



City of Pico Rivera
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January 23, 2021

Southern California Association of Governments
Attn: Peggy Huang, Executive Director
900 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1700
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Subject: City of Pico Rivera Response to Appeals Board for Housing Unit Allocation for the Sixth Cycle Housing Element (2021-2029)

Dr. Ms. Huang:

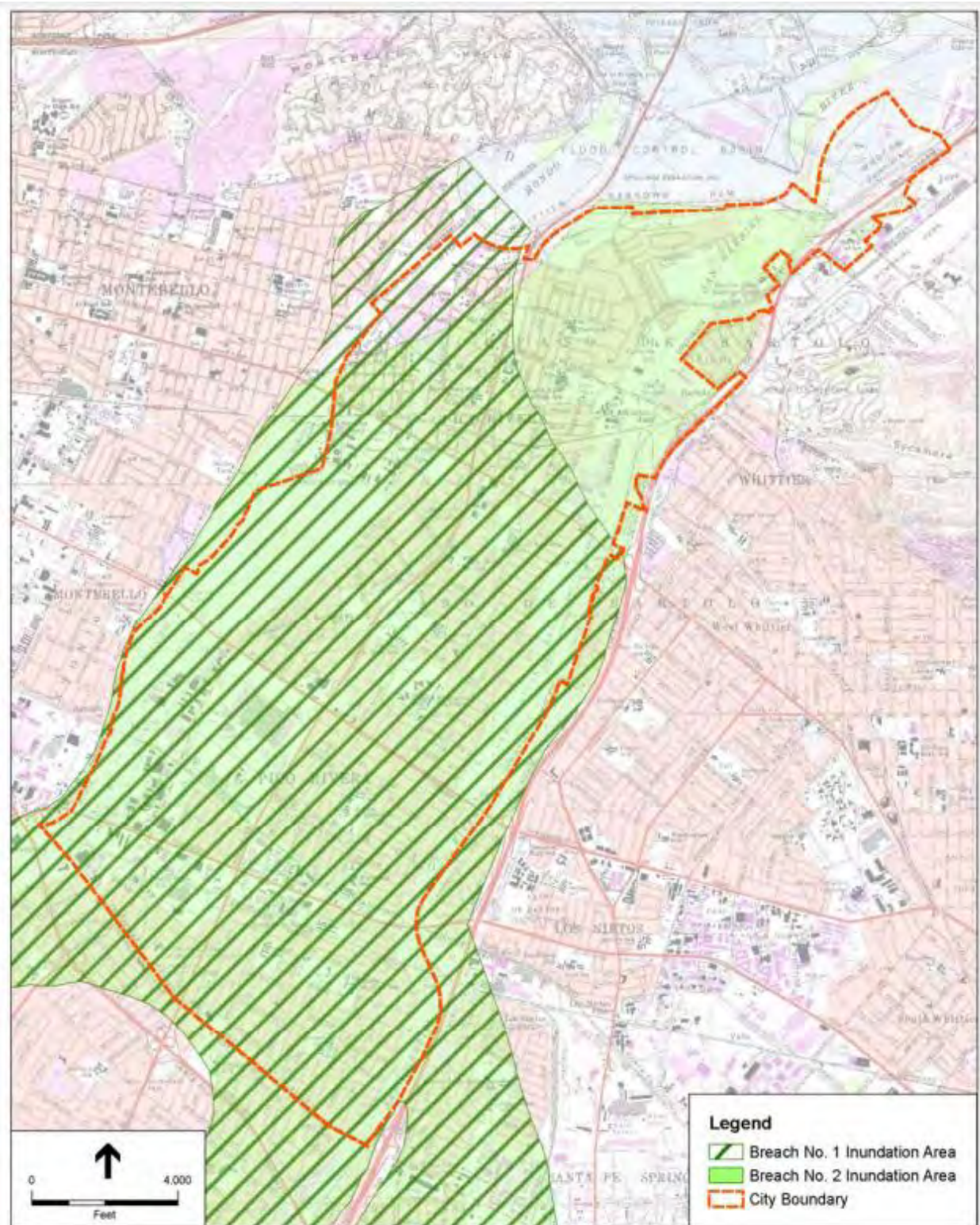
On behalf of the City Council and the residents of the City of Pico Rivera (City), the following provides a response to the request from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Appeals Board (Appeals Board) for additional information related to the City's appeal of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) specifically related to flood impacts in the City. The following is based on proceedings of the Appeals Board from Friday, January 8, 2021 and the continued appeals hearing of Friday, January 22, 2021. The Appeals Board requested information related to how the City's location within the flood inundation area from the Whittier Narrows Dam impacts its ability to meet its Final Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Methodology for the Sixth Housing Element Cycle. While the City believes that the criteria presented in its appeal dated October 22, 2020 are important, the following provides a calculation of the City's RHNA strictly addressing flooding concerns from Whittier Narrows Dam (Dam).

BACKGROUND ON FLOOD INUNDATION

The 6th Cycle RHNA allocation of a proposed 3,939 units does not fully consider local planning factors unique to the City, specifically the risk of life from flood inundation. The City must plan for future growth within the City taking flood inundation and specifically evacuation into consideration based on maps, modeling and emergency planning provided to the City by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps), who is the owner and operator of the Dam.

The entire City lies within the flood inundation area (See Figure 1) and in maps provided by the Army Corps, which the City is not authorized to share and the Army Corps cannot release, significant flood risk is highest in the City and would require a complete evacuation of the City.

FIGURE 1 – Pico Rivera Dam Inundation



Pico Rivera Appeal Sites Methodology

The Army Corps has determined that there are several potential failure methods (PFMs) that would result in the City of Pico Rivera being inundated with anywhere from 8-20+ feet of water, which would result in a high likelihood of loss of life for residents within the City.

Additionally, the City has been told that catastrophic flooding can result from the Dam in all of the following scenarios of a severe rain condition:

- Dam break/failure,
- Overtopping of the Dam due to high levels of rain water, and
- Proper functioning of the Dam which activates the spillways opening at Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers

Even after this earthen dam is fixed, if it functions properly and the spillways open and due to over-capacity the City will be inundated and released water will overrun the groundwater retention basins along the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers.

FUTURE RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AND EVACUATION PLANNING

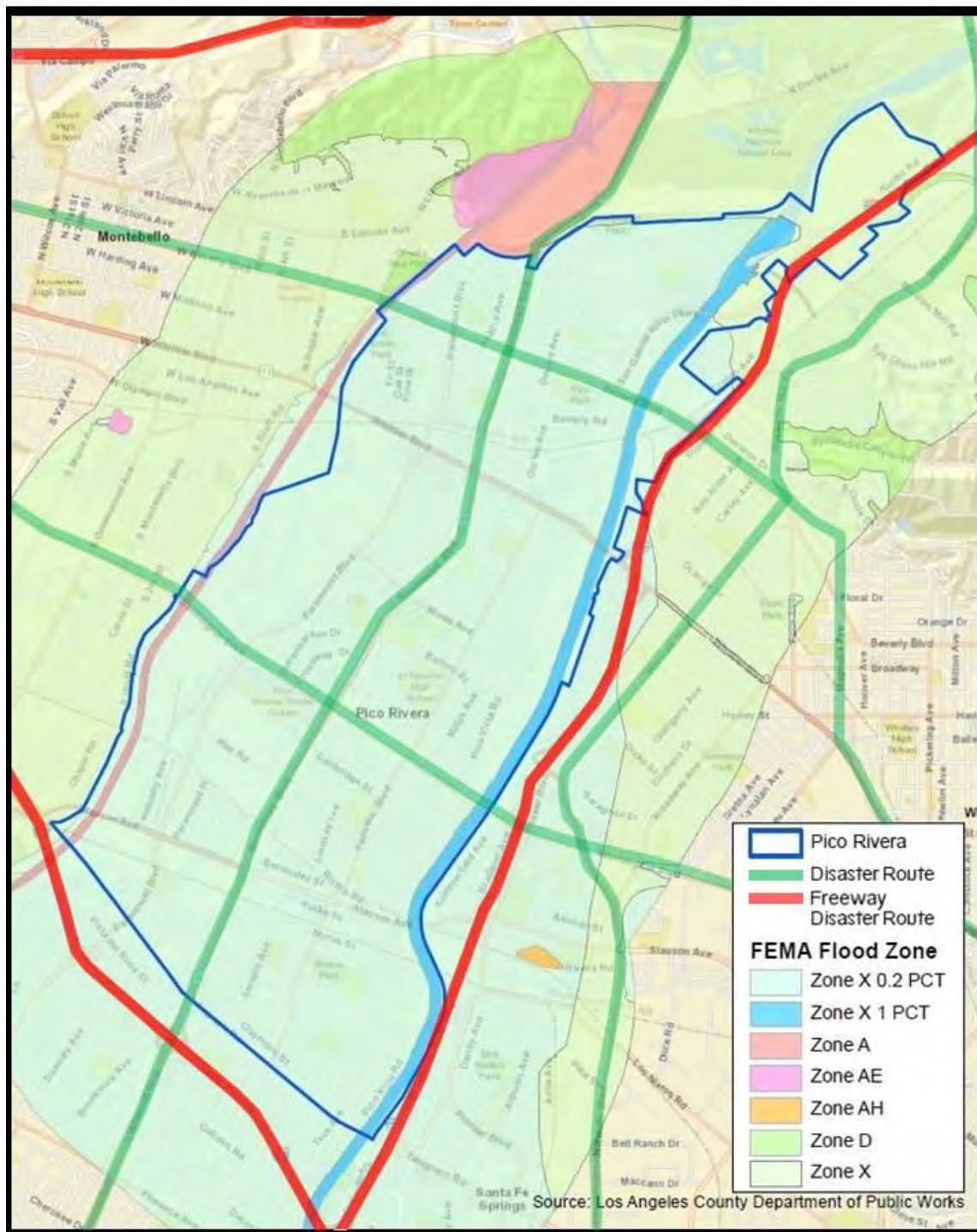
The City was provided Disaster routes (Evacuation Corridors) from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (See Figure 2). The City believes it is prudent to plan for future higher density growth within the areas along these Evacuation Corridors. While the City is not authorized to share, and the Army Corps cannot release different inundation maps from the Dam, significant flood risk is highest within the City (compared to other affected cities downstream of the Dam), with an estimated 98% of the City experiencing between 5 to 20 feet of inundation.

The City plans to continue growing and assist SCAG and the State with housing production. The City is currently preparing a Washington Boulevard Transit Oriented Development Specific Plan (to prepare for the future expansion of the Los Angeles County METRO Eastside Corridor Light Rail Line along Washington Boulevard). The City is also updating its Housing Element that accounts for increased housing production. Planning for increased residential density near these Evacuation Corridors (Beverly, Washington and Rosemead Boulevards) will minimize risk of life and property during an evacuation event.

The City has analyzed what would be the most reasonable and responsible method for future growth within Pico Rivera based on local emergency route data and HCD established guidelines (AB 1397). The City's evacuation routes are:

- Rosemead Boulevard
- Washington Boulevard
- Beverly Boulevard

Figure 2 – Pico Rivera Disaster Routes (Evacuation Corridors)



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The City analyzed all parcels within the adjacent areas to these Evacuation Corridors to determine which parcels could realistically redevelop for housing growth. As shown on the attached exhibit, these areas are comprised of parcels with various zoning designations. For the purposes of analysis, the City did not consider residential growth within the following areas as they do not currently permit residential development or are built out to max capacity with no growth options that would not create a replacement housing issue:

- Public Facilities (P-F)
- Open Space (O-S)
- Single-family (S-F)
- SP 301 & 400

This left potential future growth in the following zoning categories.

Zone	Acreage	Potential Units
C-C	4.65	38
C-G	54.54	457
C-M	0.00	0
CPD	11.77	100
I-G	9.60	116
I-L	3.54	43
IPD	12.29	147
P-A	2.80	96
R-M	2.09	25
	101.29	1,022.00

The following table describes the assumptions made for parcels within each zone, with a parcel by parcel analysis completed within the R-M zone to determine whether there were existing residential uses that must be taken into account. The City worked with its consultants to utilize GIS and analyze the City on a parcel level basis the map presented below (See Figure 3).

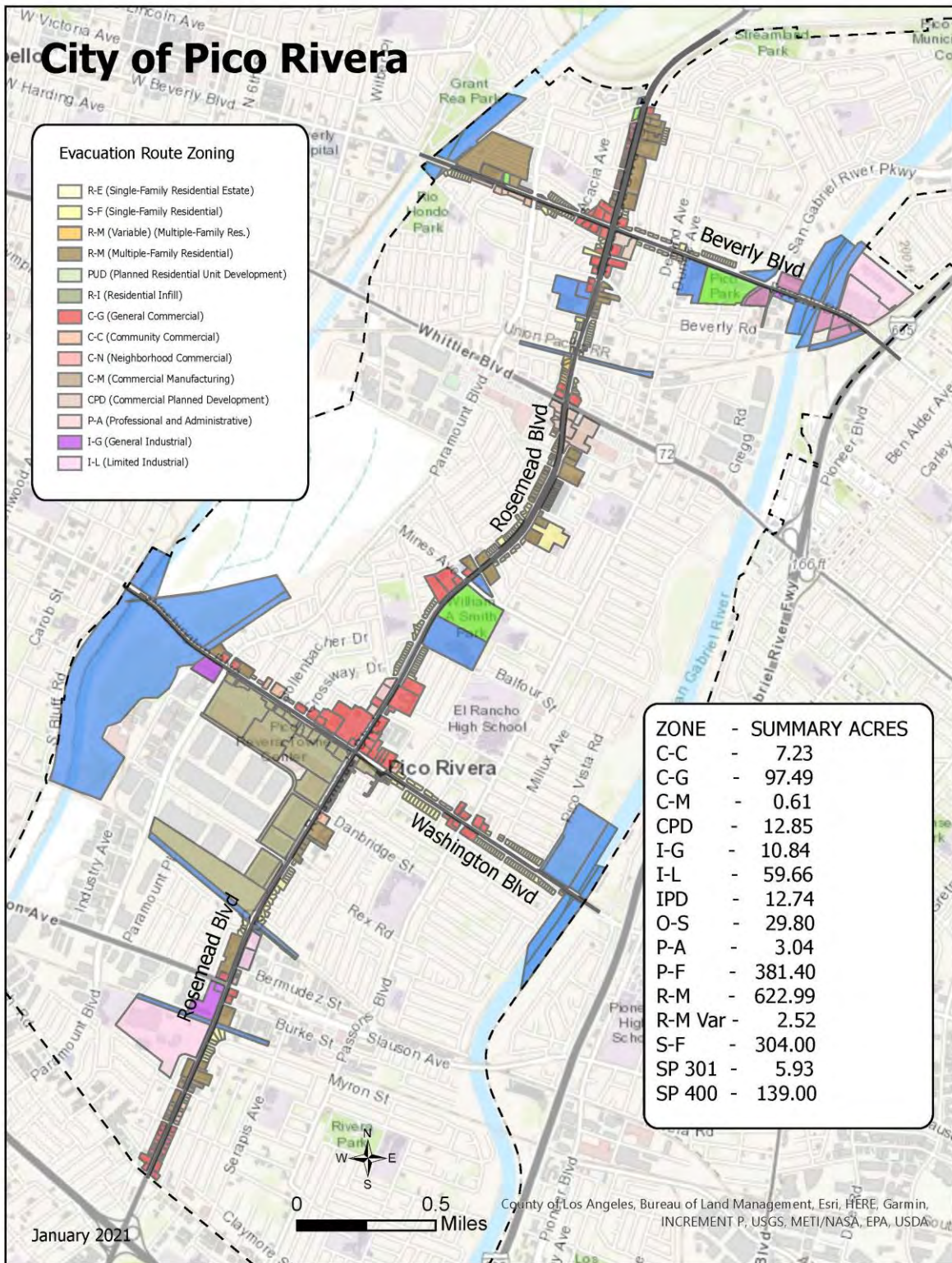
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Zone	Development Assumptions	Acreage	Development Potential (Dwelling Units)
C-C, C-G, C-M, CPD	<p>The City anticipates that future growth could be accommodated within the listed commercial zones. These zones do not currently permit residential development, but due to the identified parcels adjacency to evacuation routes, the City anticipates that these zones may be able to accommodate residential development in a mixed-use development pattern up to 40 dwelling units per acre.</p> <p>The City has factored in the likelihood that uses are going to redevelop within the next 8 years, AB 1397 size requirements, and the need to maintain commercial square footage as part of these developments. A 25% development factor was applied to these parcels to capture the loss in total potential developable area. Per HCD guidance not to use the maximum density for planning purposes, the City assumed a reasonable density of 35 dwelling units per acre.</p>	70.96	595
I-G, I-L, IPD, P-A	<p>The City believes that a portion of the existing industrial uses along the identified evacuation routes may be reasonable assumed to be able to redevelop for residential uses if rezoned to permit residential development. A number of these properties have long-term leases that exceed the length of the 6th Cycle planning period, but some may present an opportunity to accommodate residential growth. To accommodate for parcels with lease lengths that would not permit redevelopment, the City has applied a 35% development factor.</p> <p>The City would need to rezone these properties or apply an overlay that permits residential development. It is anticipated the City could do this and permit up to 40 dwelling units per acre on the applicable sites. Per HCD guidance not to use the maximum density for planning purposes, the City assumed a reasonable density of 35 dwelling units per acre.</p>	28.23	402
R-M	<p>One parcel within the R-M zone and the identified evacuation routes is not currently developed to capacity with a residential use. The City has identified this parcel as having the potential to contribute to future residential growth. This zone permits up to 14 dwelling units per acre. Per HCD guidance not to use the maximum density for planning purposes, the City assumed a reasonable density of 12 dwelling units per acre.</p>	2.09	25
	TOTAL	101.29	1,022

Figure 3 – Pico Rivera Land Inventory



While the City is required to (and will) continue to accommodate accessory dwelling units in the zones that permit them, this development strategy distributes units to all parts of the City and away from the identified evacuation routes. The City's goal is to focus growth along these evacuation routes in an attempt to decrease potential loss of life in the event of a failure of the Whittier Narrows Dam.

Pico Rivera believes that this approach to future housing growth allows the City to incorporate strategic residential growth over the 2021-2029 planning period in a responsible manner given the local safety conditions that impact development within the City boundaries.

The City of Pico Rivera recommends the following RHNA allocation by income category:

Income Category	Draft SCAG RHNA Allocation	Pico Rivera Recommended RHNA Allocation
Very Low	1,148 Units (29%)	296 Units (29%)
Low	562 Units (14%)	143 Units (14%)
Moderate	572 Units (15%)	153 Units (15%)
Above Moderate	1,657 Units (42%)	430 Units (42%)
TOTAL	3,939 Units	1,022 Units

Conclusion

Due to the high risk of flooding in the event of a severe rain conditions from the Dam, the City is extremely limited in areas where it can plan for future housing in a manner that is safe for future residents. The discrepancy demonstrates the RHNA allocation undermines Government Code Section 65584(d)(2)(B) by failing to provide the distribution of units in an equitable manner.

The City contends that a realistic estimate of future growth need should be directly tied to the amount of available land within the City and near the Evacuation Corridors suitable for urban development that represents a minimized risk of life from flooding from the Dam.

Your consideration is greatly appreciated, thank you for the opportunity to provide additional analysis. The City heard the Appeals Board and modified its RHNA number, which include an increase of units from 688 to 1,022 units. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact either myself at (562-801-4398 office) or (714-309-1104 or Julia Gonzalez – Deputy Director (562-801-4447 office) or (323-691-4369 cell).



Michael L. Garcia
Community and Economic Development Director
City of Pico Rivera