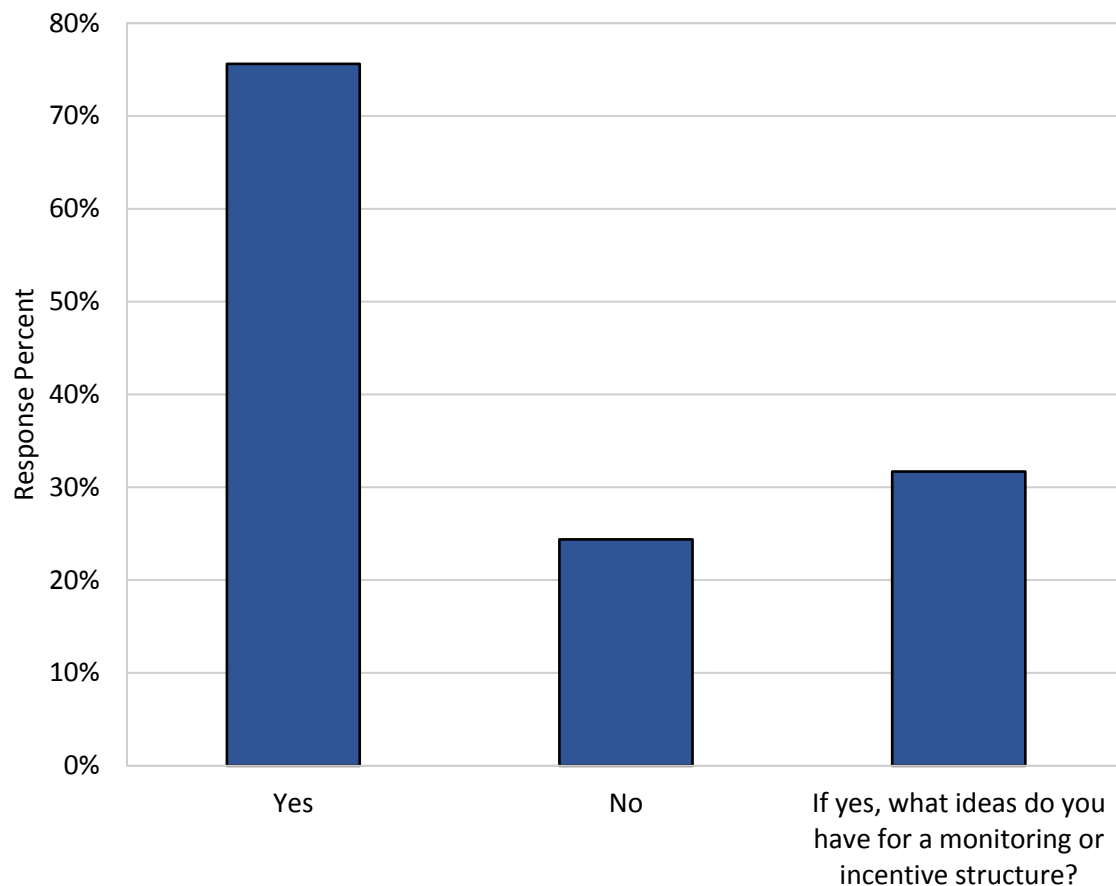
Note: Entries in *italics* are from respondents' additions, and represent "Other" in the chart.





Question 6: Should there be a local monitoring and incentive mechanism to encourage the cities and county to meet affordable housing production goals (such as the Regional Housing Need Allocation)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	75.6%	31
No	24.4%	10
If yes, what ideas do you have for a monitoring or incentive structure?	31.7%	13
Answered Question		41
Skipped Question		16



The individual ideas submitted for this question are listed below:

More than just zoning land for RHNA, they should have to build the housing.

Develop consequences for not meeting, unlike the current lack thereof.

Reduced mandates from the state.

It's not about incentives, it's about creating a culture that puts all the needs of a community on an equal playing field -- economics and environment, not just environment.

Jurisdictions should be rewarded for meeting lower-income RHNA objectives.

Uncertain; need model for permanent affordability.

Landlord incentives, i.e. holding fees, damage claims, case management, move-in assistance.

Monitor timeframe of approvals for projects and incentivize regulatory streamlining.

Reducing reporting requirements, financial incentives.

Countywide reduced impact fees; Increased coordination of operating subsidies.

Money from the State for achieving goals.

The CoC conducts a needs assessment that identifies the housing needs. That tool should be used by the cities/county to fund affordable housing projects that fill the gaps.

Financial incentive for meeting stated goals.

Question 7: Has homelessness directly impacted businesses or economic development in your community/jurisdiction?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	69.8%	30
No	30.2%	13
Answered Question		43
Skipped Question		14

If yes (to Question 7), how? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Actual/perceived increase in crime	36.8%	14
Increased security/building maintenance costs	23.7%	9
Image of downtown or other business districts	50.0%	19
Changes in customer base	15.8%	6
Other	23.7%	9
Answered Question		38
Skipped Question		19

Other entries by respondents:

Government needs to admit that a big part of the homelessness problem has been created by the lack of sufficient affordable housing in the community & also that the very high AMI & very low incomes in retail, restaurant, ag and other low-paying industries contributes to homelessness.

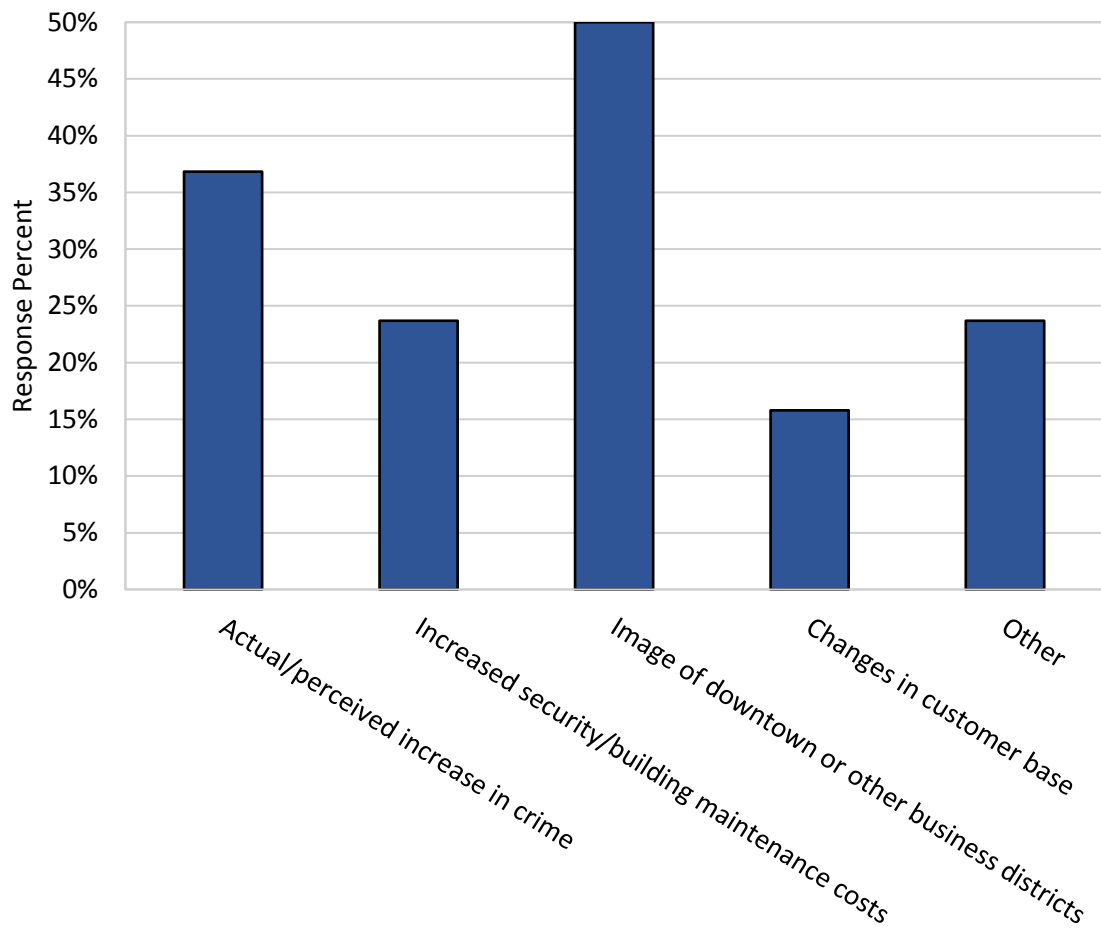
Loss of opportunity for new business.

The homeless community is used as scapegoat for every ill.

Perceived as not much, and so undercounted.

There is no available housing or services to meet the need. As a result, community perception of homelessness is fear-based and that has various impacts.

We have students who are homeless.



Question 8: In your opinion, what entity(ies) [unit of government, organization, etc.] should have primary responsibility for addressing homelessness in Ventura County?

# Men- tions	Entities Responsible for Addressing Affordable Housing
6	County and cities
5	County
4	County and cities in a cooperative effort
3	Cities
1	All 10 cities should be primarily responsible for their issues dealing with homelessness. The County does and should only provide resources and services needed as a partner with all 10 cities.
1	Churches
1	Cities, County, VCOG
1	City and County Planning & Building & Safety Departments and LAFCo
1	City, County, churches, businesses
1	CoC, City Housing Community Dev Depts., Local Service Providers
1	CoC, County, cities, non-profit homeless organizations.
1	Collaboration between private and public entities
1	Collaborative - no one entity, Continuum of Care Coordinates
1	County Government should provide the leadership, every jurisdiction should share in the responsibility with funds and manpower.
1	County, Cities - Consider county-wide homeless housing and service coordination organization
1	Creating a vision to get us out of a 20% poverty level, a culture that advocates for sustainable business development ..people can live here (have affordable housing) and have employment
1	Everyone, Government, Private Industry, Faith Community and Individual Residents
1	It's a regional community issue; everyone needs to be at the table, realizing that the problem can't be solved by law enforcement.
1	No entity or organization is solely responsible. But rather, a coordinated effort between housers, County and cities is needed. VBH needs to step up its game relative to working with other agencies in the County.
1	Partnership between local governments, non-profit organizations, and developers
1	Partnership w/ County & local Non-Profit orgs
1	Planning
1	Social services
1	The entire governmental structure in collaboration