

grow the
san diego way

2018

WHITE PAPER

SANDAG's Series 14 Housing Forecast Grossly Overestimates
2050 Housing Needs, Relies On Faulty Methodology



The Voice of San Diego published an article earlier this year, [San Diego County Will Be Short of Housing Even If Everything Planned Gets Built](#). It referred to recently announced preliminary Regional Growth Forecast figures that differed wildly from the forecast developed just 4 years ago. They showed that despite a lower population and lower employment than was projected in the last forecast, our housing need somehow increased by a whopping 56%, conveniently above the General Plan capacity of the County. These numbers could be used to help make the case for building more sprawl-oriented projects in the rural areas of the County.

While the media and everyday citizens, having been accustomed to alarmist headlines about housing, did not question the numbers nor the headline, people in the planning community were flabbergasted. Naturally, Grow the San Diego Way was intrigued and concerned that the numbers defied common sense and logic. We dug deeper to find out why.

New housing projection increase



56%

To be clear, under every possible analysis, it is abundantly clear that San Diego has not achieved its level of needed housing, particularly in the lower and moderate income levels. We need to build a lot more housing that is affordable to moderate and lower income San Diegans. That is not in question. What is in question is a non-transparent process whereby forecasts are inflated unnecessarily via a flawed methodology and with input from players who are riven with conflicts of interest.

What are regional growth forecasts?

SANDAG creates a new regional growth forecast for future planning including housing, population, and employment every four years. As part of that process, they take the most recent population projections provided by the state and plug it into a model which, among other things, spits out how many houses will be needed by 2050. All things being equal, a decrease in the 2050 projected population should yield a decrease in the need for housing. The population figures are provided by the State of California Department of Finance (DOF), as required by law. This year, the DOF lowered their population projections for the San Diego region for 2050 by about 70,000 people (versus the last time this analysis was conducted). Plugging that number into the housing model should yield about 25,000 fewer houses needed in 2050 than were originally projected. However, something unusual happened and SANDAG's housing need projection jumped upward by **more than 180,000 houses**. Let's explore how that happened.



Fewer people = Fewer houses

All things being equal, if there are fewer people, there should also be fewer housing units projected. About 25,000 fewer houses. The need for housing should go down.



However, something unusual happened on the way to updating the numbers this year. At the end of the day, SANDAG decided to change the model it has been using since the 70s and to do so, sought input from two expert review panels, the last of which was a five person panel that included two building industry consultants. This last panel made the most significant changes to the new model. The panel is supposed to provide a diversity of expert opinions from government, academia, housing experts and industry. Unfortunately that did not happen entirely.

“...something unusual happened on the way to updating the numbers this year.”

What happened? This drastic leap in housing need from the forecast conducted four years ago despite lower projected population and employment figures raised some flags. Senior SANDAG officials, Ray Major (Chief Economist and Director of Technical Services) and Muggs Stoll (Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning), explained to Grow the San Diego

Way that they felt the original housing growth forecast model was getting “long in the tooth” and decided to create a new model altogether.

The recent [scandal](#) that forced out the previous Executive Director was directly related to the growth forecast, though it was related to a clerical “copy and paste” error. The subsequent ignoring of that error led to overstated income forecasts in the midst of a push for Measure A which relied on tax revenue projections from the model. In essence it exaggerated the benefits of Measure A. While this error had a drastic impact on tax revenue projections, the housing forecast was not affected. Nonetheless, SANDAG has been under a lot of scrutiny to ensure these types of errors do not occur and they resolved to create a simpler, more transparent plan. Unfortunately, as it pertains to the latest growth forecast, it was anything but transparent.

The previous forecast model, known as the “Demographic and Economic Forecasting Model” (DEFM) had been used since the early 1970s, starting with Series 4. It had proven to be quite accurate, within approximately 4% of the observed growth.

SANDAG uses its Demographic and Economic Forecasting Model (DEFM) to develop the regional forecast. DEFM was first developed to support the Series 4 forecast in the late 1970s. DEFM uses a standard demographic (i.e., cohort-survival) economic modeling technique to estimate future growth. Forecasts developed using DEFM have had strong accuracy; since Series 4 (1977), on average DEFM regional forecasts have been within 4 percent of observed population growth. Source: [SANDAG series 13 forecast](#)

So what was wrong with the old model? It isn’t entirely clear, but the new model changes the outcome so significantly and counterintuitively, that we have to question why a successful and accurate model was discarded and replaced with a flawed model that drastically changes the entire housing discussion for the foreseeable future. Despite a drop in population and jobs projected for 2050, the new model increases the housing needed by 56%. The onus is on SANDAG to explain why.

The timeline

For this new forecast (Series 14), SANDAG convened two groups of outside experts over the course of 12 months to help plan for the next forecast. The following is a timeline of the meetings that led to the new forecast.

March 2017: The first group, convened in March 2017, consisted of 12 experts in demography, economics and planning from around the country. They looked at which assumptions (and variables) should be used as inputs into the new growth forecast. They came up with scenarios that looked at household size by age, gender and race/ethnicity-

“...the new model changes the outcome so significantly and counterintuitively, that we have to question why a successful and accurate model was discarded and replaced...”

ty as well as vacancy rates and other housing indicators. SANDAG did not made public any of the inputs or results from this all day session.

May 5, 2017: At the SANDAG Regional Planning Committee meeting, SANDAG staffer, Clint Daniels issued a status report on Series 14 and a brief recap of the expert review panel. It validates the forecasting model derived from the March meeting. ([Regional Planning Committee, May 5, 2017, Item 4](#) and [audio here](#)), but they did not provide detail on the assumptions that were being used.

November 3, 2017: The SANDAG Board of Directors met and Ray Major presented results from the expert review panel as part of the 7 point plan that was meant to prevent errors like the one that occurred in late 2016. They announced that the original computer model (DFEM) was to be discontinued and presented a new methodology that would incorporate demographic trends and historical trends ([Board of Directors Meeting, November 3, 2017, Item 5](#) and [audio here](#)).

February 8, 2018: The Regional Planning Technical Working Group (the region's planning directors) received a presentation from SANDAG staffer, Rachel Cortes, laying out the various housing scenarios that would be analyzed by a new expert review panel a week later. SANDAG presented two viable 2050 scenarios, one lower than Series 13 at 1.375 million units and one slightly higher than Series 13 at 1.45 million units (the red lines in the chart below). Importantly, these scenarios showed that we had enough capacity in the general plans of the region to accommodate the projected housing need (the horizontal grey line labeled "buildout"). Source: [Regional Plan Technical Working Group, February 8, 2018, Item 3](#) and [audio here](#)).

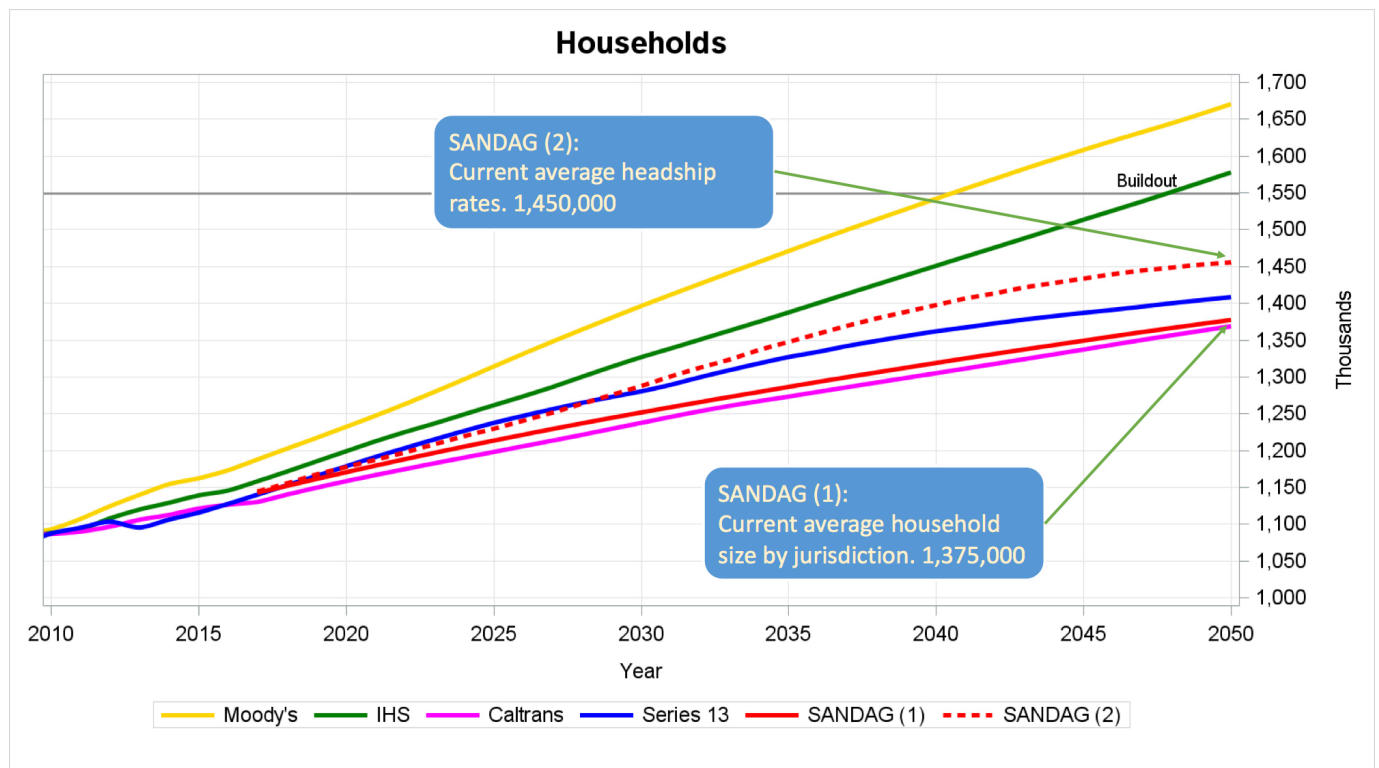


Chart from the Technical Working Group presentation delivered by Ms. Cortes. The red lines are the scenarios SANDAG derived from the earlier, larger expert review panel. The dotted line is the lower (alternate) scenario. The red line is the high scenario. The gray horizontal line is the "buildout" of all general plan capacities across all the jurisdictions. Note that both SANDAG scenarios are at least 100,000 houses lower than the full build-out scenario, indicating that we have enough capacity in our general plans to absorb the projected housing.

February 14, 2018: The new, smaller expert review panel of five experts convened. This time they added two building industry consultants (from the same firm) in addition to three other experts, two of whom had participated in the previous year's panel (Ratcliff and Sharygin). Audio, materials and conclusions from this meeting were not made available to the general public. The five panelists were:

- Gary London, London Moeder Advisors
- Nathan Moeder, London Moeder Advisors
- Frank Wen, Ph.D, Planning Manager, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- Ryan Ratcliff, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Economics, USD
- Ethan Sharygin, Ph.D, Demographer, CA Department of Finance

40%
of the panel were building industry consultants

March 26, 2018: SANDAG staffers, Rachel Cortes and Coleen Clementson, present findings from February's meeting to the Technical Working Group which introduces completely new variables to calculate the housing need based on "persons per household" (PPH) and the housing forecast jumped massively. This demographic assumption (PPH), according to one of the members of the panel, happened without input from the one panelist who was an expert in demographics. It is also responsible for the lion's share of the 56% jump in housing need. The high estimate of 1.45 jumped to 1.7 million, inexplicably and importantly, the housing need now exceeds the regional capacity to absorb the forecasted housing ([Regional Planning Technical Working Group, March 26, 2018, Item 3](#)).

The expert review panel

What is concerning is that SANDAG chose two building industry consultants from the same firm to make up 40% of the five-person panel which is counterintuitive if they were seeking a diversity of expert opinions across disciplines. One private sector expert would probably have been sufficient. Furthermore, these two consultants are well known for their opposition to the recently approved San Diego County General Plan, and they are [on record stating](#) that it is a bad plan and believe that it doesn't provide enough housing for the County. They are hired regularly by developers to [testify in favor of backcountry GPA projects](#) and help make the case for General Plan Amendments (unplanned zoning changes) in the unincorporated County. They have testified at many of the General Plan Amendment hearings on behalf of developers in the past year or so. They generally advocate for more housing in wildfire prone areas of the backcountry despite it being specifically avoided in the General Plan. In a nutshell, they lack the objectivity one might seek in a panel of this nature. One could argue that they are pro-sprawl which is counter to the County and SANDAG's philosophy of smart, transit oriented and sustainable development. It is with the input of these two consultants (who work for the same firm) that the new forecast suddenly shows that the current general plan capacities are insufficient to

meet our housing needs. In other words, it helps make the case they've been trying to make since the County's general plan was approved in 2011.

While an expert review panel is supposed to bring diverse disciplines into the conversation, this particular panel did not operate very transparently. In fact, important assumptions in the model changed substantially after their Valentine's day meeting in 2018. This change in assumptions happened without informing all members of that abbreviated panel, despite requests for more information from at least one of the panel members (which were subsequently ignored). The assumptions were highly technical and demographic in nature and the sole demographer was not consulted. A month later, in the Technical Working Group meeting of March 2018, the housing need jumped 56% based on a new assumption about persons per household.

At any rate, however it happened, SANDAG made a decision to change a key assumption in the model following the last meeting of the experts and that resulted in a 56% jump in housing need compared to the last forecast despite a drop in population and employment.

So, how did the model change so drastically?

A "new model"

Despite having a model that has proven reasonably accurate over the past 4 decades, SANDAG chose to change the model and used several assumptions to structure their model. From the March 2017 expert review panel (12 experts) to the meeting of the smaller expert review panel (in February 2018), SANDAG had two scenarios: the most conservative used a demographically reasonable "headship rate" assumption (based on rate of household formation) that would remain constant through 2050. This model would have yielded a number (1.45 million) that was slightly higher than the earlier Series 13 forecast. An alternative scenario yielded 1.375 million units which is lower than the Series 13 forecast (see chart above).

However, after the February 2018 expert review panel met, SANDAG convened a meeting of the Technical Working Group ([March 26, 2018, Item 3](#)) and presented findings from the panel that introduced an entirely new household variable based on nationwide trends, not on localized demographics. To estimate the future housing need for 2050, they used population growth, vacancy rates, average age of population and an estimate of "persons per household" (PPH) to arrive at a figure for how many houses would be needed by 2050. Using those inputs, they arrived at 509,000 additional units needed by 2050 which was a substantial increase from both Series 13 and from their initial stab at the forecast, and of course, makes a case that we suddenly do not have enough capacity to absorb the projected housing need.

"The assumptions were highly technical and demographic in nature and the sole demographer was not consulted."

Assumptions used for the 2050 forecast used by the February 2018 panel:

a) **Population:** The figure for projected population, comes courtesy of the Department of Finance (and regional planning agencies like SANDAG are required by state law to use this figure for regional planning). DOF's projection was lower than it was 4 years ago.

b) **Vacancy Rate:** Rather than predict a realistic vacancy rate based on historical figures (2-3%), SANDAG chose to pick a "healthy" best case scenario of 5%. This obviously increases the housing forecast for 2050 because it assumes that the housing market will eventually resemble that of the rest of the United States and will be a "healthy" market. This is a dubious assumption, but its impact is not as significant as some of the other assumptions.

c) **Second Homes and Vacation Rentals:** here, SANDAG assumes that these will not increase significantly because they do not have enough reliable data to adjust the figure. They assumed about 57,000 houses will be unavailable to residents.

d) **Household Size (Persons Per Household):** this last assumption is the one that would have the greatest impact on housing need and it is also one of the most difficult variables to project—so hard that the Department of Finance will not make projections much more than 20 years past the recent Census.

“...the Department of Finance will not make projections much more than 20 years past the recent Census.”

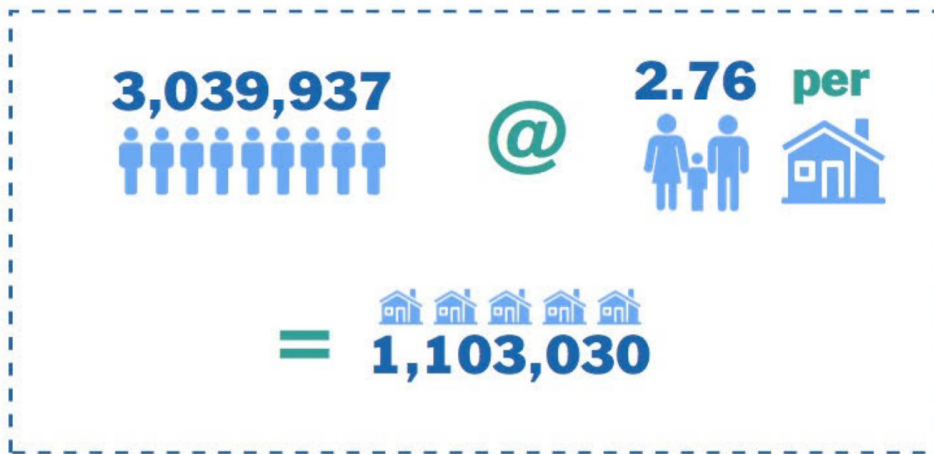
Source: [Agenda - Regional Planning Committee - May 4, 2018, Item 18-05-4](#)

Persons per household?

The assumption that would have the greatest impact on housing numbers is the persons per household (PPH) figure. It is also the one least likely to yield accuracy for 2050. To obtain persons per household, you divide the total number of residents by the total number of occupied houses and that gives you PPH. The number SANDAG used for 2016 is 2.76. It is close enough, though the DOF figure for PPH in 2016 is 2.81, if we're seeking the most accuracy

(<http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/E-5/>)

2016



What about in 2050?

For 2016, the persons per household (PPH) data is easy to calculate. The variable of PPH is derived from existing data on population and households, so it is reasonably accurate. The problem starts when you try to project into the future. PPH is a very difficult number to project because there are many factors that can affect it: household trends (multigenerational households, boomerang children), ethnicity (Hispanics have larger households, for example), delayed household formation, fertility rates and age distribution (older folks tend to have smaller households). In fact, it is so difficult to project that the Department of Finance (the entity charged with maintaining and updating projections on population and demographics every year) refuses to speculate.

In an email exchange, Walter Schwarm, Director of the California State Data Center for the Department of Finance, told Grow the San Diego Way:

“We do not make household [size] projections more than 20 years past the most recent Census. Therefore we have no projections at all past 2030. Household formation and housing trends are currently too unsettled to make consistent long term projections of households to 2030. Historical examination (since 1990) of the data you have been shown sees San Diego’s PPH relatively stable in the 2.7 - 2.8ish range. The data make no comment on the likelihood of future changes that might alter that.”

In essence, he is saying that there is no data that supports such a low PPH figure. And in a subsequent email, one of his colleagues, Bill Schooling, at the Department of Finance reiterated this:

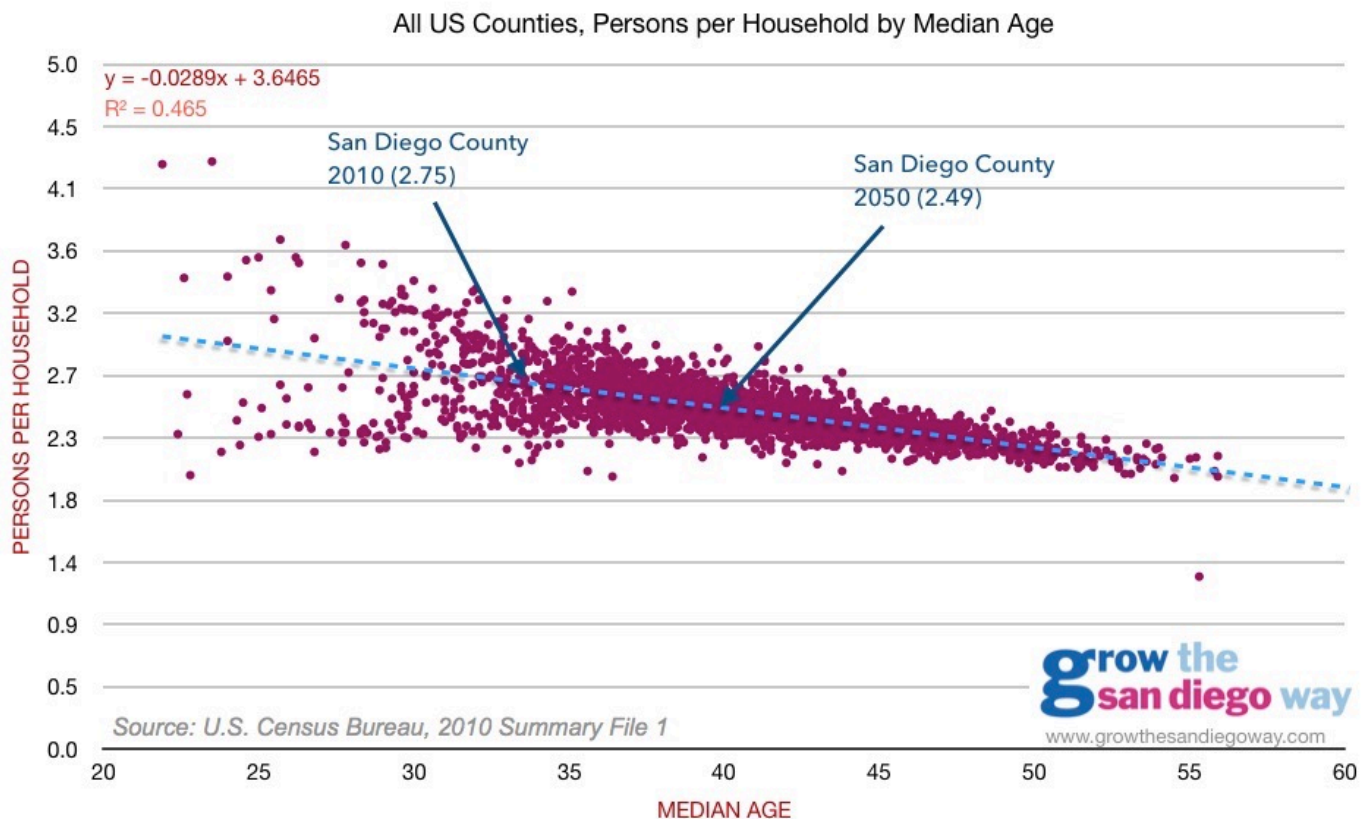
“I think there is risk with any set of projections, but really haven’t given much thought to projecting PPH. There are so many moving parts (housing cost, cultural, birth rates, age) that I would hesitate to consider anything very far into the future.”

So, how did SANDAG do it?

With the state's top demographers stating that forecasting "persons per household" is not tenable even 12 years from now, we ask "how was SANDAG able to project PPH out to 2050?" A reasonable degree of accuracy is required when forecasting out to 2050. Why? Because important long term plans by the local jurisdictions use SANDAG's regional forecast to project everything from traffic, housing or even tax revenue.

In its analysis, SANDAG looked at all 3,142 United States counties from the 2010 US Census and plotted them on a cluster chart by PPH and by median age (chart below). What they attempt to show is a trend line where counties in 2010 that had a higher median age also had a lower household size (PPH). In other words, in the US (in 2010), higher median age seems to correlate to smaller household sizes; as folks get older, their children move out, etc. However, demographers we've spoken with (including the sole demographer on the panel) noted that this is a highly inaccurate way to forecast persons per household and is, in fact, bad science.

Since San Diego's population is projected to age by 2050 (to a median age of 40, according to DOF), SANDAG attempted to correlate median age with average household size. Essentially, SANDAG plotted a linear trend line that showed that, across the US, counties that are older tend to have fewer people per household. Based on this linear trend, counties with an average age of 40 have about 2.49 people per household. So, if US counties in 2010 with a median age of 40 have a household size of 2.49, SANDAG's assumption is that San Diego will follow the same pattern. The below interactive chart is a recreation of the chart SANDAG presented.



There are numerous significant flaws to this analysis that demographers we interviewed noted and further, this demographic analysis was conducted without input from one of the top demographers in the state who, incidentally, was also a member of the panel. He told us that some of the reviewers were not provided information about the persons per household assumption that was used in the Series 14 projections at either of their meetings:

“During 2017 and early 2018, reviewers were presented with a different method of calculation which held constant household headship rates by age, sex, and race/ethnicity, and therefore varied based on the county’s demographic change. Incredibly, the decision to change the persons per household forecast was not made with the knowledge or endorsement of the demographers on the panel.” [Telephone and email interviews with a member who was on both expert review panels.]

In fact, from the February 2018 convening of the panel to the March 26 meeting of the Technical Working Group, there was a substantial change in the projected housing number and, crucially, key members of the panel were not consulted, despite their requests for more information. As mentioned previously, as of February 2018, the preliminary housing forecast scenarios were between 1.375 million to 1.45 million housing units, which is in line with the previous forecast (Series 13) of 1.4 million units. In April, the number inexplicably jumped to 1.7 million and used a flawed and unscientific methodology to justify the jump. Again, not all experts were consulted on this change.

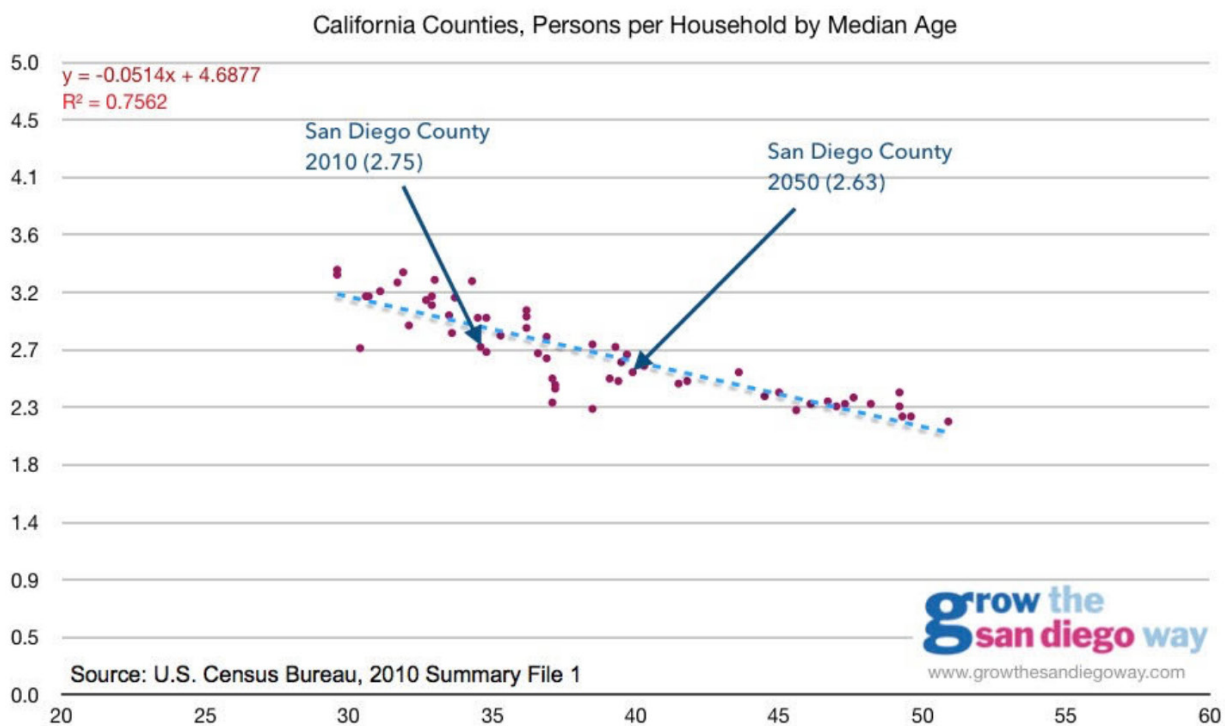
Nationwide demographics vs. local dynamics: Using “total US counties” PPH to project future PPH in California is counter to basic principles of demographics. The household composition, ethnicity and age distribution for counties across the US in 2010 vary so widely and diverge so considerably from California counties that making conclusions from that data set is highly flawed from the start. For example, in 2010, older Counties also happen to have a much larger White population and lower population overall. Franklin County, Indiana, with a median age of exactly 40 is [99% White](#). Contrast that with San Diego County which was [43% White and 30.2% Hispanic](#) in 2017. Projecting out to 2050, San Diego County residents will average 40 years of age but the County will also be over [40% Hispanic](#). Why does that matter? Because Hispanics, on average, have larger households. How much larger? Almost a whole person larger. In many Latino cultures, multigenerational households are not only more common but they are culturally desirable (grandparents helping raise the grandchildren, adults taking care of their senior parents, etc.). According to [2017 Census data](#), Hispanics have 3.25 PPH. Non-Hispanics have 2.43 PPH. In fact, two elected officials in the April 2018 Regional Planning Committee meeting, John Aguilera of Vista and Kristine Alessio of La Mesa raised doubts about such a low household size given the ethnic and cultural makeup of their communities. So, using a correlation of all US counties to project San Diego household sizes in 2050 is not just inexact science, it is irresponsible. A

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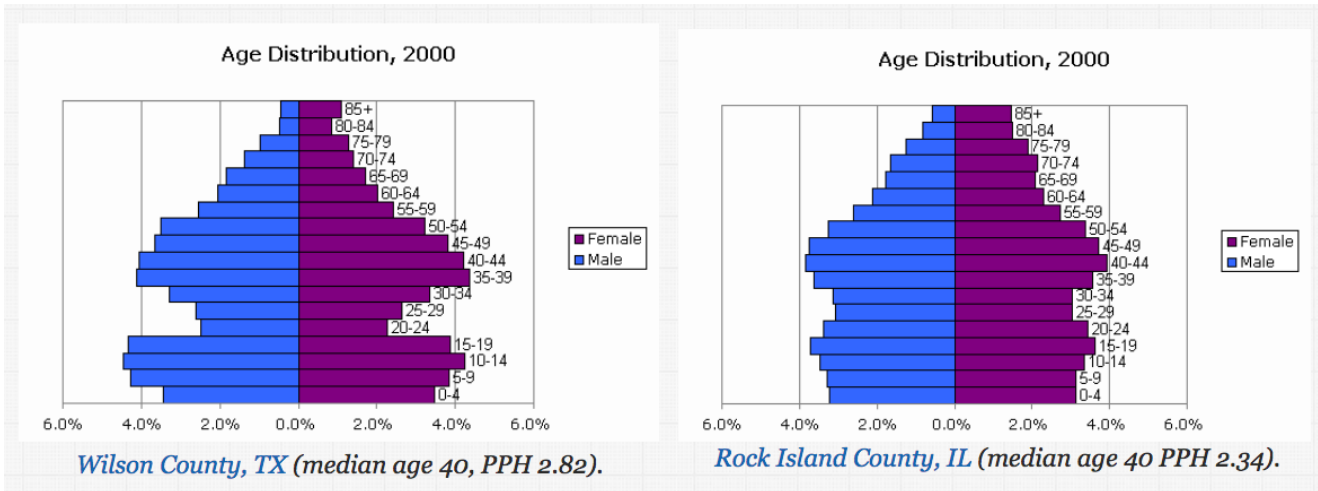
seminal paper in demographics noted that:

Given these differences, county PPH estimates that are based solely on previous values, historical trends, or changes at the state or national level will often be inaccurate. [[“A regression approach to estimating the average number of persons per household”](#) Smith, S.K., Nogle, J. & Cody, S. Demography (2002) 39: 697]

Grow the San Diego Way took the exact same dataset that SANDAG used to make this correlation, but focused it exclusively on California counties. While the same methodological flaws exist (using median age and disparate counties) it still yields a much higher PPH (2.63 to be exact) which mostly erases the additional housing numbers.



Irrelevance of Median Age: One independent demographer we spoke with also raised the point that median age is absolutely irrelevant to the persons per household metric because it depends on the distribution of the age cohort that makes up that median. In fact, demographers never use median age in analyses on household size because it doesn't take into account the overall distribution of ages across the population. They call it "age structure" usually depicted as a "population pyramid."



For example, a County with the median age of 40 like Wilson County, Texas (see chart, above), could have a concentration of residents clustered around the median age (lots of middle age folks with older children in the home) or like Rock Island County, IL, it could have people bunched up at the ends of the spectrum, e.g. younger families (larger household sizes) and many senior households (empty nesters). Both counties average 40 years of age, but the PPH number is quite different, depending on the “shape” of the distribution. The former has a higher HH size (2.82) while the latter has a lower HH size (2.34). The median age remains the same, however. That is why demographers do not use median age and instead use age distribution, gender and ethnicity to look at household composition trends. Using median age to determine future household size is not only inaccurate it violates basic principles of demographics.

This is very important because this variable contributes the most to the housing forecast for 2050. A drop in PPH from 2.75 to 2.49 adds more than 150,000 more houses as there are fewer people per household.

Why does it matter?

As our region suffers from a housing affordability crisis, it is essential we have reasonably accurate data to make projections. Exaggerating or obfuscating our housing need does not help solve the problem and can make it seem even more intractable than it is. When a problem is intractable, the public and decision-makers could give up on common sense solutions or they could implement extreme measures that could create other planning related problems in our region.

These growth forecasts help planners make a case for allocating resources and setting policy on everything from transit, transportation, revenue and housing. Knowing how many houses will be needed by 2050 helps us determine how much housing needs to be built every year to achieve that

objective. A higher number in 2050 means we need to build more houses every year than previously projected. This has the effect of making a crisis that is already bad appear to be worse and possibly intractable. It also forces jurisdictions to attempt to build more houses than are necessary to meet that need.

But most importantly, this housing number was inflated just enough to make it appear that the existing general plans of San Diego County would not be enough to accommodate all the housing they were projecting which helps make the argument that we need to disregard the General Plan of San Diego that the building industry has been so disdainful of. With 10 general plan amendments planned for this year alone and another 10 on the way, they are well on their way to dismantle the smart plan for growth that we spent \$18 million dollars and years to painstakingly design. This forecast will help make their case.

Already, this preliminary Regional Growth Forecast (not yet finalized) has been used (by members of the panel itself) to sway decision-makers and the media in the conversation on land use and housing including the aforementioned article in Voice of San Diego.

More recently, the City of Santee [recently spent \\$40K](#) hiring Gary London (who was on the above-mentioned expert review panel) to provide analysis on a citizen's initiative known as "the Santee General Plan Protection Initiative" (Save our Santee). Unsurprisingly, the report found that the city would lose millions in potential revenue on account of this initiative. The [report](#) relied, in part, on the preliminary Regional Growth Forecast that Mr. London himself had a hand in devising. Without this flawed figure, Mr. London's case would have been much harder (actually, impossible) to make. The Santee initiative (and others like it) is seen as a threat to the building industry because it requires that any major general plan amendment be voted on by citizens of the jurisdiction. With the exaggerated Regional Growth Forecast that Mr. London had a hand in creating, they were able to make their case whereas a more accurate (and lower number) would not have. This study will play an important role when the initiative goes on the ballot and opponents (including Mr. London's BIA clients who oppose these types of initiatives) will try to convince voters that it will harm the city.

In summary

1. SANDAG's preliminary Regional Growth Forecast relied on unscientific and flawed data to derive its most recent forecast (Series 14).
2. Despite a drop in projected population and jobs in 2050, SANDAG inexplicably increased its housing need forecast by almost 60% above the

..."this housing number was inflated just enough to make it appear that the existing general plans of San Diego County would not be enough to accommodate all the housing they were projecting..."

Series 13 forecast conducted 4 years earlier and, for the first time exceeds the capacity of the general plans of the region.

3. One of the panels of experts assembled included two building industry consultants from the same firm, London and Moeder, which poses serious concerns about conflict of interest, especially when the resulting data is being used to make the case for its clients.

4. There was a serious lack of transparency during the expert review process, with some panel members being kept in the dark about crucial methodological changes in areas they had the most expertise (demography) even though they requested more information and clarity from SANDAG.

5. This lack of transparency extends to the general public and interested parties as the information provided to the expert review panels were not made publicly available, and no report with detailed information about the input of the experts was prepared. The information that was provided to the public had numerous inconsistencies that made it very difficult for the public to provide concrete input.

6. The methodology used to calculate projected housing for 2050 changed with very little transparency from one meeting to the next without the input of all panelists and introduced methodologically flawed assumptions.

7. The key assumption (persons per household) that contributed to the bulk of the increase in the forecast relied on flawed demographic variables that are technical in nature without actual input from experts in demographics, despite having a demographer on the expert review panel.

8. The PPH figure proposed by SANDAG used a highly flawed, nationwide analysis of counties correlating median age with PPH, contrary to standard practices in demography and statistical science.

9. Members of the expert review panel, Gary London and Nathan Moeder, Building Industry consultants, subsequently used this flawed, preliminary data in a \$40,000 study they were commissioned to prepare by the City of Santee.

At Grow the San Diego Way, we believe there is a housing affordability problem and that we need to build more housing, particularly in the moderate and lower income categories. We also believe that there needs to be a balanced conversation on housing and that in order to have that conversation, the data we use needs to be reasonably accurate. When data is flawed or, worse, manipulated, even if it is to tell an important story (we need housing) it causes the public to lose trust in the institutions that are supposed to help us make good decisions. It also makes a difficult problem

seem intractable.

We hope that SANDAG's new Executive Director, Hasan Ikhata, will take a look at these figures and how they were derived and send the team back to the drawing board to come up with a more accurate number.



About Grow the San Diego Way

We are San Diegans from all walks of life, across the political spectrum and with many different perspectives, hobbies and interests. What we have in common is our love for the San Diego lifestyle and quality of life. We want to make sure our voice is given as much importance by our decision makers as that of deep pocketed outside interests who seek to profit from our great region without giving anything back in return. While we don't have deep pockets, we have deep passion.

We are a loose coalition of rural folks, surfers, property rights enthusiasts, environmentalists, liberals, conservatives, libertarians, baby boomers, millennials and just about anyone who loves what San Diego stands for. While it means different things to different people, we all seek a decent quality of life, reduced traffic, lower taxes, affordable housing, protection from fire dangers, scenic environments and maintaining the unique character of all the cities, towns, communities and neighborhoods of San Diego County. From San Isidro to Oceanside and from the Pacific Ocean to Borrego Springs. We want to see our area succeed, but to succeed in a San Diego way, not an Orange County or LA way. To grow the San Diego way.

Contributors

JP Theberge, Author: JP is the Founder and CEO of Cultural Edge Consulting and has been providing demographic and sociocultural insights into consumer behavior on behalf of global brands and Fortune 500 companies for the last 15 years. An accomplished athlete and former member of Team USA triathlon, JP has a true love of the outdoors and livable cities designed for people. He founded Grow the San Diego Way in 2017 to balance the conversation about San Diego's growth and development, which has been lead by special interests for many years.



Bill Tippets, Contributing Author: While employed as a resource agency ecologist and non-profit environmental specialist, Bill has worked on habitat and species conservation issues and projects for over 30 years. Primary areas of focus include reviews and preparation of habitat conservation plans, land use planning and acquisitions, and upland and wetland habitat restoration. Geographic communities that he has worked in range from desert oases to coastal sage scrub to coastal wetlands.



James Gordon, Contributing Advisor: James was a Managing Director for a NYSE listed company (NYSE:NCI); with national and international responsibility for expert and consulting services that included: financial and business management; business risk & compliance; and conducting corporate fraud investigations. From 2009 to 2012, Mr. Gordon was based in Hong Kong responsible for running APAC operations throughout China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Indonesia; with a primary focus on global financial fraud investigations.



Jacqueline Arsivaud, Contributing Advisor: An entrepreneur with senior management experience at top technology companies spanning two decades, Jacqueline is also a veteran of San Diego development issues and a leading community voice in North County. She chaired the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council for many years and is currently a member of the San Dieguito Planning Group.



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