Citizen-Initiated Smart Growth Plan

Alliance for Environmental Leadership

Prepared by:

Genevieve Marsh
AGILE ARCHITECTURE

Phase 2

June 2019

Alliance for Environmental Leadership

AEL brings together existing like-minded organizations and citizens for a common cause: defending natural ecosystems and advocating for sustainable, inclusive communities in Placer and Nevada Counties.

Thank You

The collaborations of many organizations and individuals made this project possible. We need diversity of thought and resilience in this world to face new challenges. Thank you to our funders, organizers, citizen scientists, cheerleaders, planners and visionaries for enacting the change the they wish to see in the world.

Prepared By:
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Dear Community,

It is our delight to follow up the Citizen-Initiated Smart Growth Plan with further refinement in Phase 2. As you may recall, Phase 1 rezoned the Sunset Area for new growth on the basis of environmental sustainability and inclusivity for all people. In our analytical comparison, we proved that our regional social and environmental causes dovetail. For example, we reduced the carbon footprint per capita by 75%, by mixing a variety of residential building types with amenities and jobs at higher density. We prioritized a walkable and active layout to encourage a sense of community, which produced an average household cost savings of $3,783 a year.

To all of this, we have received predominantly positive feedback and now people ask about the feasibility of higher density housing. In investigating this question, there is a chicken and the egg problem. Some say build it and they will come, others say build what people have already bought. We have very little multi-tenant building stock in our County and have yet to experiment with its breadth and depth on a large scale. Just because something has not been done in our community before does not mean it is unfeasible. It just takes forging a new path to get there.

Now is the time to forge that new path, as the pressure mounts to address the housing affordability crisis and move California to carbon neutrality by 2045[1]. Now is the time to work toward our community's climate resilience, especially in planning projects that will be constructed in future decades. We have the tools and ability to measure and minimize humanity's environmental impacts at our fingertips. The CISGP provides a case-study and road map into this 21st-century technique while improving the County's proposal for an 8,497-acre development.

As proposed, the County's Sunset Area Plan, a General Plan amendment, replicates the mistakes of the past. Instead of looking to the future, The County Plan perpetuates socially isolating and exclusionary automobile-centric sprawl that has spread through Placer County for decades. While this may look comfortable and familiar to some, it aligns entitlements with the values of those that seek to flip the land and move on- not with our County population who will live each day with the results. The environments we build shape who we are and define our quality of life, from our genetic code[2] to how we behave and feel. Now is the time for fresh vision and political leadership to set in place progressive policy and plans that guard against environmental destruction, social dislocation, and economic strife while serving all our neighbors, rich or poor.

As you will learn in Phase 2, there is a strong case that multifamily units are in high demand and that the workforce in the Sunset Area requires it. You will also learn that housing developers have, historically, been allowed to socially and economically discriminated against 85% of our community and that the average single-family house is priced far above incomes- even for many of our affluent families. You will see that multi-tenant housing will redress long-standing community needs. The few multi-tenant units that have been built in Placer County fly off the shelf- in a few weeks time for on average $46,000 more than asking price.

We are beginning to feel the ripple effects of a cultural change. Across the nation, people demonstrate their preference for access over ownership, immediate experience over luxury, and for products made to preserve our natural resources. By looking at peoples' basic housing needs, their pocketbooks and buying trends, and the necessity to design for climate resilience, we are proud to demonstrate in Phase 2 the supportive statistical and economic data for our vibrant, walkable mixed-use housing plan. We look forward to continuing the conversation with you.

–Genevieve Marsh, Master Planner

1 *Edmund G Brown, "Executive Order B-55-18 To Achieve Carbon Neutrality" (2018).*

2 *Epigentics studies how environmental stimuli, such as where we live and what we do, causes genes in our DNA to be turned on or turned off.*

"Epigenetics: Fundamentals, History, and Examples | What Is Epigenetics?" Accessed May 31, 2019. https://www.whatisepigenetics.com/fundamentals/.

Contents

Acronyms

AEL	Alliance for Environmental Leadership
CCD	Community Census District
CISGP	Citizen Initiated Smart Growth Plan (The document you are reading)
DEIR	Draft Environmental Impact Report (Evaluates the environmental impact of the SAP and PRSP.)
FAR	Floor Area Ratio (Percentage of a parcel's area allowed to be made indoor floorspace. Used to establish density rules.)
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HDIMU	High Density Industrial Mixed Use
HH	Household
PR	Placer Ranch (Development within the SAP)
PRSP	Placer Ranch Specific Plan (De tailed development plan for a large part of the SA.)
SACOG	Sacramento Area Council of Governments
SAP	Sunset Area Plan (Placer County's zoning and development guidelines plan for the site)
SA	Sunset Area (the planning area)
SIA	Sunset Industrial Area (name for the existing plan for the SA)
WRSL	Western Regional Sanitary Landfill (The landfill in the middle of the SA.)

Get Caught Up

The Alliance for Environmental Leadership has a variety of publications and media that provide background and depth to this report.

Here are our go-to recommendations:

CISGP Phase 1

The precursor document to Phase 2 that lays out our innovation ecosystem concept as an alternative plan for the Sunset Area. It includes an in-depth look at the environmental factors of land use in the Sunset Area, design research that targets the projected market audience, and quantifies and compares social and environmental impacts of the CISGP and the County's Sunset Area Plan.
On the web: bit.ly/CISGP1

Watch the summary video (30 min.):
bit.ly/CISGP1video

AEL SIA Fact Sheet

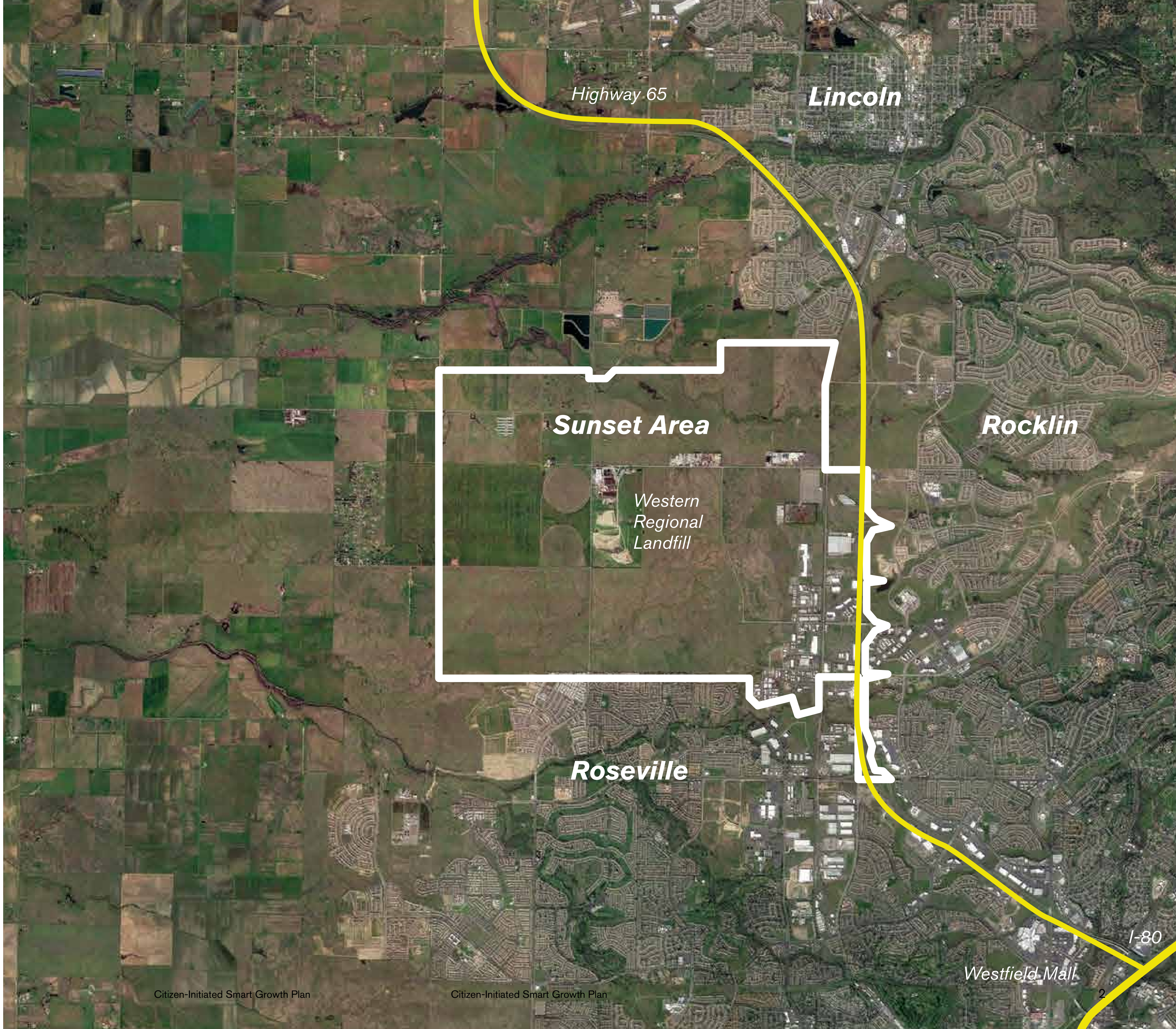
A two-pager that explains the shortfalls of the County's Sunset Area Plan and the opportunities of the CISGP.

On the web:
bit.ly/AELfactsheet

Site Analysis and Historic Overview

Slides:
Video Presentation:

Find more at:
www.allianceforenvironmentalleadership.org
facebook.com/allianceforenviroleadership



Housing

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to look at the housing and job portion of the CISGP and provide justification for it's multi-tenant building strategy beyond the climate and site factors described in Phase 1. This begins by matching income levels with housing types in the CISGP to create an equitable distribution. The housing component of the SAP is evaluated and units are redistributed by the CISGP standards. Finally, it zooms out to a county wide level to discuss the larger context for multi-tenant buildings. As 'multifamily' often seems like a nebulous term, pictures and descriptions of various typologies are shown.

Housing Stock for the Jobs-housing Balance

The jobs-housing balance refers to how many jobs there are per dwelling unit within a given area. If the jobs-housing balance is too high, there are many more jobs than housing units. As a result, adequate housing may be unaffordable or unavailable to workers in an area, leading to issues such as housing unaffordability and traffic congestion from in-commuting workers. If the jobs-housing balance is too low, this may indicate too few jobs locally and a housing oversupply.[1] When there is an oversupply of housing, rent and sales prices drop, houses are sold less often, and over time more properties are left vacant and turn derelict. The ideal ratio for the greater Sacramento Area is 1 dwelling for every 2 jobs.[2]

For the jobs-housing balance to function properly, the types of houses must be appropriate for the income of workers in the local area. Take for example a town with low-wage jobs and large estates at an ideal jobs-housing ratio of 1:2. The low-wage workers would not be able to afford the large estates and would have to find housing in another town. Similarly, those living in the large estates would have to find jobs in other communities. Both the high-wage earners and the low-wage earners would be forced into out-of-town commutes. While the CISGP job sectors are more complex then this example, its housing types still must relate to the spectrum of jobs anticipated to avoid disadvantaging particular income groups. The County's SAP does not relate housing types to job types in a balanced way. It is important for public decision makers to consider the impacts of this on quality of life and climate.

The process to properly establish the jobs-housing balance includes three steps (Figure 1.) Firstly, count all the possible jobs in each zoning designation by type. Next, find the annual average wages in Placer County for those jobs and use it to calculate the price of an affordable home. Lastly, proportionately distribute different dwelling types between the income levels. This results in a perfect fit of jobs to homes.

1 "Jobs-Housing Balance." YIMBYwiki. Accessed May 31, 2019. https://yimby.wiki/wiki/Jobs-Housing_Balance.
2 Chew, Greg. (14 May 2018). "White Paper on Future Housing Product Type Demand and Preference" (Online). SACOG Transportation Committee. [Accessed 31 May 2019].

Figure 1: AEL's Process for Fulfilling the Jobs-housing Balance

Count all the jobs at full build out of the CISGP zoning plan.

Find the local average wages for those jobs and calculate a corresponding affordable house price.

Match the price points of units with the affordability levels of local jobs.

Figure 2

CISGP Employment by Sector
(151.4k total jobs)

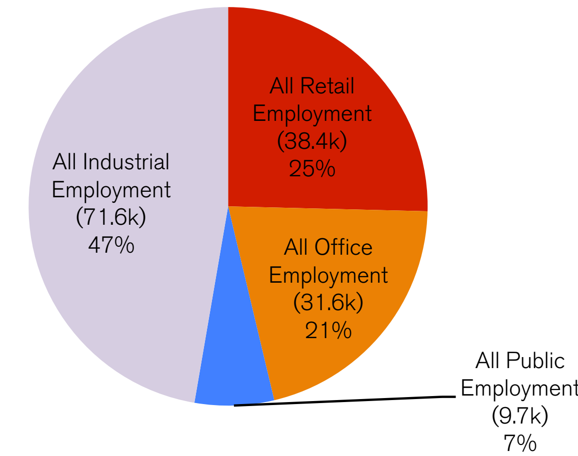
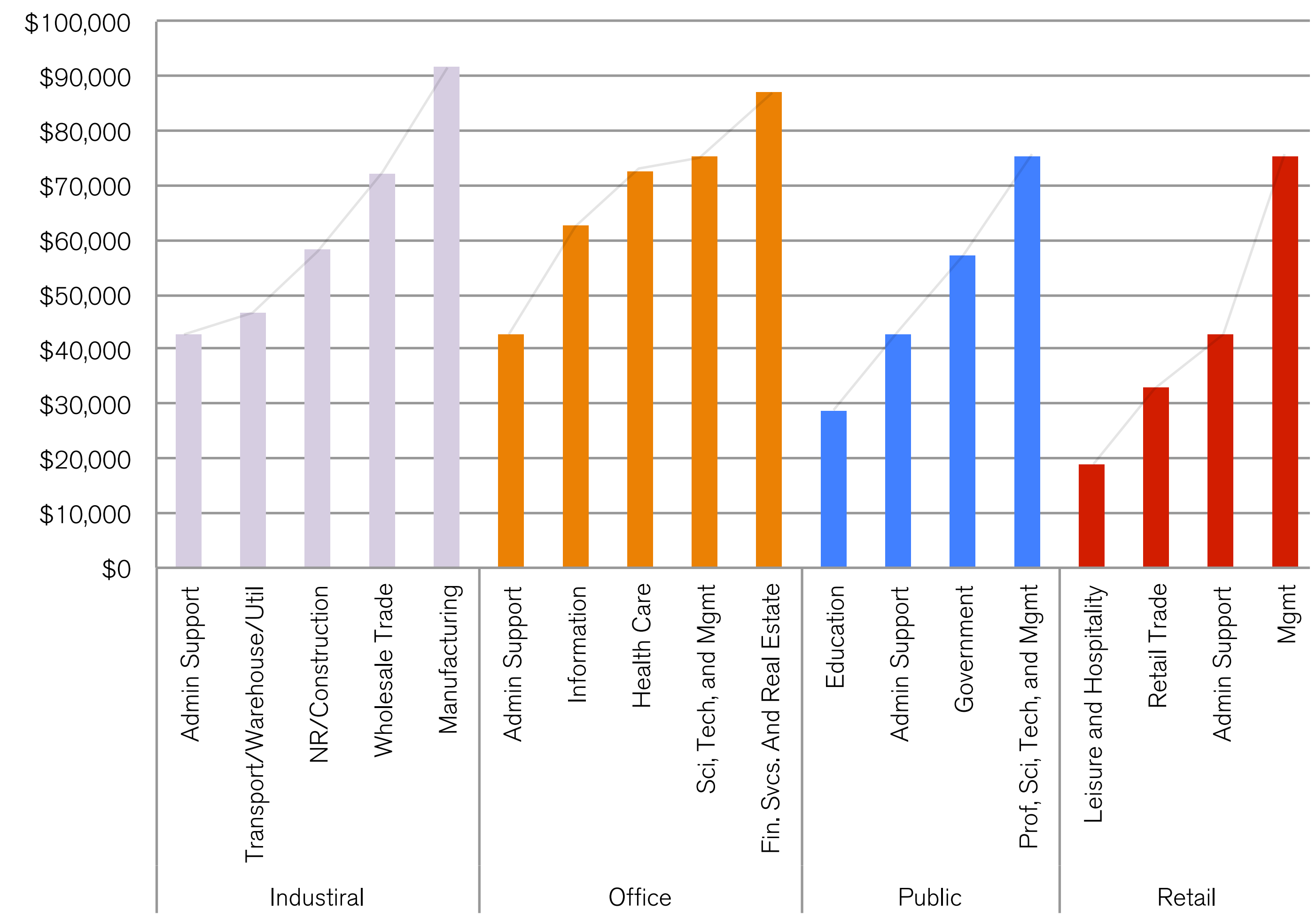


Figure 3

CISGP Average Wages
Uses average county wages.
Beacon Economics, South Placer County Employment Profile, Dec. 2017



	Industrial	Office	Public	Retail
Wage Ranges:	$42,700 $91,700	$42,700 $87,100	$28,700 $75,300	$18,900 $75,300

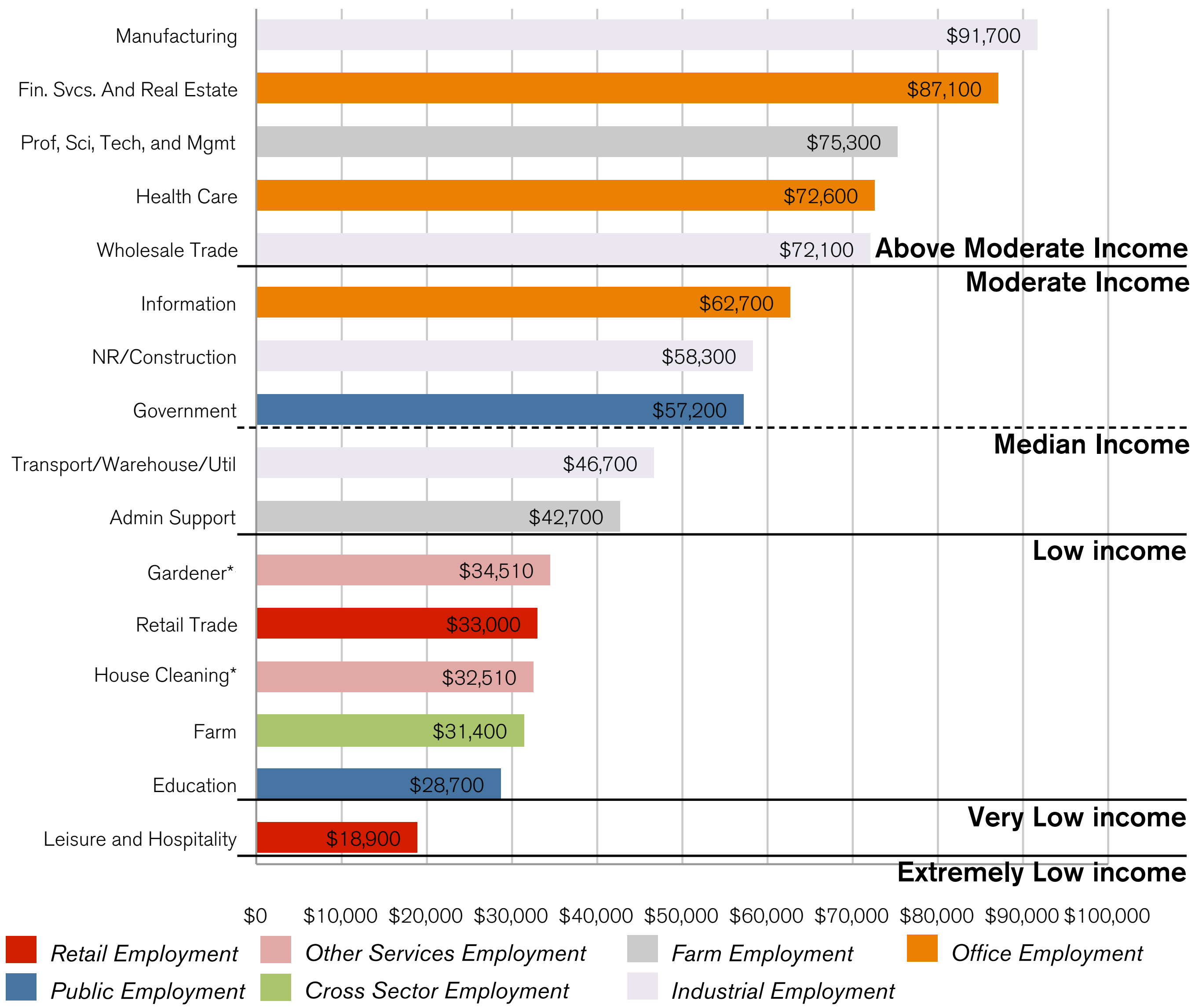
On Site

Within the Sunset Area, the CISGP has a jobs-housing balance of one house to three jobs. At maximum build out, it supports a population of 84,000 with 49,000 dwelling units and 151,000 jobs. Most of the jobs will be related to industry (47%), followed by retail (25%), office (21%), and public (7%) (Figure 2).

Within each focus, or employment sector, are a variety of jobs with various pay ranges (Figure 3). On average, industrial-related jobs have a higher wage range than office, public and retail, consecutively. Retail has the largest pay difference between its lower wage jobs and higher wage jobs-which earn four times as much as low-wage retail.

Figure 4

Placer County Average Annual Wages



Income levels are based on single person households.

Data from: Thornberg, Christopher, and Robert Kleinhenz. "South Placer County Employment Profile." Beacon Economics, 2017.

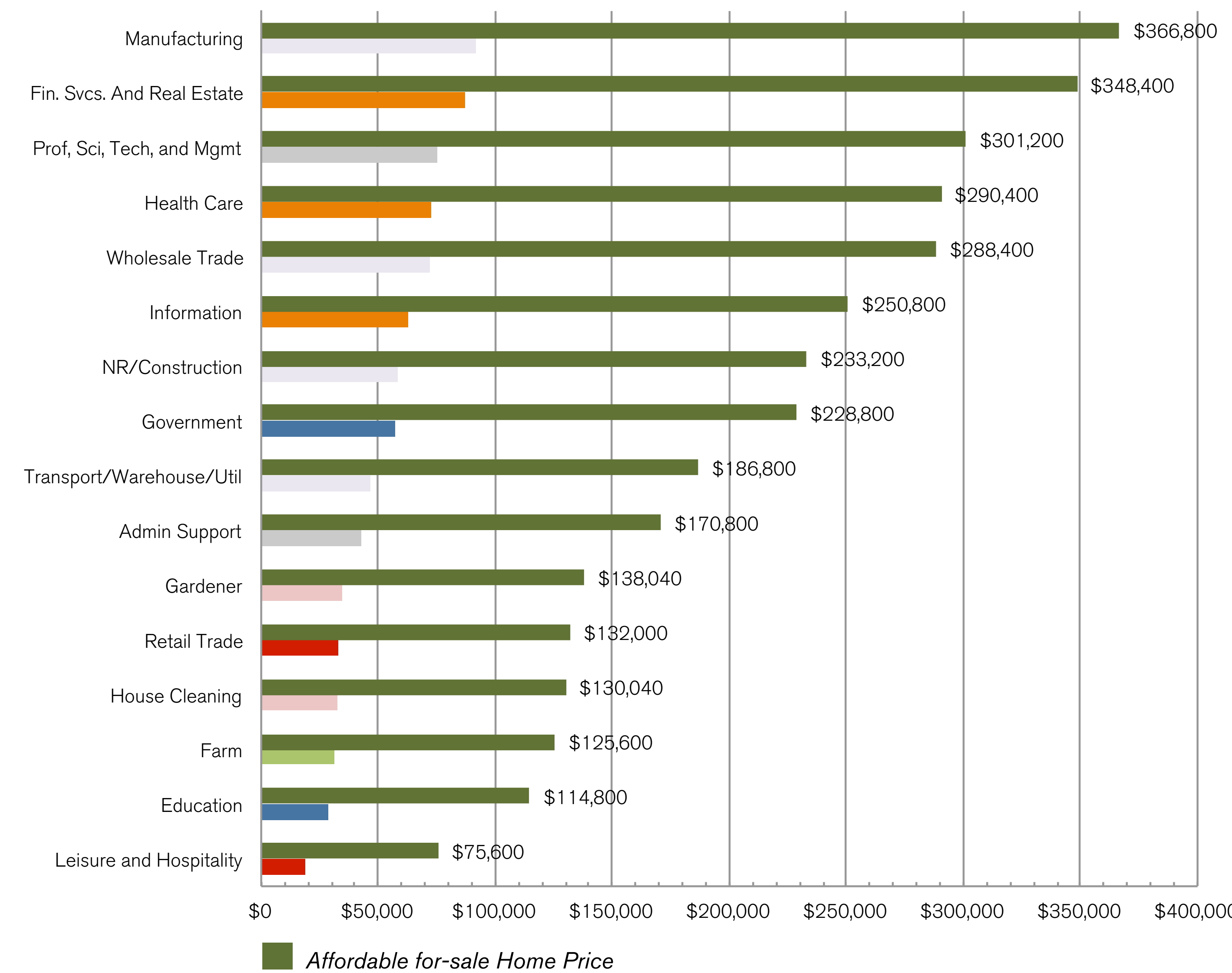
**Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers - Occupational Employment and Wages in California. (2018, May). Retrieved June 4, 2019, from Bureau of Labor Statistics website: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes373011.htm*

**Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners - Occupational Employment and Wages in Roseville, Sacramento, Arden Region. (2018, May). Retrieved June 4, 2019, from Bureau of Labor Statistics website: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes372012.htm*

Some jobs span across employment sectors, such as administration assistants and management. When jobs are evaluated independent of their sector, one can see how jobs relate to income class. Figure 4 evaluates how wages translate to income levels for single person households. Retail and education jobs are low income and leisure and hospitality jobs are very low income. Moderate income jobs which correspond to the 'missing-middle', include admin support, warehousing, construction, government and information services. Average government wages are approximately the median income in our community at $57,200. As an earner has more people to support, their corresponding income class declines (Figure 6).

Figure 5

Affordable House Prices by Wage Sector



Data from: Thornberg, Christopher, and Robert Kleinhenz. "South Placer County Employment Profile." Beacon Economics, 2017.

Translating Wages to House Prices

Figure 5 introduces the affordable price of a home based on wages for an individual worker living alone. It assumes the worker has no equity from previously owning a home and that the worker is entering into a 30 year mortgage with 4.5% fixed interest.[3] With this range of jobs, appropriately priced houses would be between $75,800 and $366,800 for County residents, including those in the Sunset Area.

The median income for a household of two where both people work is $60,900 in Placer County (2018). A house for them should cost $225,966. The median income for a household of four, typically with two workers, earns $76,100 and can afford a house priced at $282,347.

Figure 6 and 7 can be used for further comparison of income levels to affordable house prices. Placer County commissioned these tables by Bae Urban Economics to assist the regional housing strategy, including the housing component of the Sunset Area Plan. Yet, the housing component of the Sunset Area Plan does little to improve their housing price points with this information. In the proceeding pages, we will illustrate how this information can guide an equitable distribution of housing prices in AEL's CISGP and the chasm between what is affordable and what the county has planned in the SAP.

3 Prices also account for 30% monthly income for housing, principle, interest, property insurance, taxes, mortgage insurance, total monthly payments and down payment.

Figure 6

2017 Income Limits	Household Size 1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	4-Person	5-Person
Extremely Low	$16,000	$18,300	$20,600	$24,600	$28,780
Very Low Income	$26,650	$30,450	$34,250	$38,050	$41,100
Low Income	$42,650	$48,750	$54,850	$60,900	$65,800
Median Income	$53,250	$60,900	$68,400	$76,100	$82,200
Moderate Income	$63,900	$73,050	$82,150	$91,300	$98,600

Appendix B-16. "Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment- Appendices." Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan. Bae Urban Economics. May 2018.

Figure 7

Affordable For-sale Home Prices, Placer County 2018

Income Limit	Household Size 1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	4-Person	5-Person
Extremely Low	$59,348	$67,953	$76,410	$91,247	$106,826
Very Low Income	$98,814	$112,909	$127,004	$141,099	$152,524
Low Income	$158,162	$180,862	$293,414	$225,966	$244,067
Median Income	$197,479	$225,966	$254,157	$282,347	$304,899
Moderate Income	$237,094	$270,922	$304,750	$338,727	$365,730

Appendix B-16. "Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment- Appendices." Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan. Bae Urban Economics. May 2018.

CISGP Housing Breakdown

The next step in allocating housing types is determine how many homes are needed for each income class. For AEL's CISGP, this is done by combining the information from Figure 4 and Figure 8. Figure 9 illustrates the results: 43% of dwellings can be for above moderate income, 33% must be for moderate income, 10% for low income, and 14% for very low income. At a housing ratio of 1:3, that translates to:

Very Low income	*6,802*
Low income	*4,990*
Moderate Income	*15,408*
Above Moderate Income	*21,413*
Total Dwelling Units	*49,614*

Figure 9

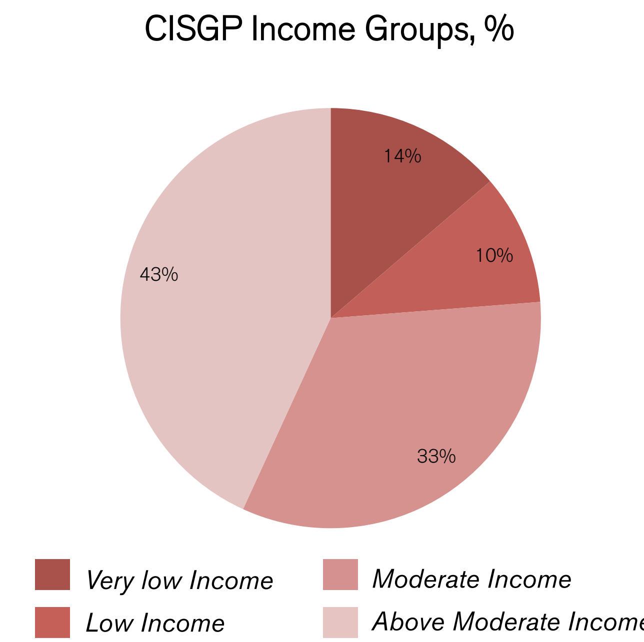
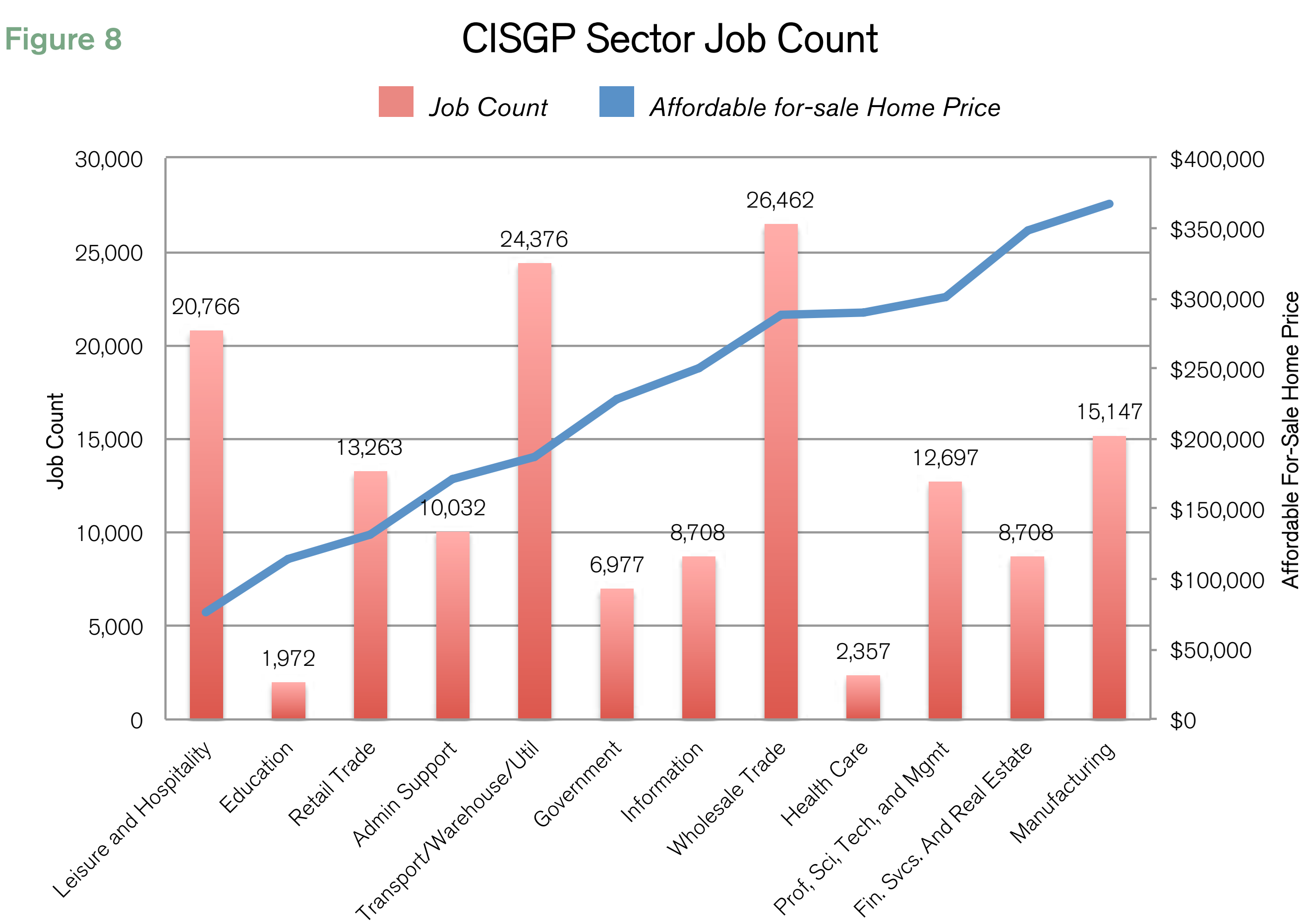


Figure 8



Redistributing the County's SAP Housing Breakdown

Applying the same method to match workers with dwellings in the County's Sunset Area Plan, 49% of dwellings should suit moderate income and higher, 27% for moderate income, 10% for low income, and 14% for very low income. At the acceptable housing ratio of the CISGP (1:3) that translates to:

Very Low income	*8,822*
Low income	*6,247*
Moderate Income	*17,173*
Above-Moderate Income	*31,043*
Total Dwelling Units	*63,285*

The next several pages will compare this breakdown with the planned housing distribution in the SAP.

Figure 10

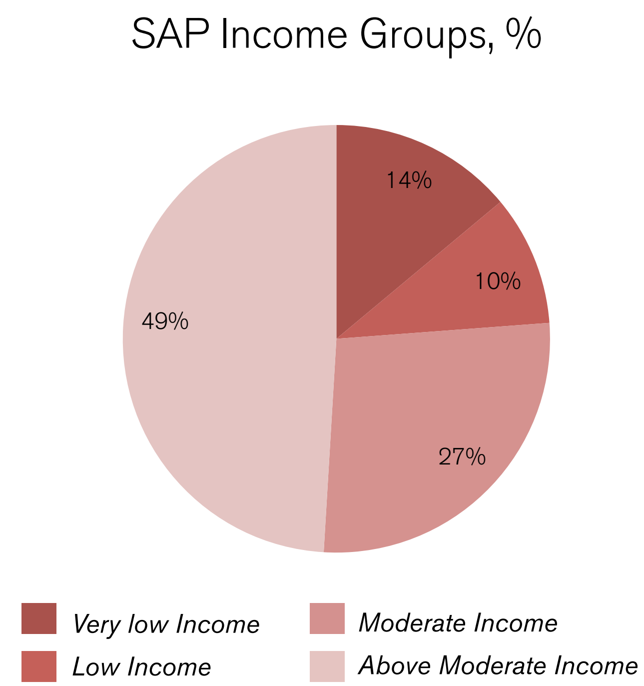


Figure 11

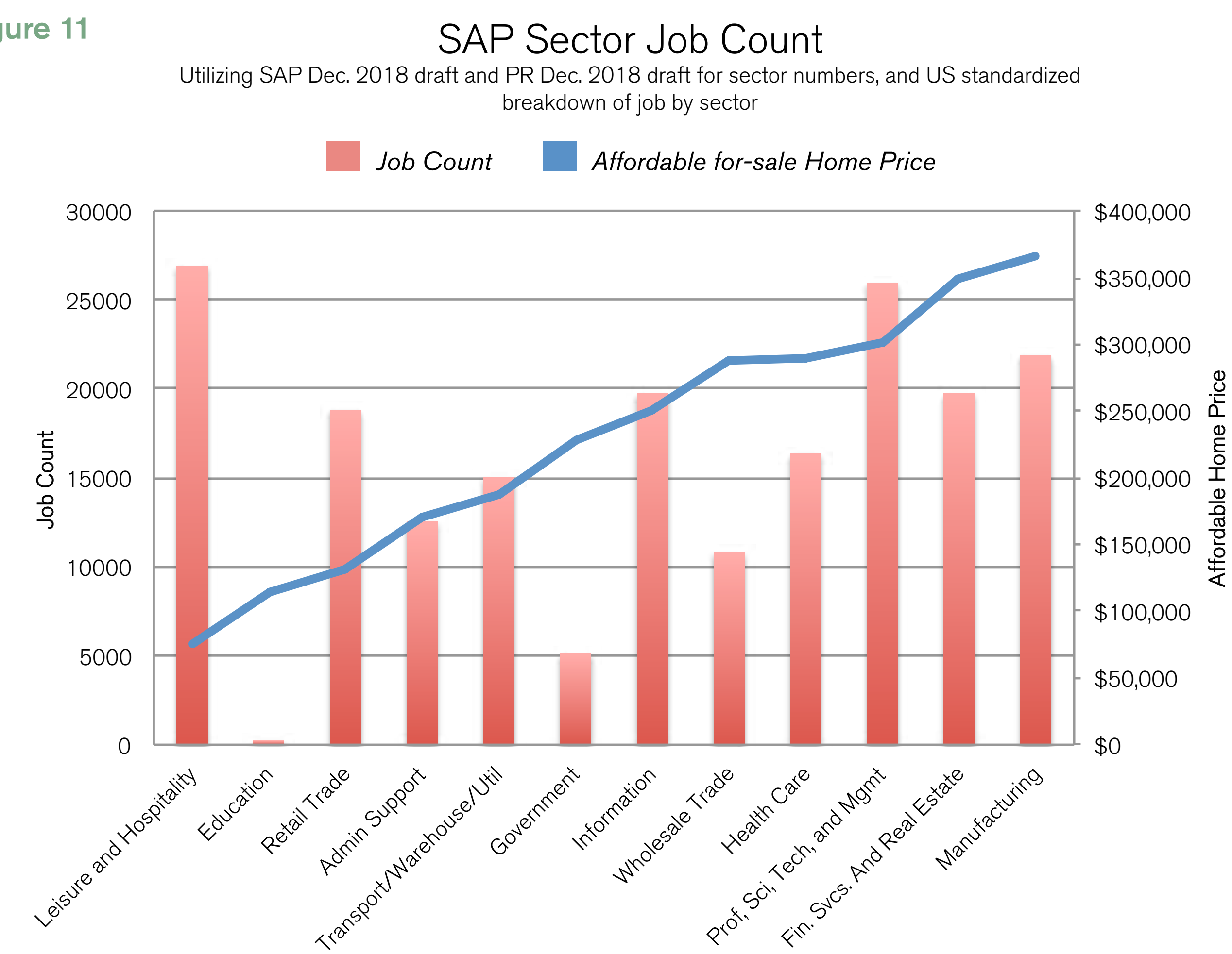
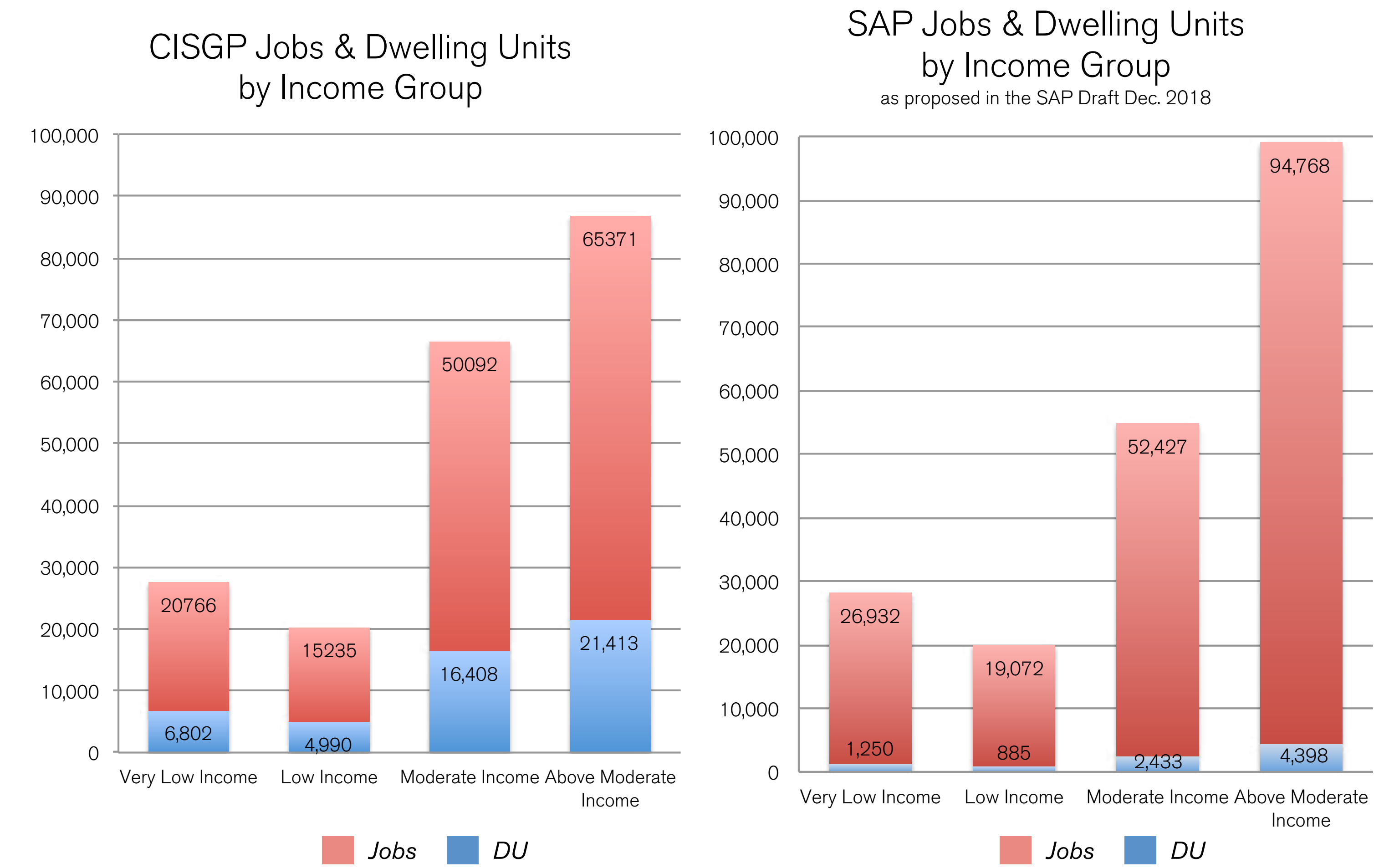


Figure 12



SAP Dwelling Unit Count

There are three sources of dwelling units in the Sunset Area Plan: Placer Ranch (5,646), subdivided ranches (1,508), and worker housing (1,806). Placer Ranch uses the 10% affordable housing rule as required by the General Plan Housing Element. In the SAP, the ranch land can be subdivided into 80 acre parcels for rural residences. As these potential properties include acreage, new home construction, and expansion of utilities for service, they are considered above moderate income dwellings in this analysis. Worker housing, as called in the SAP, is defined as between 50% and 120% of Placer's annual median income, indicating that the units are for low and moderate income workers. In this analysis the workers' units have been split between low and moderate.

Comparison

There are two problems with the SAP housing plan: the quantity of units and their 'housing fit', the correlation of price point distribution to local job incomes. Firstly, the jobs-housing ratio of one home to twenty-two jobs fails to house the SAP workforce at acceptable levels (Figure 12). To properly do so at the same match as the CISGP, the SAP needs 54,320 more homes. Without those units, when the County's SAP is built out, 54,320 households, most having 2 workers each, will commute into the SAP for jobs. The local area around the SA is primarily residential development. If every one of these dwelling units was used to house current existing local workers and SAP anticipated workers, 31,345 units would still be needed. Not to mention any new jobs that may come to Lincoln, Rocklin, and Roseville in the next fifty years.

Figure 13

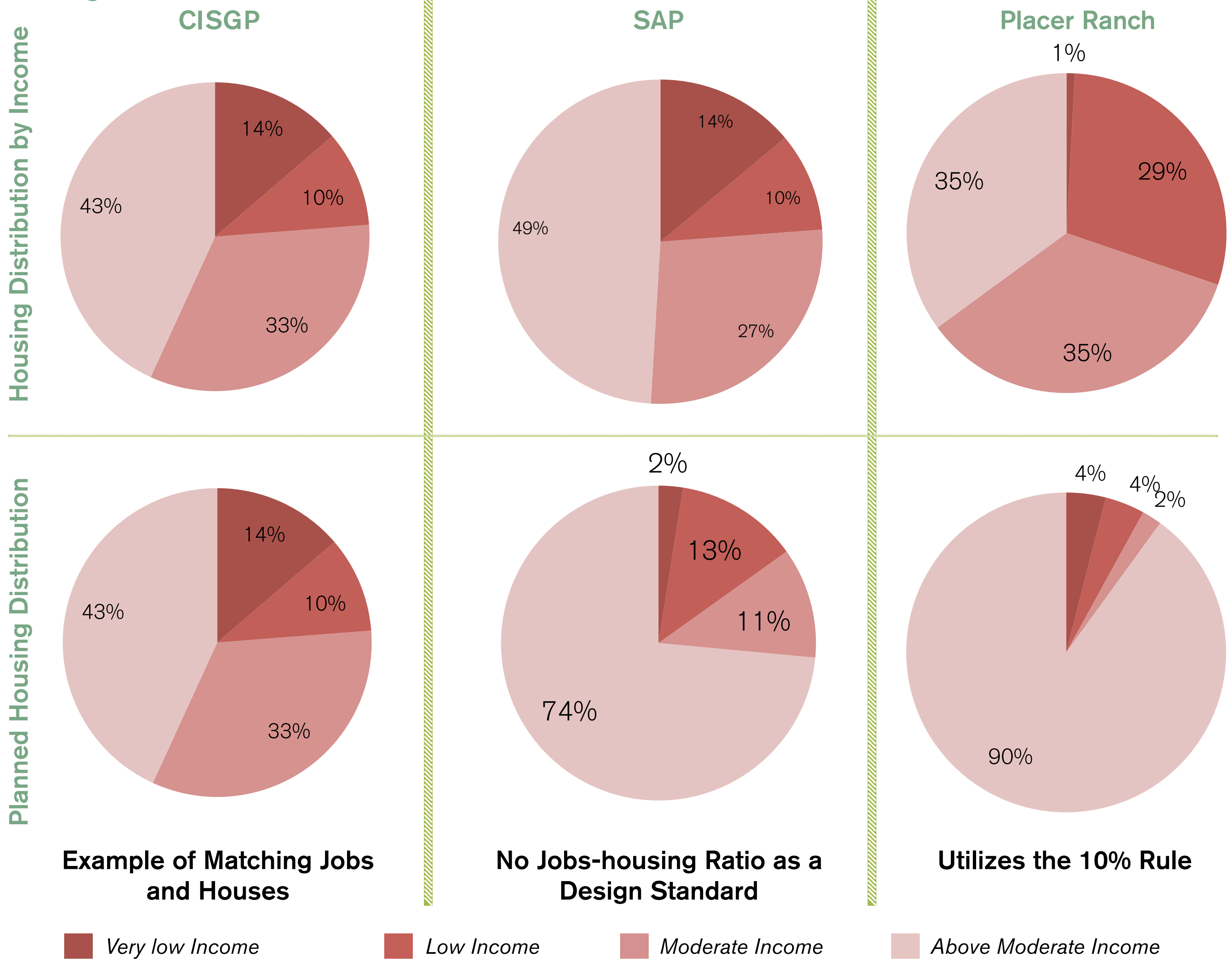


Figure 14

SAP Housing Distribution Comparison	SAP with CISGP distribution fit (1 DU : 3 Jobs)	SAP with distribution fit (1 DU : 22 Jobs)		SAP Draft Dec. 2018, planned distribution		
	DU	DU	Difference between 1:3 and 1:22	DU	Difference between Planned and 1:22	Difference between Planned and 1:3
Extremely Low Income	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very Low Income	8,822	1,250	(7,572)	225	(1,025)	(9,847)
Low Income	6,247	885	(5,362)	1,129	244	(6,003)
Moderate Income	17,173	2,433	(14,740)	1,016	(1,417)	(18,590)
Above Moderate Income	31,043	4,398	(26,645)	6,580	2,182	(28,860)
Total Dwelling Units	63,285	8,965	(54,320)	8,950	(15)	(63,300)

Congestion can be cased by a poor housing fit.

The other problem with the County's SAP is the fit of income levels to the distribution of housing price points (Figure 13). When the housing fit in the SAP Dec. 2018 Draft is compared with an exact fit, two income groups are under-served (Figure 13 SAP column comparison). These groups are the very low income workers (leisure and hospitality employees) and moderate income workers (admin assistants to information specialists). Under the County's plan, six out of seven hospitality employees will not find housing in the SA, while their bosses will have plenty of selection. Three houses are available for every two above-moderate income households. 27% of all units have been mis-distributed in a way that favors the highest income earners.

Extremely low income households, while extremely important for our community, are not planned for at the zoning level of the CISGP or SAP, because these units are special developments subsidized to below market rate.

The 10% Affordable Housing Rule

To comply with Placer County's General Plan Housing Element, Placer Ranch is required to make 10% of all units 'affordable'. Under it, 4% of all homes must be Very Low income, 4% Low income, and 2% Moderate Income. A major flaw of the 10% rule is that it does not mirror the community the houses intend to serve. Placer Ranch is unique in that it is a huge housing development and also a substantial job center. As these two elements have been conceptualized as part of the same Specific Plan, the numbers are readily available to coordinate an equitable housing distribution.

While Placer Ranch documents state many times that it will produce high-wage earner jobs and homes, a closer look at the jobs breakdown reveals the plan fails to take account of how many moderate and lower wage jobs are required to support each higher wage job in the Sunset Area. The Placer Ranch column of Figure 13 illustrates this difference. While the shortages are obvious, there are a few points to call special attention to. Accounting solely by percentage points, there are four times more very low income units than very low income jobs. But with the poor jobs-housing ratio, four-fifths of the very low income workers will be commuting from outside of the SA for work. Also, the moderate income group, commonly called the missing-middle, will feel the shortage the most. Only one in every 17.5 missing-middle workers in Placer Ranch will find housing there. As discussed later in the report, these missing-middle families are continually pushed onto the suburban outskirts to find homes they can afford, primarily in Lincoln. The current housing distribution of Placer Ranch will add more pressure for Lincoln's periphery to expand.

The graphs in Figure 13 do not take into account the student population of the proposed university, which will further require affordable unit types. At full build out the university may house 17% of its student body and 3% of its staff on site. As the competition for affordable units elsewhere in Placer Ranch is already steep, it is likely the additional 25,000 students will commute in.

Regionally

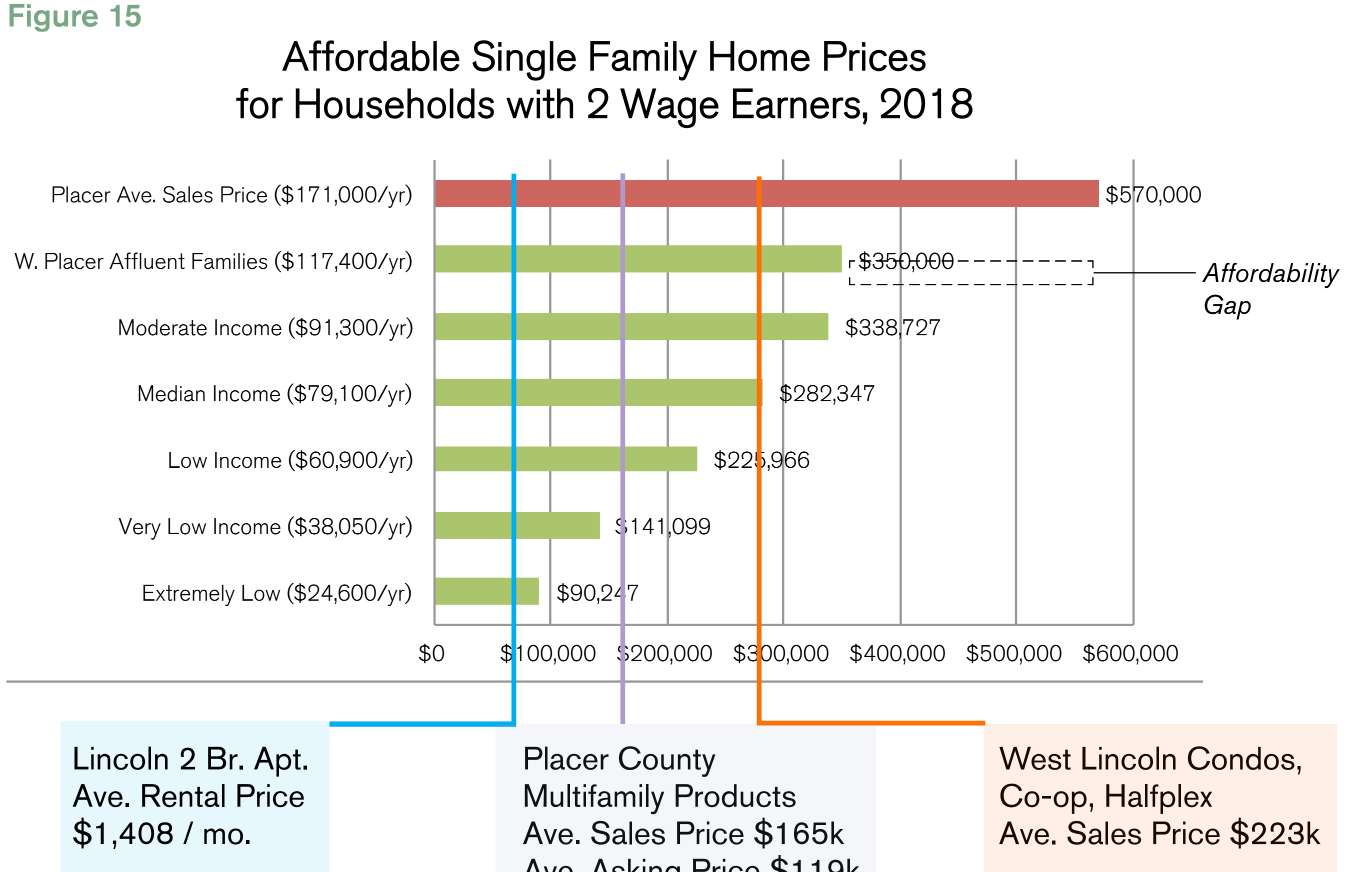
Multi-tenant buildings fill the affordability gap.

By comparing housing prices in the market with affordable home prices, it becomes clear that the average sales price for single family homes in Placer County exceeds affordability for at least 81.3% of the population, when evaluating based on two combined incomes. (County wide, 8.9% of the populous makes $200,000 or more a year and 9.8% makes $150,000-199,999, totaling 18.7%)[1]. Without equity from a previous house and enough savings for the down payment, these single family homes are unaffordable to 81.3% of Placer County workers.

However, the going rates for multi-tenant products are in the price range for a large sector of households. On a County-wide scale, the average asking price for a multifamily

1 County of Placer. "Housing Strategy and Development Plan," July 2018.

Figure 15



product is $119,000 and it will sell on average in 13 days for $46,000 more then its listing price.[2] Without the competitive offers, average low income families (such as gardeners, house cleaners and farmers) could afford to buy at list price. In West Lincoln, condos, co-ops and halfplexes are affordable for median income and above, selling on average for $223,000.[3] At certain income levels, renting a home is the most achievable option. Apartment rental prices tend to be a thousand dollars less each month than the corresponding cost for the same number of bedrooms in a whole house rental. This makes apartments a crucial part of the housing stock for the lowest wage earners. The average 2 bedroom apartment rental in Lincoln is $1,400/month, affordable for families making $54,000 annually.[4]

Most Vulnerable

Affordable Housing requirements do not account for Extremely Low income Families.

The missing-middle has been addressed in the previous pages, as they participate in the work force in usual ways. The most vulnerable members of our community often do not. Only two out of ten of extremely low income renter households are able to find an affordable, available home (Figure 14). Typically more than 50% of extremely low income households are elderly or disabled. As a result of rents increasing and incomes not keeping pace, low income houses become more heavily rent burdened. Rent burdened is when more than 50% of household income goes to housing. This trend has been on the rise since 2000, so that now 4 in 5 extremely low income households face severe rent burden.

Very low income households fair only slightly better. Low income households are more likely to include low-wage workers. Their rent burden has risen from 30% in 2000 to

2 Griffith, Paul. "Placer County Multifamily Report," February 6, 2019.
3 TrendVision. "10-Year Market Report West Lincoln Yr Built 200," November 2018.
4 Kowta, Matt. "Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan: Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment," May 2018.

53% today. This strain reduces and eliminates the ability to save for emergencies, education, health and other basic expenses.[5] When health problems occur, it is more likely to be handed through emergency room visits payed for with public dollars. It also strains households in other ways, as more people are likely to crowd into the same dwelling. Studies have shown that children in these households are less likely to complete their homework. Proper space facilities healthy family relationships and reduces stress.

Often overshadowed by housing needs for the elderly and families, young working professionals transferring from school to career often start off with low-wages and need affordable housing too. Without having affordable housing for young people, it creates barriers for local kids to transition into adult life in the same community in which they grew up.

5 "Who Needs Affordable Housing?" Placer Housing Matters (blog), June 7, 2016. http://placerhousingmatters.org/who-needs-affordable-housing/.

Types of Multi-Tenant Buildings

Multi-tenant buildings comes in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some are more suited for residential neighborhoods, while others are best for mixed-use areas, such as downtowns. Inherently higher density then single family houses, multi-tenant buildings can help smooth transitions between low density neighborhoods and larger commercial buildings or high density housing.

Defining Multi-Family Housing

In California, multi-family housing refers to residential buildings with more than one unit. Buildings with 2-3 units are usually managed by a landlord as a small business. Buildings with 4-15 units are considered mid size rental properties and are managed by real-estate agents that earn 3-6% of the rental income. Buildings with 16+ units are considered commercial rentals, managed by professional property management companies, and have on-site managers. The images to the right feature nine common multi-family building types.

CISGP Housing

The CISGP centers around a mixed use innovation district where residential buildings must compliment office, commercial and industrial buildings. As such, residential buildings need to fit the larger building scale. The CISGP includes the following types of residential buildings (see pictures on the next spread):

Mid-rises- a multi-story building with an elevator and less than nine floors. Entirely residential use.

Garden Apartments- a cluster of two- to six-story buildings built in a garden like setting with open lawns, landscaping and pathways considered common areas.

Podium Apartments- A mid-rise with commercial or office space on the first few floors and residential on the top floors.

Duplex: 2 units side by side
*$300,000 median price**

Duplex Stacked

Bungalow Court

Small Multiplex
*$398,000 median price**

Fourplex

Carriage House / Accessory Dwelling Unit

Townhouses

Live/Work

Courtyard Apartments

All Images From: MissingMiddleHousing.com
**Q4 2017, Listsource 2017, BAE 2018.*

Urban Townhouses- Single-family dwelling of at least two stories that share a wall with another house. Unlike duplexes and fourplexes, townhouses are individually owned. Urban townhouses have a more commercial character and create a cohesive street front.

Suburban Townhouses- Single-family dwelling of at least two stories that share a wall with another house. Suburban townhouses tend to look like miniature versions of single family houses in their area.

Live/Work Townhouses- Single-family dwelling of at least two stories that share a wall with another house. The bottom floor(s) are commercial and office space.

Types of Units

Mid-rises, garden apartments, podium apartments, and live/work townhouses can all have a variety of units, most commonly ranging from studios, 1-bedroom, 2-bedrooms, and 3-bedrooms, lofts and pent-houses. Apartments are rental units, while condos are owned.

Modern urban townhouses: three stories hosting one or two units. Homes visually blend together to appear like a cohesive block-sized building. Image: C2E Irvine

Modern suburban townhouses: two stories and look like individual homes stacked tightly together. Image: Limassol, Agios Tychonas, Buy Home Estate Agency.

Garden Apartments- townhouse units on the left, various apartments on the right. First floors have gardens, elevated floors have balconies. Image: KF Architecture

First-floor gardens provide an outdoor room and enliven the common areas. Image: Doublespace Photography. Beaver Barracks Community Housing by Barry J. Hobin and Associates Architects.

Mid-rise: complete community design, with shared amenities. Image: Century West Partners

Multifamily Podium: shops below, apartments above. Image: Pollack Shores, Matrix Residential

Demographics

Purpose

The previous section illustrated how local people are unlikely to be able to afford local housing were the County's SAP to be approved. Often, incomers, people moving in to communities in Placer County, are blamed for rising house prices. The purpose of this section is to gain a better understanding of the flow of people into Placer County communities, where different demographic groups find homes and how new neighbors contribute to our future. Having a clear picture of who we are and who we will become is important because collectively, we are the market that development claims to serve.

Population Growth

The center weight of population in California is moving from Southern California coastal communities (where currently 45% of Californians reside) to the San Francisco-Sacramento area. Migration, rather than births, drives this change. As the suburban fringe of Sacramento, Placer will receive a similar amount of incomers as San Francisco, while Sacramento will out pace both of them (Figure 17).[1] In 2030, Placer County will register more deaths than births annually, without any sign of the trend reversing.[2]

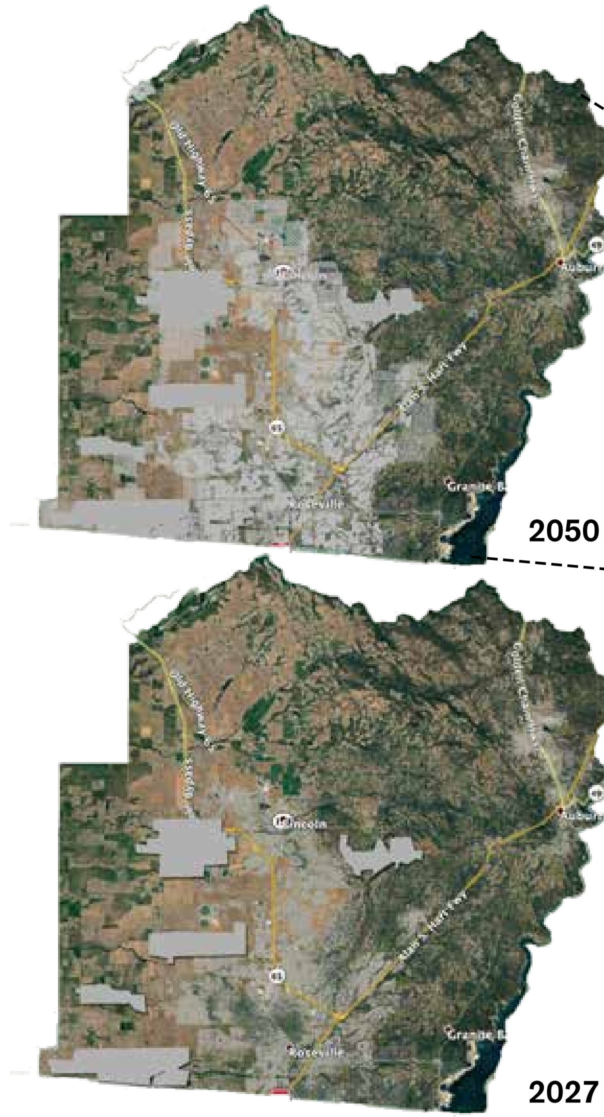
By 2050, approximately 3,000 more people will die a year in Placer than will be born. From 2030 onwards, Placer will depend on incomers to keep the population level stable and growing. The national Demographic Research Unit predicts that Placer will have a net gain of 5,000 to 6,400 incomers annually through 2050 (Figure 20). The fastest influx happened in 2014 and currently Placer is the 4th fastest growing county in California by percentage of population. Our ranking will decrease to 5th over the coming decades.

Most of the growth in Placer will be absorbed by the area around Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln (Figure 16). The current strategy to accommodate newcomers is to build very large specific plans for mainly low density residential development. All the specific plans with housing currently in progress can theoretically accommodate Placer's population growth until 2027, but do not collectively properly distribute housing types (Figure 21). By 2050, Placer will have to fit an additional 50,000 households and associated uses (top of Figure 16). Alternative development solutions must come forth now.

1 Sharygin, E., Palmer, H. D. "Department of Finance Releases New State Population Projections." Department of Finance. Mar. 8, 2017.

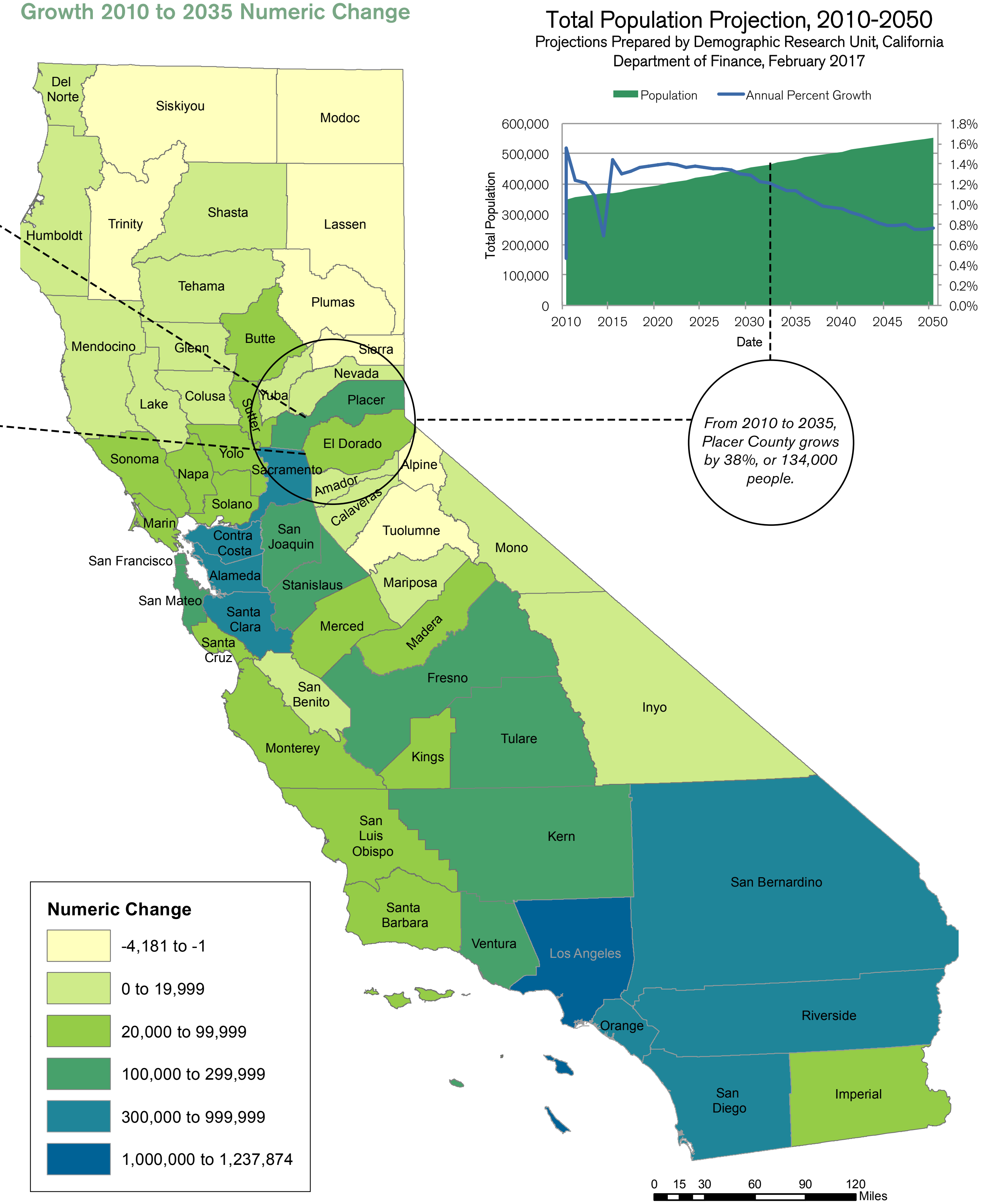
2 "Projected Population and Components of Change: California Counties 4/1/2010-7/1/2060." Demographic Research Unit, California Department of Finance, February 2017.

Figure 16: Continuing the Pattern of Growth



Placer's population growth will out grow the housing proposed in large developments by 2027.

Figure 17: California Projected Population Growth 2010 to 2035 Numeric Change



Source: California Department of Finance. Population Projections for California and its Counties. 2016 Baseline Series.

Figure 18

From 2010 to 2035, Placer County grows by 38%, or 134,000 people.

Figure 19

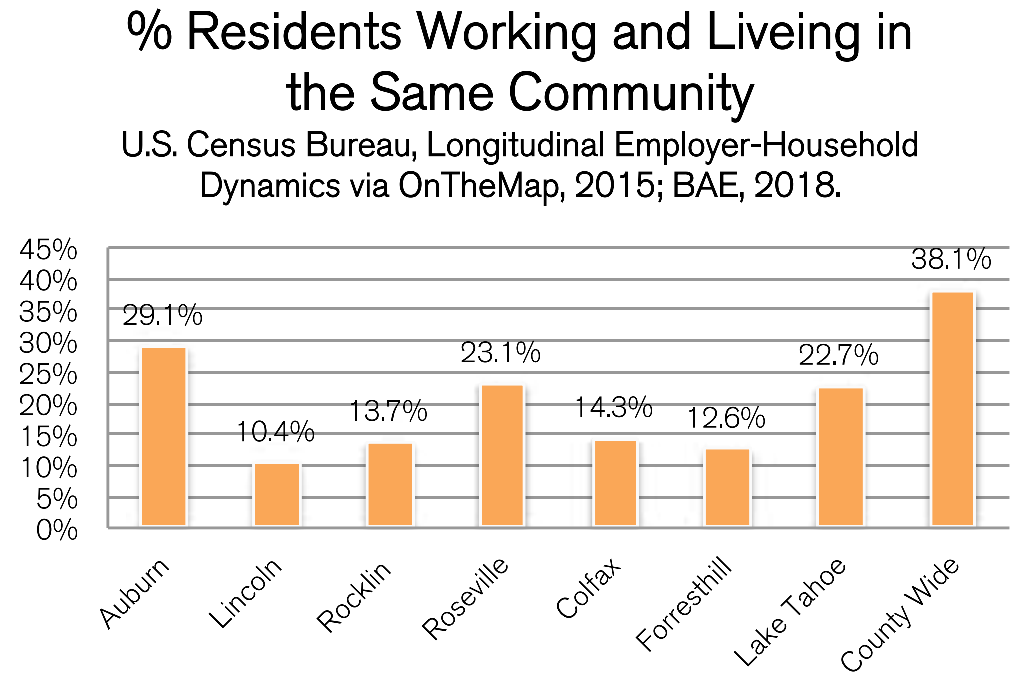


Figure 20

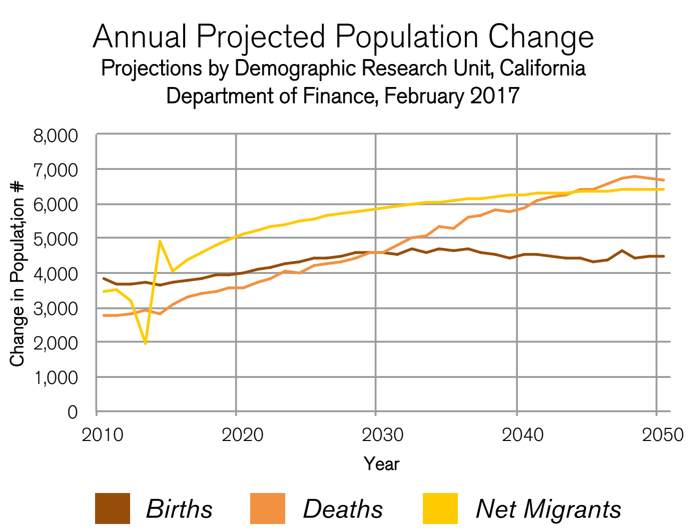


Figure 21: W. Placer Specific Plans 2018

DU=dwelling unit

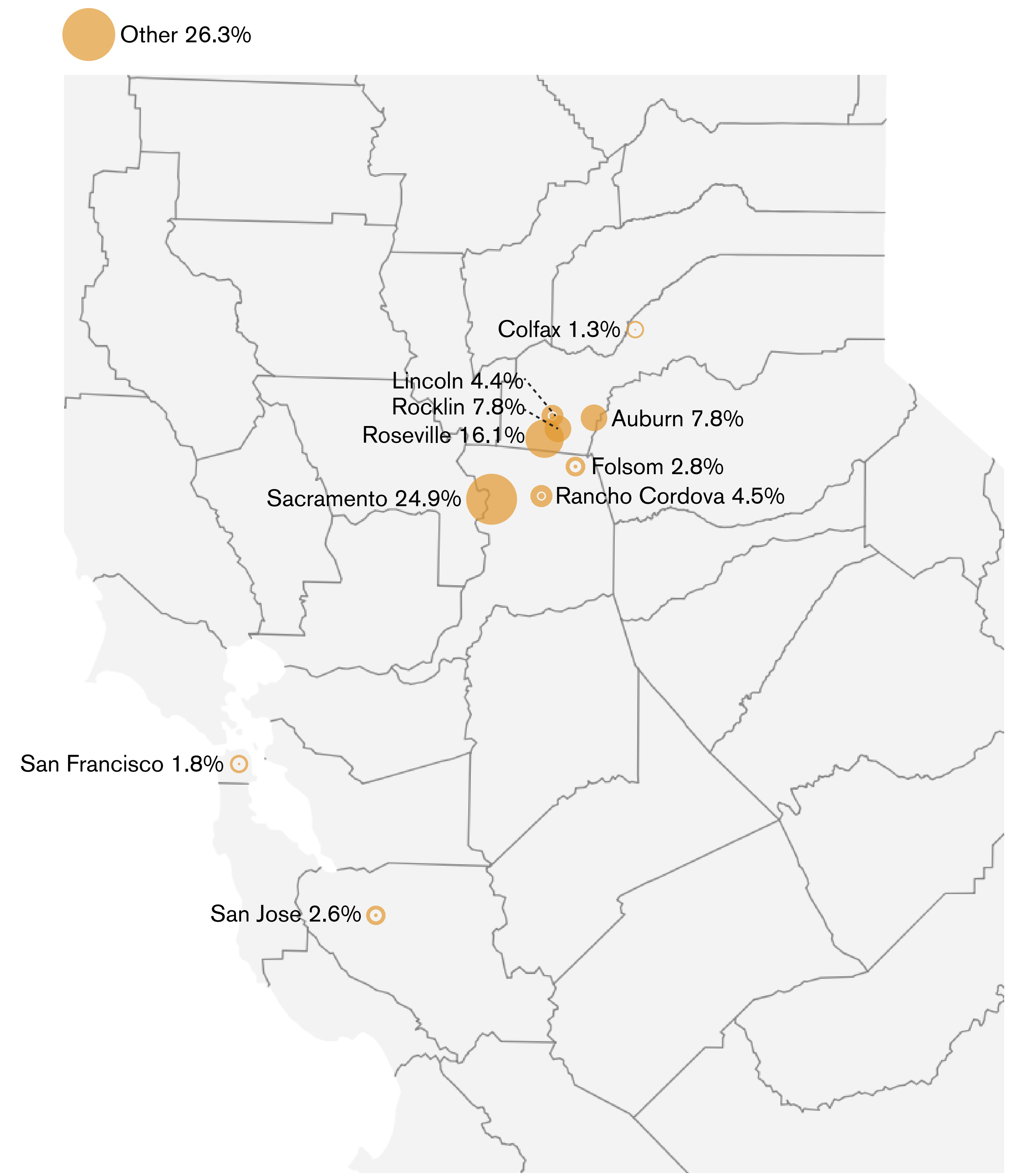
Placer Vineyards	3,437 ac. for	13,982 DU
Bickford Ranch	701 ac. for	1,890 DU
Riolo Vineyards	266 ac. for	933 DU
Regional University	732 ac. for	4,387 DU
Martis Valley West Parcel	662 ac. for	760 DU
Placer Ranch	759 ac. for	8,285 DU
Amoruso Ranch	337 ac. for	2,827 DU
Lincoln Village 5	2,094 ac. for	8,244 DU

Pattern of Growth & Commutes

Without a new approach for growth in Placer, the trend of living and working in different communities will continue. In 2015, only 38.1% of all employed Placer residents lived and worked in the same community (Figure 19). The rest, 61.9%, commuted to outside their community census district. A third of all workers commuted to neighboring counties and 4.4% commuted to the Bay Area. This commuter-lifestyle not only depletes household free time and spending money, but also skyrockets County-wide air pollution emissions, lowers quality of life and works against climate resiliency.

The CISGP offers a new approach. By concentrating jobs and residences together, residents benefit from a live-work community and the County benefits from reduced environmental and transit impacts and costs. (To see the full list of benefits, check out the CISGP Phase 1 analysis section.) In approximately 800 acres, the CISGP accommodates up to 49,614 households--53% of total expected growth by 2050. We must build more dense if we are going to preserve our wetlands and prairies sequester huge amounts of carbon.

Figure 21: Where Placer County Residents Work



Data from: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics via OnTheMap, 2015

Placer: A County of Incomers

Incomers are anyone who changes residence. Most come from within Placer County (48%) and other counties in California (39%) with a few coming from other states and abroad (14% combined). The demographics of incomers changes depending on how far they come to be here. For example, the further incomers come, the younger they are.

Incomers from within Placer County

There are three main types of local people moving to different communities in the County. The major group is families, parents with elementary school children, followed by young professionals. The third group are people age 55 to 64, who may be downsizing, retiring, or empty nesting. 70% of local incomers are married or have been married, the highest ratio of all incomer groups. 25% make more than $75,000 a year, while the median earnings are $25,000 to $35,000. The gender distribution

Figure 22

Incomer Origin

2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

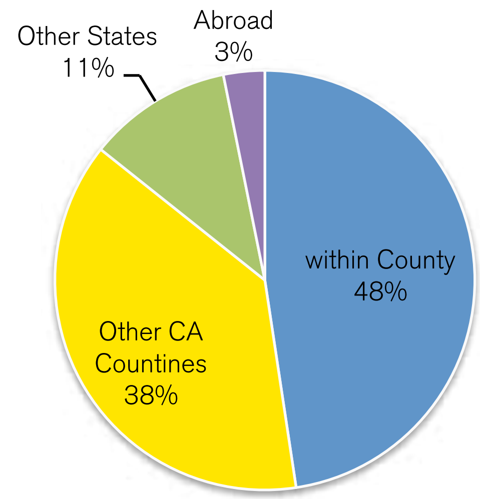
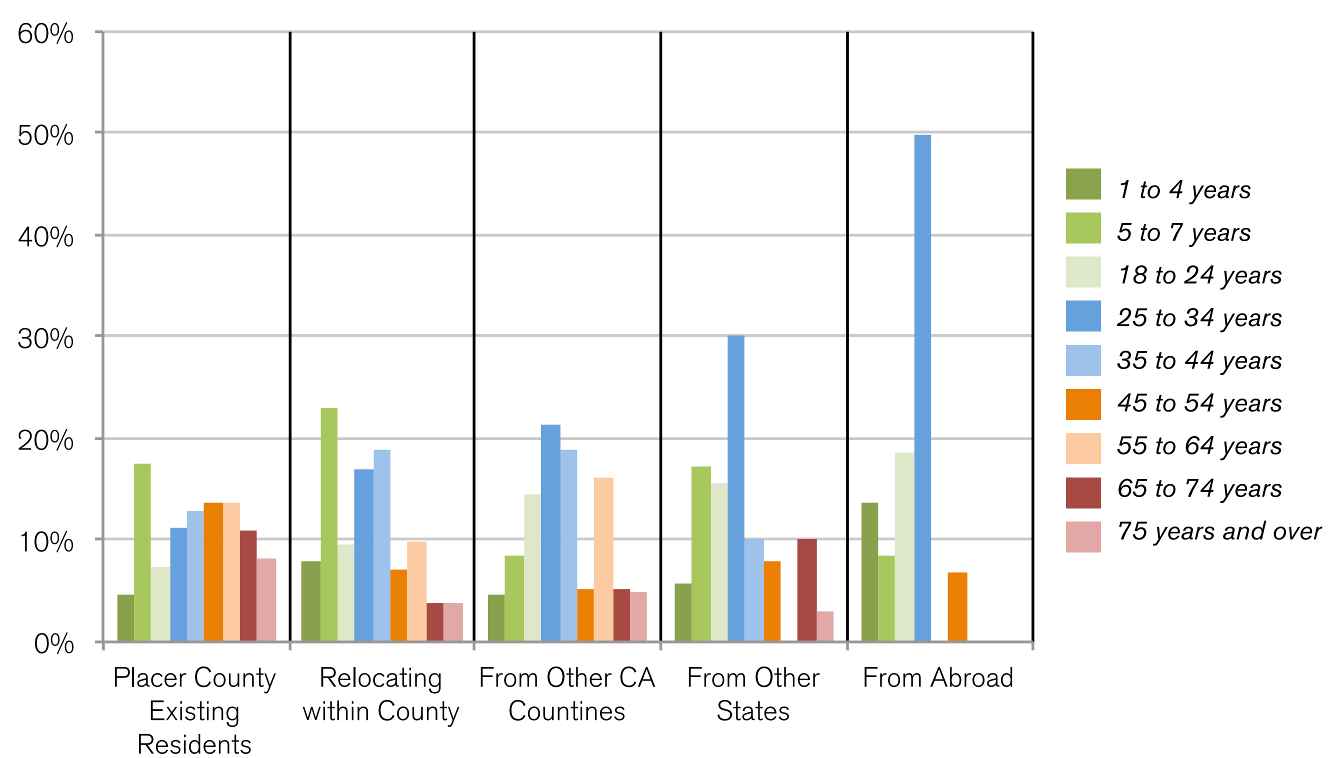


Figure 23

Age Percentiles of Incomers by Distance

2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



Incomer Demographics

Figure 24

2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau is nearly balanced, with slightly more females than males. Compared to the overall County population, 5-17 year olds and 25-44 year olds move at a higher rate then other residents.

Incomers from Other California Counties

They are mostly 25 to 44 years old, but with less children than local relocating families. 55 to 64 year-olds are this category's second biggest group. Slightly less than 25% make more than $75,000 a year, and the remaining 75% make on average slightly more than in-county incomers. The gender balance still slightly favors females, and slightly more than 60% of both genders are or have been married.

Incomers from Other States

The age profile begins to dramatically shift to younger people. 30% are between 24 and 35 years old, and 15% are young adults, 18 to 24 years of age. People 65 to 74 are more likely to move from another state than any other place, and spike at 10% of the interstate incomer group. 11% make more than $75,000 a year, and the most common income category is $9,999 or less, representing 24% of all interstate incomers. As college-age incomers make up 32%, students may account for a portion of large low income group. The gender balance remains around 55% female, and the proportion of those that are single approaches 50%.

Incomers from Abroad

Half of all foreign incomers are between the age of 25 to 34 years old, the transitional time after college to career or going back to grad school. 19% are 18 to 24 years old, who may be moving to college or back home. Young children age 1 to 4 are more likely to belong to families moving from abroad than from anywhere else. 17% make more than $75,000 a year, with a 31% making more than $50,000. 35% make less than $10,000 a year, likely corresponding to 23% being under 17, and another 18% possibly still dependent. 60% of this population are male, a jump of 15% from national incomers. Slightly more than half are single, and the other half are married, with negligible divorces or widowings.

Bay Area Incomers

Bay Area transplants are often blamed for making Placer more expensive to live in because of their high purchasing power. Yet, looking at the income levels of Bay Area incomers tells a different story. Figure 25 shows that people leaving the Bay Area have lower incomes than the people of Placer County.

According to the Sacramento Bee, "If you live in the Central Valley, the Bay Area transplant who moves in next door won't likely be a Silicon Valley executive driving a Tesla. Your new neighbor will more likely be a barista." This indicates that many Bay Area incomers likely work in the service sector. Wealthier Bay Area incomers were more likely to move to more expensive destinations, such as Honolulu, Washington DC, and New York City.

Figure 25

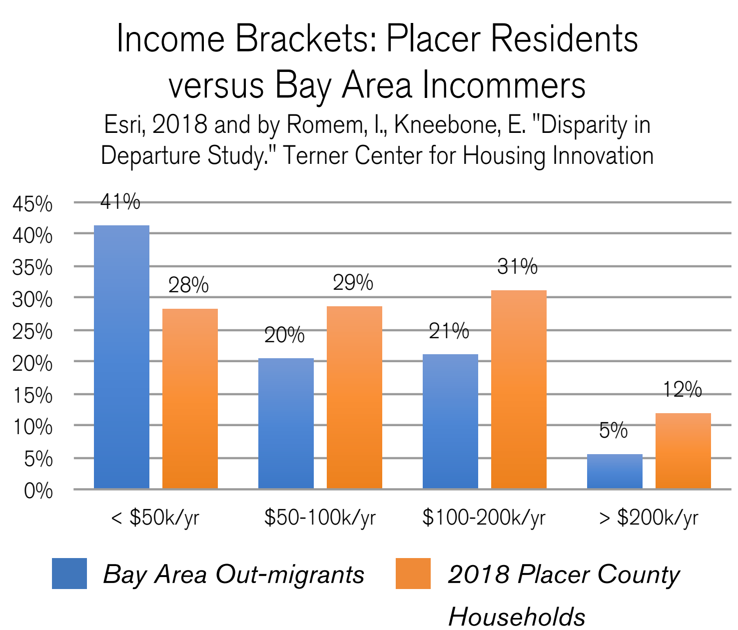
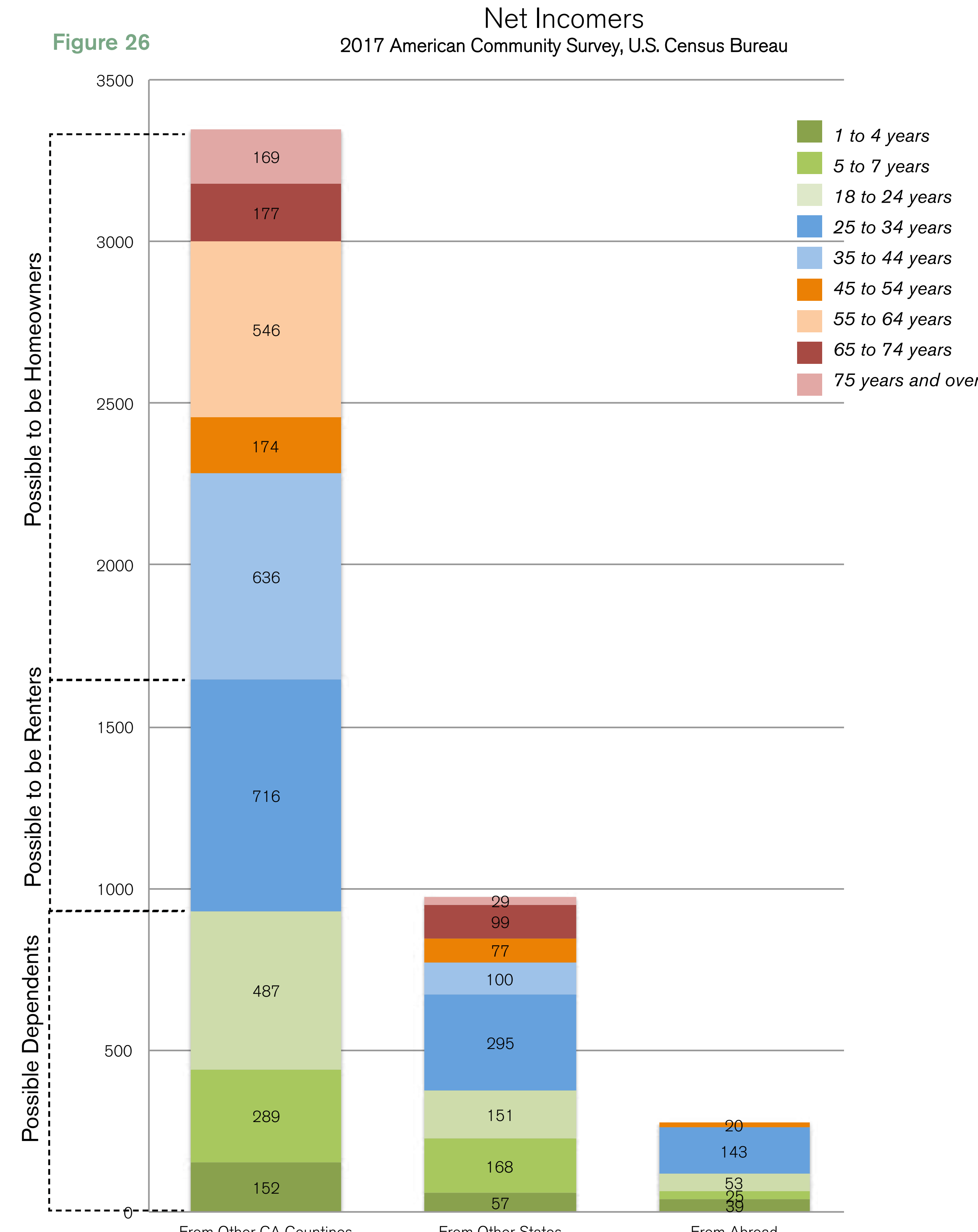


Figure 26



Net Incomers	From Other CA Countines	From Other States	From Abroad
Possible Dependents	929	376	117
Possible Renters*	716	295	143
Possible Home Owners*	1,702	305	20

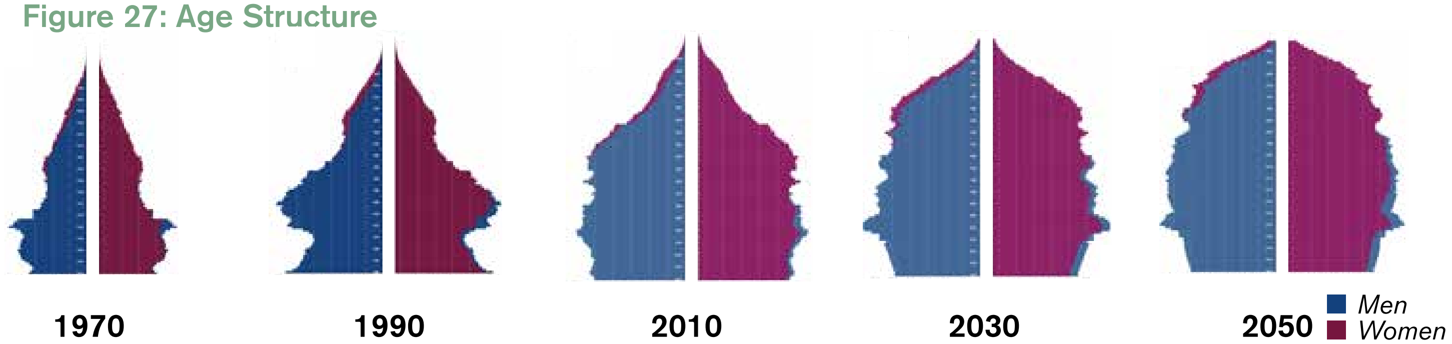
*by age

Aging

The age structure in Placer County mirrors national aging trends. In the 1970's Placer County has a bottom heavy population, with more young people than old people (Figure 27). Since then, the distribution has been evening out. People have been living longer, and having less kids. The resulting age structure becomes more balloon-like and less arrow head-like (Figure 27). Without incomers, the age structure would have a V-shape, with many more elderly per working-age adults. Since Placer has more older people than ever before, incomers help keep the tax base large enough to fund social benefits for older residents.

From a stand point of average age, Placer's will increase to 45-49 by 2035 (Figure 29). Nevada County's median age is currently 45-49, and will lower to 40-44, so in a way Placer is trading places with Nevada County. El Dorado will remain consistent at 40-44 and Yolo will remain forever young at 29. The rest of our great central valley neighbors will also age by 5 years, while the Bay Area counties will age by 10. Placer will be younger than the Bay Area, increasing its potential for innovation.

Figure 27: Age Structure



Age Structures in 20 Year Increments. Annual Intercensal Population Estimates for California, Demographic Research Unit.

Figure 28: California 2010 Median Age

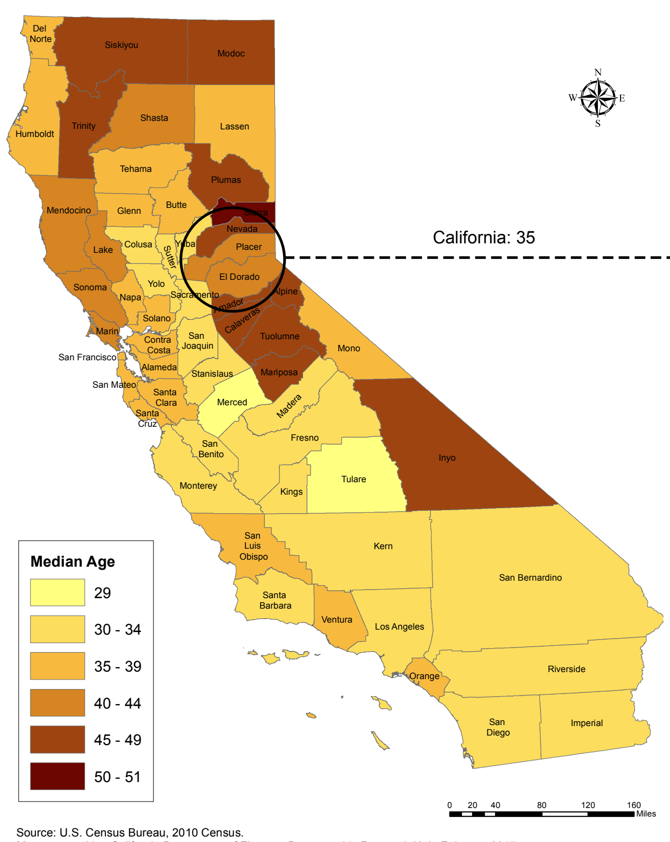
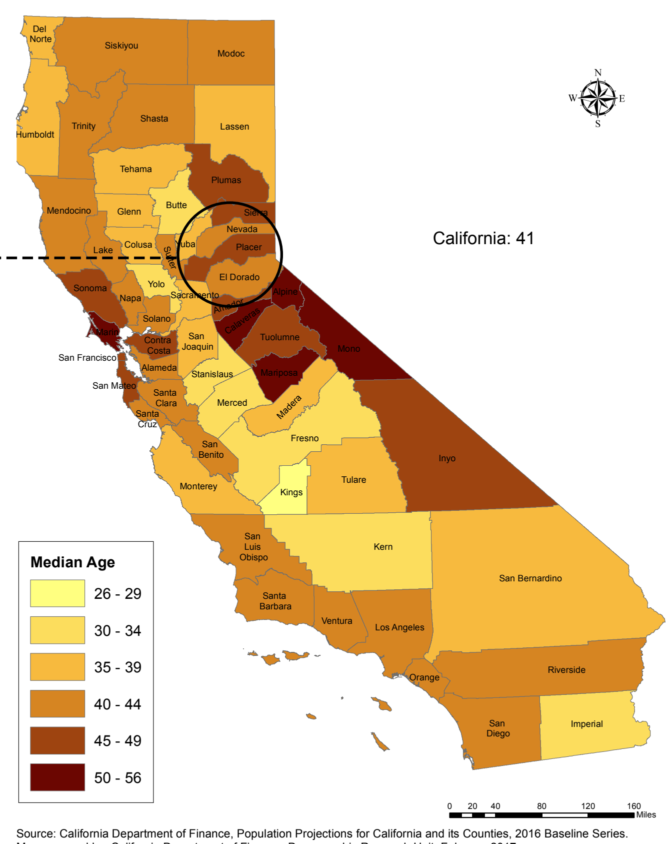


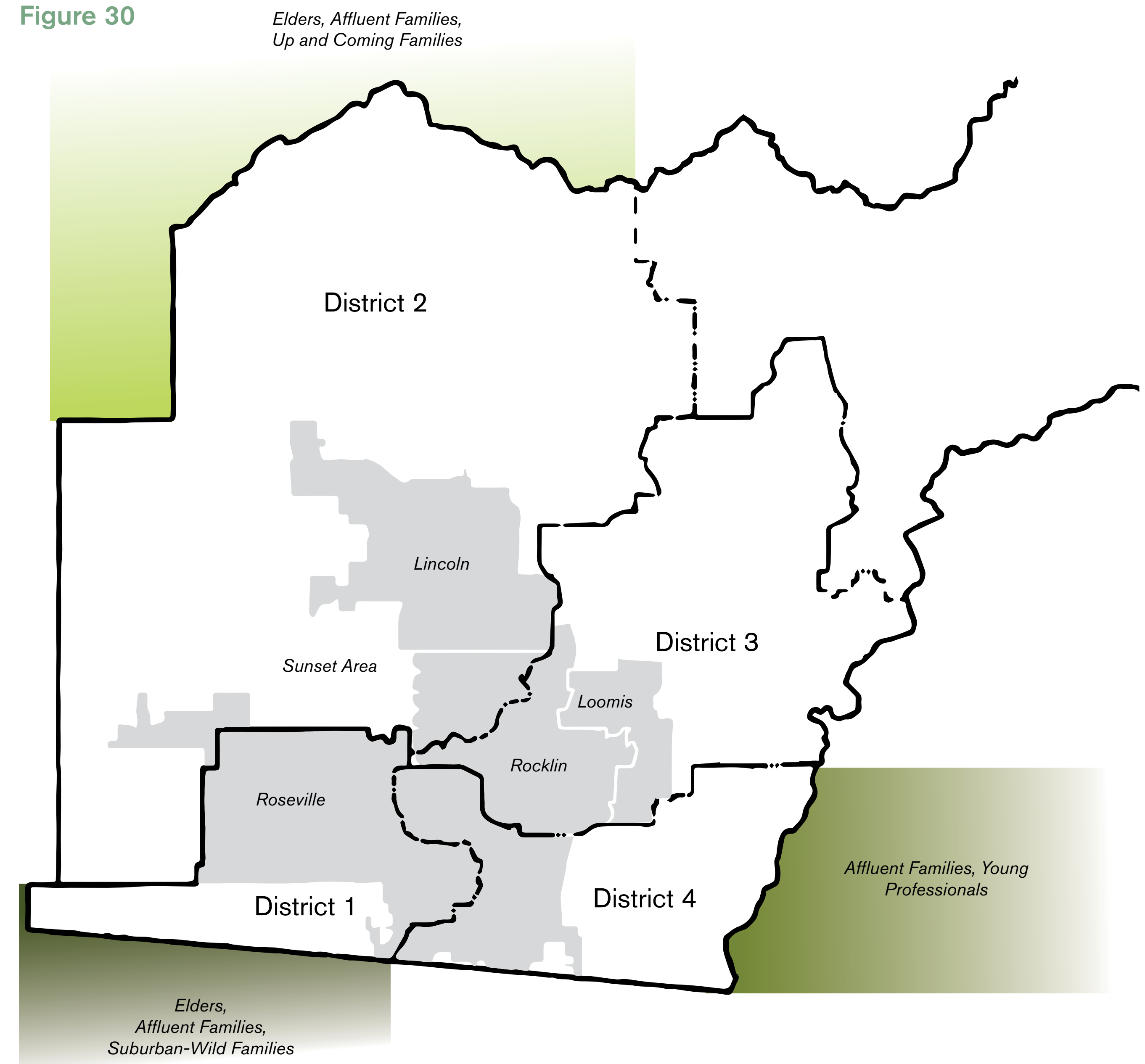
Figure 29: California Projected 2035 Median Age



West Placer's Dominant Demographic Clusters

Placer County has a wide variety of demographic clusters. These are people who live in the same areas, have similar household compositions and ages, and earn and spend money in similar ways. In February 2019, Placer County's Economic Development Department published a series of Community Profile reports that captures these similarities and differences. These reports are intended to inform businesses about local consumers so that they can tailor their marketing and products, such as what type of houses to build and what neighborhood amenities would be popular. The following pages draw from and expand upon the five dominant clusters in West Placer, across the three relevant Supervisorial Districts.

Figure 30



Affluent Families

Affluent families are well-educated professionals with a running start on prosperity. Parents are mostly between 39 and 54 years of age with young teens. They are most common tapestry segment in West Placer, crossing all three Supervisorial Districts. Nationally they are considered high-wage earners earning double the national average ($56,100) and fulfill the benchmark for affluent families in West Placer. 55% graduated from college. They bought homes in 1990s and through the peak of the housing boom. They are beginning to reap the benefits from financial planning and are able to traded-up to the newest housing in the suburbs. They are 173% more likely to have a mortgage than the national average.

They live along the suburban growth corridor in West Placer and have one of the longest commutes to work, often crossing county lines. To compensate, working from home is popular. With two or more workers per household, they are very busy and often complain about intrusions on personal time.

They own the latest technology and style matters in personal and home appearance. They are still furnishing their homes and remodeling. Gardening is an aspirational hobby, often contracted out. Physical fitness is a priority at the gym and at home. For fun they do outdoor sports, such as hiking biking, swimming and golf. They visit theme parks and water parks with their kids.

Average Household Size: 3.25
Median[1] Household Income: $113,400
Median House Value: $350,000[2]
Median County Home Price, Zillow April 2019: $499,500

Housing Affordability for Affluent Families in Placer County

An affordable single family home for an average affluent family starts at $300k, significantly lower than average home prices throughout Placer County.

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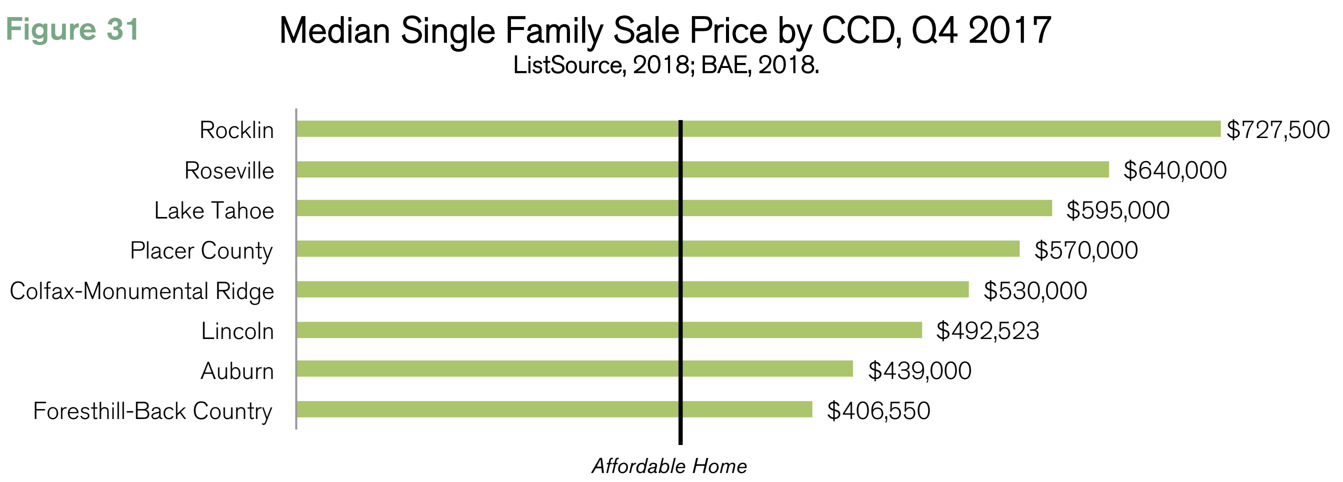
1 Medians are the middle value separating the higher half from the lower half. Averages are the sum of values divided by how many values there are.
2 Esri. (2018). Community Profile Supervisorial District 2 - Placer County [Executive Summary].

Figure 31



Cardinal Realty

The Elders

Elders are informed, independent and involved. With an average age between 69 and 79, the Elders are mostly Baby Boomers. Their tapestry segment is most represented in Roseville and Lincoln. They are retired and favor communities with social activity. They own single family homes and high rise apartments, and are likely to relocate themselves throughout the year to follow temperate weather. 45% are married couple households and the rest are single households.

With a median age of 72 years, 60% live in group quarters or nursing home facilities. 22% still work, typically as self-employed or part-timers, usually in real estate, retail or the arts. Income comes mostly from social security (80%), retirement, or investments (50%). While income is low, their net worth is 276% of the national average. They are strongly opinionated about product choices and seek the best value. They prefer American-made and environmentally safe products.

They are avid readers of books, newspapers, and magazines. Cable TV is popular for move channels, golf, weather and history channels. For fun, elders participate in a variety of clubs and organizations and are generous with their time and support.

Average Household Size: 1.68
Median Household Income: $42,800
Median Home Value: $180,000[1]
Median Home Value in Sun City, Zillow April 2019: $268,500

Housing Affordability for Elder Households in Placer County

In Placer County, Elder households' low median household income of $42k, qualifies as low income for a single person household, and very low income for a two person household. More Elders live alone than with another. An affordable house for them is $160k, way below Placer County's average home prices.

1 *ibid*

Dan Russo

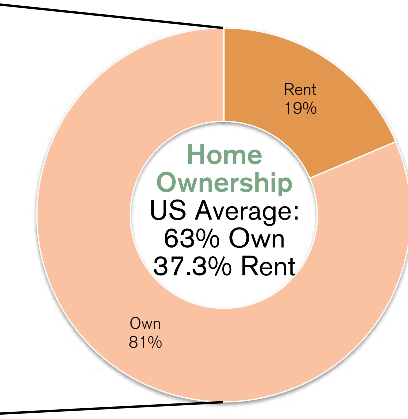
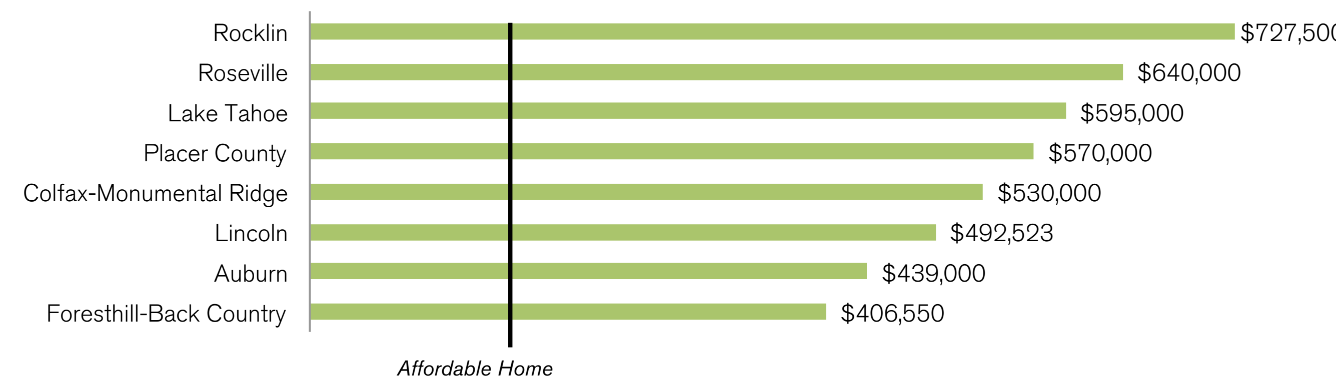


Figure 32 Median Single Family Sale Price by CCD, Q4 2017

ListSource, 2018; BAE, 2018.



Chronicle of the Week

Up and Coming Families

Most up and coming families have parents that are 29 to 44 years of age with elementary age children. They are ambitious and work hard to get ahead. They took on risk and invested during the housing boom, and were financially impaired as a result. While this group also carries debt from credit cards, students loans and mortgages, they maintain retirement plans and make charitable contributions. As they recover, they become a powerful market in the US.

Many live in District 4, around Lincoln. Their children are young and their homes are new. As a result, they are likely to live in the suburban periphery where new single family subdivisions are being built. Their commutes are 217% the national average of 26.4 minutes each way[1], with two or more workers per household.

They are careful shoppers, willing to search for the best deals. They seek the latest technology and are still furnishing their homes and establishing their style. 67% have some college education or degrees.

They are busy with work and family, do family activities for fun, such as movies at home, trips to theme parks or the zoo. Golfing, weight lifting, and jogging/running are popular pastimes.

Median Household Income: $72,000
Average Household Size: 3.12
Median Home Value: $194,400[2]
Placer County Single Family Homes sold for less than $254k in last 12 months, Zillow:
205 houses of 7,484 houses total

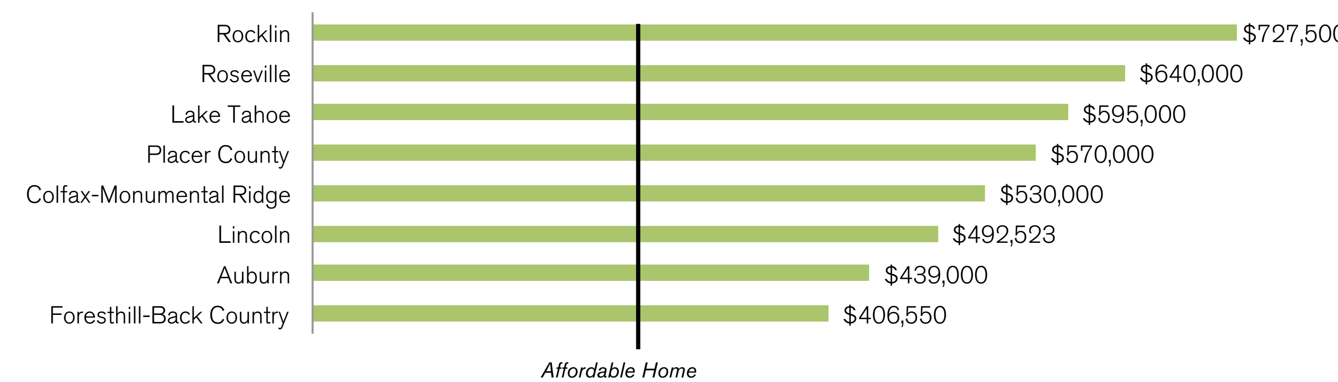
Housing Affordability for Up and Coming Families in Placer County

For a family of 3, their average income level is considered moderate. An affordable home for them is on average $254k, well below the average house prices throughout the county.

1 U.S. Census Bureau. "Mean travel time to work (minutes)." 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. [Accessed 31 May 2019]. https://www.census.gov/search-results.html?q=commute&page=1&stateGeo=none&searchtype=web&cssp=SERP&_charset_=UTF-8

2 ibid

Figure 33 Median Single Family Sale Price by CCD, Q4 2017
ListSource, 2018; BAE, 2018.



Suburban-Wild Families

These families have a country flavor and live in the 'suburban wilderness'-new housing on the edge of open space. Parents are 39 to 64 years of age and children between 9 and 19. They live mostly in District 1 around Roseville and commute to professional job centers, sometimes in a different county. 41% graduated from college, and 72% have some college education. With 71% of both parents working, life can be hectic. They favor time saving-devices and services such as housekeeping and gardeners. Their priority is family time.

They carry a high level of debt, including first and second mortgages and auto loans. They spend their money on family-oriented purchases and activities, such as movies, children's apparel and toys, and visits to theme parks and zoos. For fun, they attend and participate in sporting events. They also enjoy biking, jogging, golfing and boating.

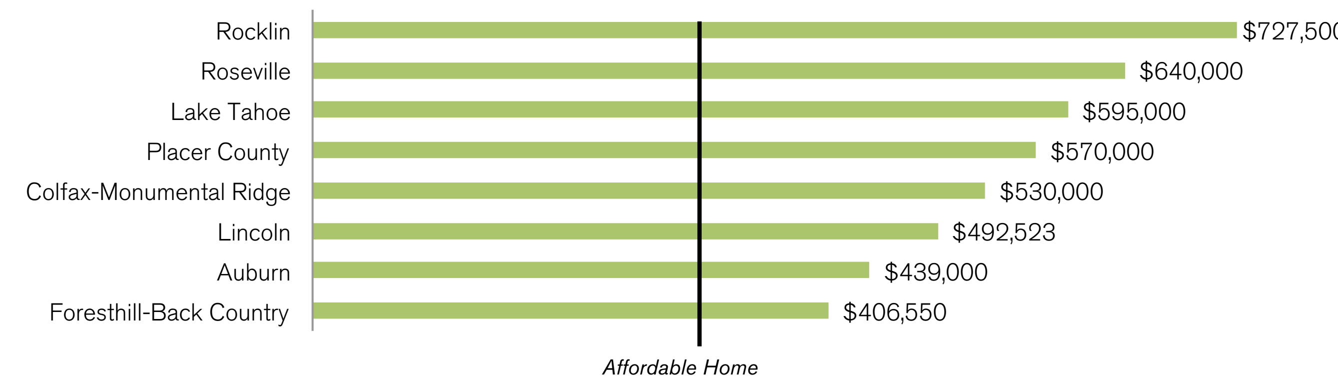
Median Home Value: $257,400
Average Household Size: 2.97
Median Household Income: $90,500
[1]Placer County Single Family Homes sold at or below $300k in last 12 months, Zillow: 413 houses of 7,482 houses total

Housing Affordability for Suburban-Wild Families in Placer County

Their median household income of $90.5k is a high income for a family of three in Placer County. An affordable house for that income is $300k. Yet again, this is too low for average house prices in Placer County- almost 50% too low.

1 Esri. (2018). Community Profile Supervisorial District 1 - Placer County [Executive Summary].

Figure 34 Median Single Family Sale Price by CCD, Q4 2017
ListSource, 2018; BAE, 2018.



Unsplash

Bright Young Professionals

Most bright young professionals are 24 to 39 years of age and are distinctively the millennial generation. Primarily located in urban outskirts of large metropolitan areas, many live in Granite Bay and secondarily in Roseville. They are young, educated and working white collar jobs. While in school, they typically work a mix of food service and part-time jobs. Households mostly rent with 2-3 house-mates, and one in three house-mates is typically under 35. Couples, whether married or unmarried, frequently rent together. They are physically active and up on the latest technology. They are concerned about the environment, which impacts their purchasing decisions.

68% have attended college or an associates program, and many have students loans as a result. For fun they like to go to bars, attend concerts, go to the beach, and watch Netflix. They enjoy a variety of sports, the most popular being backpacking, rock climbing, football, Pilates, running and yoga.

Average Household Income: $54,000
Average Rent: $1,042 / mo
Household Size: 2.41[1]
Median Placer County Rent, Zillow Apr. 2019: $2,195 (or $1.30/sf)
Number of Placer County Apartments currently for rent at $1,042 or less, Zillow May 2019: 5 units of 256 total units

Housing Affordability for Bright Young Professionals in Placer County

With a median household income of $54k, these households of two and three are considered low income. An affordable home for this group is $180k to $200k. As such, in West Placer most bright young professionals rent.

1 *Esri. (2018). Community Profile Supervisorial District 4 - Placer County [Executive Summary].*

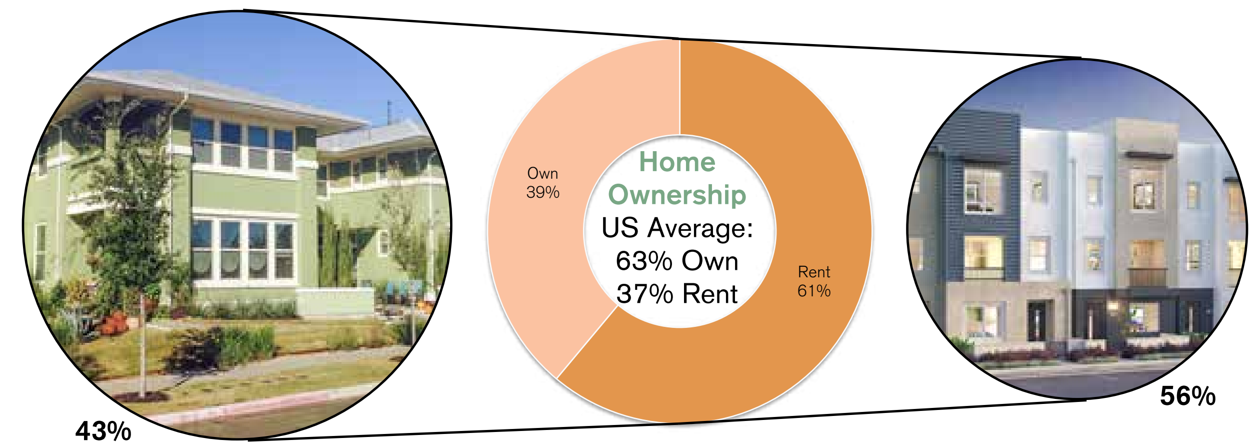
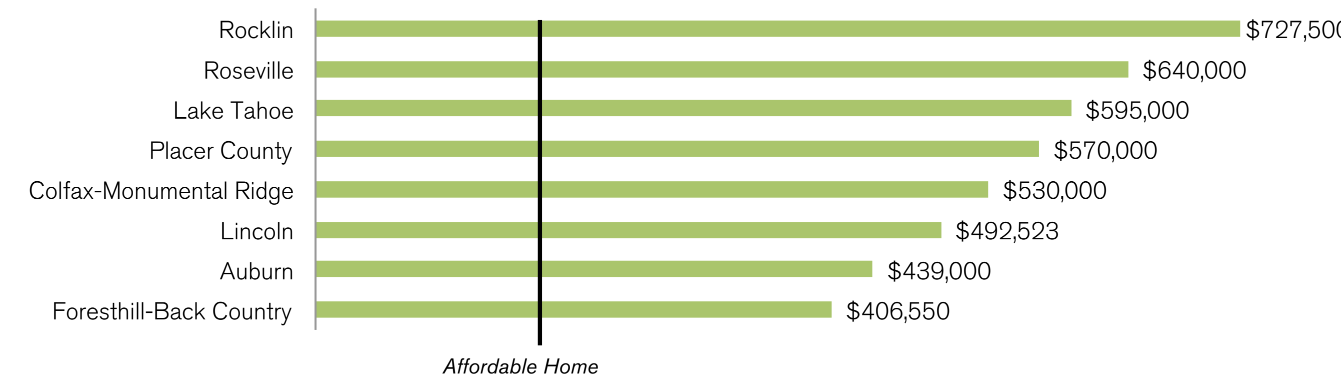


Figure 35 Median Single Family Sale Price by CCD, Q4 2017
ListSource, 2018; BAE, 2018.



Unsplash

Conclusion and Recommendations

Affordability

Throughout this report, we evaluated critical dimensions of Placer's housing affordability problem. We discovered that 81% of Placer County households do not make enough money to afford[1] a mortgage for a median-priced house[2] in Placer County.

When looking at the main demographic clusters in West Placer, we found hardworking, well-educated people striving for financial stability and a happy family life. We also found that substantial prior equity is necessary to afford a home. Affluent Families making $113,000 a year with dual incomes need $270,000 in equity to span the gap between what they can afford and Placer's median home price (page 33).

Up and Coming Families, many burdened by financial setbacks such a foreclosure and investment losses during the recession, make on average $72,000 a year from two working parents (page 37). Only 2.7% of all houses sold in the last 12 months (May 2018-May 2019) fit their price range. A similar shock comes from the rental market, where the Bright Young Professionals find shelter (page 41). The average rental price in Placer is 210% what young professionals living with one or two roommates can afford. A major factor is the lack of apartments for rent; whole house rentals with equivalent beds and baths tend to be twice as much.

Housing prices are also unaffordable for most of the incomers, 48% of whom are families moving neighborhoods within Placer. Our proximity to the Bay Area makes West Placer attractive for people leaving the Bay, but mostly for the lower-wage workers. Working mostly in service jobs, 41% make less than $50k a year. The wealthy bay area expats represent a minor segment of incomers to West Placer, as they tend to relocate farther afield in more expensive cities. We also learned that 56% of incomers are under 34 years old, meaning that overall, incomers are younger and less wealthy than the common perception (page 27).

For housing to be affordable, it must not exceed 30% of the household's budget. When households spend more than 50% of their income on rent or a mortgage, they are considered rent-burdened. This produces negative effects on household members and the community, such as students performing lower in school, household financial safety nets disappearing, greater reliance on emergency room healthcare visits at public expense, and young local adults unable to afford to live where they grew up. Low income and very low income households, which includes families, elderly, and young people, feel this pressure the most.

1 *Affordable is defined as spending no more than 30% of their income on housing costs.*

2 *$570,000*

Growth

Placer currently must accommodate approximately 5,000 more people each year.[3] Most of these people will be fellow Californians under 40, many with families in tow (page 30). Planned housing stock does not address this increase in a way integrates it into our community and safeguards our environment. At the same time, all the current and planned housing combined will only supply the demand until 2027. Of 41,308 planned units, the bulk is skewed towards upper end, low-density sprawl. As migration shifts from coastal cities to the Sacramento Valley, Placer will need an additional 50,000 dwellings by 2050. If the same sprawl strategy is deployed for these 50,000 units, an additional 10,879 acres of mostly prairie and farmland will be converted. Adding the land conversion from current proposed projects, Placer will lose 19,867 acres of today's open space. In its place, we will have 19,867 acres more of negative sprawl side effects, such as traffic congestion and unhealthy air and water, and loss of Placer's appealing rural character. Persisting with a sprawl strategy is a failure to adapt to growth strategies in the face of statewide climate goals. Already Placer County is characterized by as a collection of bedroom communities with people commuting long distances to get to work (page 32). Sprawl does little to create attractive places for companies to locate in Placer. The social isolation of sprawl also provides no encouragement for entrepreneurship. The CISGP illustrates how multi-tenant housing and entrepreneurship can support each other.

3 *In 2019, net migrants will be 4,967; this is predicted to steadily and slowly rise to 6,433 net migrants a year by 2050. Demographic Research Unit of California Department of Finance. (2017). Projected Population and Components of Change: California Counties [Excel Spreadsheet].*

People relocating to Placer will sustain the County population, as the population of existing elder residents grows and we birth fewer children per woman a year. Costs to provide social benefits to this aging population will also increase. Incomers keep Placer County young and contribute a significant component to healthy tax revenues.

Opportunity

To address growth and affordability, we need extraordinary and innovative plans such as the CISGP that achieve higher land conversion value while serving workers, families, and entrepreneurs of today and tomorrow. The documentation of these plans must demonstrate for the Board of Supervisors change at the zoning and policy level. Through cross referencing County, state and national economic and demographic data, we have unequivocally demonstrated the empty space multi-tenant buildings must fill in our community. We have also demonstrated how mixed-use development not only creates centers of community life but also gives more revenue options in finance models. When we build more densely, we have more varied and vibrant communities, lower emissions and more opportunity to leverage public infrastructure.

The CISGP utilizes the two metrics of jobs-housing balance and housing-fit to ensure an equitable match between people and homes. As such, it aligns unit prices with income distribution. We show how this is diametrically different from how housing in the SAP and PR are distributed, which discriminates against the middle and lower classes through failing to examine the breakdown of job types within industries. Our analysis also uncovers the harmful discrepancy between what is legally required with the 10% Affordability Rule and the realities of income distribution in Placer County. In analyzing the various proposals for the Sunset Area and applying the equitable distribution model, we determined that 57% of units in the CISGP must be for moderate income and below income. The SAP should adjust their figures to 51% moderate and below to reflect the jobs it anticipates. Placer Ranch, a so-called primary wage earner community should redistribute to units to make 65% for households of moderate income and less to match with the jobs they intend to create (page 13).

With the average single-family house across priced at $570,000 across Placer County, multi-tenant buildings are the obvious solution for serving new and existing residents. We described nine different types of multi-tenant buildings to learn that there are various configurations and styles. Different types suit urban and residential areas and can be deployed strategically to seamlessly blend between the two. In the CISGP, we envision beautiful and respectable high-density housing that will be the first choice for prospective residents and workers in the Sunset Area (page 19).

The Last Big Question

While we demonstrated demand for multi-tenant homes in this report, we did not address the financial feasibility of developing such projects. Developers promulgate a myth that single family homes are the only profitable building type and that this type is necessary to subsidize all other development projects. The local proponents of this view have not produced any proformas for public scrutiny- no numbers, facts, or documents that proves or disproves the viability of higher density mixed-use buildings, making their argument the value of hearsay. Developers routinely come to the County having purchased vast acreages zoned for primarily agricultural uses and ask for rezoning to single-family sprawl. There are two case studies that came up in preparation for this report that demonstrate that it is not only possible to recoup the development cost of several-story mixed-use buildings, but also make a very reasonable return on investment.

Firstly, we came across a financial analysis case study produced by an architecture firm for a three-story building on a 6,000 sf lot with six apartments and one office space. The land costs $750,000 and total building costs were estimated at $1,306,000, totaling $2,056,000. By the third year, the building would open for business and in the tenth year of operation, the investor intends to cash out. Financed by a typical investor-developer-bank relationship, the total after-tax cash flow from ten years of operation and sale is $3,111,000. The low-risk nature of the investment and the doubling of money invested (internal rate of return of 12%) makes this an attractive and feasible investment opportunity for someone who also cares about housing equity.[4]

Secondly, SACOG produced a technical report in 2015 called the Yolo County Case Study, in which they recommended how to incentivize urban infill rather than greenfield development and supported their conclusions with a comparative fiscal analysis. This is relevant to the CISGP because the 800-acre Mixed-Use Innovation District and University District have many infill opportunities, while the County's Plan focuses on enabling greenfield development further and further away from existing town centers. In the analysis, SACOG compared a project to develop small vacant lots in downtown Winters into two-story retail with a large lot corridor-style retail project on farmland on the outskirts of town. Given differences in permit costs, impact fees, and especially construction and parking costs, the small lot infill scenario returned a lower net income for the developer but a return on investment double that of the large lot greenfield scenario. On a per acre basis, the small lot infill project delivered a net income triple the large lot greenfield project.

In addition, SACOG analyzed the fiscal benefits for the jurisdiction. The infill project more efficiently used land and existing infrastructure assets, including the transportation system, water, and sewer infrastructure and the urban network. They concluded, "While more costly upfront and to maintain, the net revenue [for the jurisdiction] associated with more compact development in a downtown district pays off at a rate nearly five times higher than large-lot retail on an arterial corridor." By analyzing from both the developer and jurisdiction point of view, SACOG showed that small lot infill development not only enhances the vibrancy and diversity of a downtown district but also works economically for developers and the community. "This underscores the potential value that comes with investing in existing assets and the care that must be taken when evaluating the costs and returns of development proposals," SACOG concludes.[5]

These case studies are breadcrumbs leading to further research. AEL hopes to simulate and publish various financial models that compare different mixed-use configurations.

4 *Cerezo, D. (n.d.). For Rent Pro Forma - Architect as Developer [Excel Spreadsheet]. C&S Design.*

5 *Rural Urban Connection Strategy, SACOG. (2015). Yolo County Case Study [Technical Report].*

Call for Leadership

The local government greatly influences the market forces of housing development through planning and zoning regulations. The planning and zoning rules are created to incentivize a particular theoretical pattern of growth. However, they are discretionary and subject to change. Landowners can apply for zoning changes, General Plan amendments, and Specific Plans and the public can oppose such changes. Over the past several decades, these changes have added up to approximately 50,000 acres of agricultural land rezoned for exclusive low-density residential uses in West Placer alone. It is uncustomary for the general public to come forth with equivalent changes, and as a result, the public is continually in a defensive position, instead of a constructive one. We need a new theoretical pattern of growth in the General Plan that reflects the 21st-century population of Placer County and anticipates inevitable social and environmental change. Within such a pattern, the local government would have more incentive to remove barriers to multi-tenant housing and finally address housing needs for all citizens. It would be disincentivized to invest public money in planning projects where long term public impacts outweigh short term returns for the private sector, such as Placer Ranch. It would transform the County into the leader for implementing progressive solutions, instead of waiting for a private sector unicorn to propose a forward-thinking project.

The Sunset Area Plan, as a General Plan amendment, is an ideal opportunity for the County to shape future growth away from communities built for cars to communities built for people. It's finite area and West Placer location make it ideal for a long term case study. In establishing a new growth pattern, the CISGP gives the County a straight path forward. It incorporates the fundamental supporting policy for multi-tenant buildings, including higher density land uses and multi-modal public transit networks. It shapes the County's vision into a 21st-century solution that skyrockets housing affordability and environmental sustainability.

Call to Action

We are stronger together. Join AEL in advocating for sustainable communities and equitable planning. Your voice counts! Here are some actions you can take:

Stay Informed

allianceforenvironmentalleadership.org

Get facebook updates from:
@allianceforenviroleadership

or AEL's email list:
allianceforenviroleadership@gmail.com

Get to know Phase 1, watch the summary video at bit.ly/CISGP1video (30 min) or purse the pdf, bit.ly/CISGP1.

Communicate

Share the CISGP with the Press and friends! With out public awareness and attention, harmful sprawl and economically discriminatory projects will continually be approved in Placer County. Write your concerns to a newspaper editor and accompany it with CISGP graphics.

Supervisor Robert Weygandt has jurisdictional authority over the West Placer Prairie / Sunset Area. Tell him and your own Supervisor about your concerns and share the Citizen-Initiated Smart Growth Plan. Join our email list to learn about opportunities to show your support for the CISGP in person at public meetings.

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Other supervisor contact information:
www.placer.ca.gov/2231/Board-of-Supervisors

Attend

Mingle with us at our monthly AEL Workshops. Topic specific, guest speakers share there expertise in an group dialog format. Our workshops are a great place to meet progressive thinkers, give your input for the CISGP or volunteer with AEL. Come away feeling empowered to guide our community to a smart, fair and sustainable future. Workshops are casual and held at a local brewery.

Citizen-Initiated
Smart
Growth
Plan