Appendix J

Regional Growth Forecast
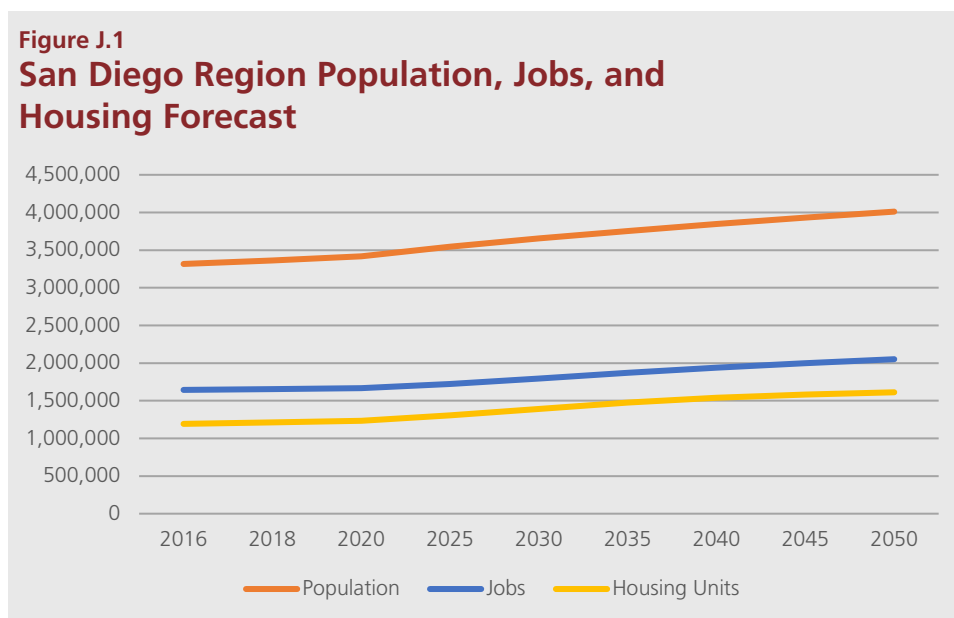
Regional Growth Forecast

Introduction

Since 1972, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) has produced long-range forecasts of population, housing, and employment that are used as a basic resource by elected officials, planners, academics, and the general public. Among other applications (including general plans and infrastructure planning), the Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast, Version 17 (Series 14) is the basis for San Diego Forward: The 2019 Federal Regional Transportation Plan (2019 Federal RTP).

These forecasts represent the best assessment of the changes we can anticipate for the region and its communities based on the best available information and well-proven, verified computer models. As explained below, they are based on the most recent planning assumptions, considering local general plans and other factors.

The SANDAG forecasts are meant to help policy- and decision-makers prepare for the future and are not an expression for or against growth. The forecasts are developed through a collaborative effort with experts in demography, housing, the economy and other disciplines, and the close cooperation of the local planning directors and their staff.

Overview of Forecasted Growth

Between 2016 and 2050, the San Diego region is expected to grow by nearly 700,000 people. This forecast is consistent with previous expectations, although future growth rates have been reduced due to increased domestic migration out of the region as well as falling birth rates. The growth in population will drive job growth and housing demand within the region – adding 408,000 jobs and more than 420,000 housing units.[1] Figure J.1 provides a summary of current population, housing units, and job counts, as well as future trends for interim years and the forecast horizon.

Figure J.1
San Diego Region Population, Jobs, and Housing Forecast

Source: SANDAG Regional Growth Forecast, Series 14, Version 17

Forecast process

The forecast process includes two iterative phases. First, a forecast for the entire region is produced based largely on economic and demographic trends. For Series 14, the total population for the region by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin is taken from published population projections from the California Department of Finance (produced in 2017). Demographic data on household formation and composition is used to develop a housing unit and household forecast from these population data. Economic data are also developed from research on current and past trends such as employment, in-commuting, and median income. The second phase allocates the forecasted growth down to the smaller geographic areas. The subregional forecast model distributes growth based on a variety of factors, including available capacity for housing and accessibility to jobs and transportation; however, it does not allocate growth beyond what is allowed for by any jurisdiction's general plan. Therefore, the forecast allocation is influenced by local land use and transportation policy decisions (see Subregional Projections section). Actions taken by one jurisdiction can affect not only that jurisdiction's forecast, but potentially others as well.

Regionwide Projections

During the 34-year forecast period, the general trend for population growth is positive, but slowing considerably when compared with past trends. Currently, yearly population estimates from the California Department of Finance suggest that the San Diego region grew at a rate of approximately 1.03 percent per year, or an average of approximately 32,000 people per year between 2010 and 2016,[2] and the SANDAG Series 14 Forecast shows that the growth rate will slow to less than 0.5 percent per year by 2035, and to less than 0.4 percent by 2050.

While San Diego has long been thought of as a region of "transplants" where more than half of the residents were born outside of the State of California, future growth is expected to be largely homegrown. Given longer life expectancies and trends in fertility rates, natural increase (births minus deaths) is projected to account for nearly two-thirds of future population growth (as shown in Figure J.2). Because most of the region's future growth is expected to be due to natural increase, the region's relatively slow growth rate can be attributed, in part, to a continual decline in fertility rate (the average number of children born to each woman). Recent data show that fertility rates are dropping or staying constant among all racial and ethnic groups. The decline in the number of births in the nation is at the lowest observed value in the past 30 years.[3] Longer life expectancies will contribute to the growth in the older population seen in the outer years of the forecast, while the trends of increased deaths (as a result of the large older population) will factor into the slower growth rates anticipated in the future. By 2050 it is expected that nearly 25 percent of the population will be age 65 and over, compared with just 15 percent today (as is shown in Figure J.3). The remaining growth is the result of net migration, both domestic and international. The Series 14 Forecast uses the measure of net migration from the Department of Finance's Population Projections. These data project a level of net migration that is near 10,000 persons per year, meaning that the number of people who in-migrate to the region is about 10,000 higher than the number of persons out-migrating from the region. This near constant level of net migration in the future is used because we are unable to anticipate changes to federal regulations that might influence international migration as well as future economic conditions (recessions or times of growth) that might deter or attract more or less migration.

Figure J.2
Components of Population Change
(Births, Deaths, and Migration)
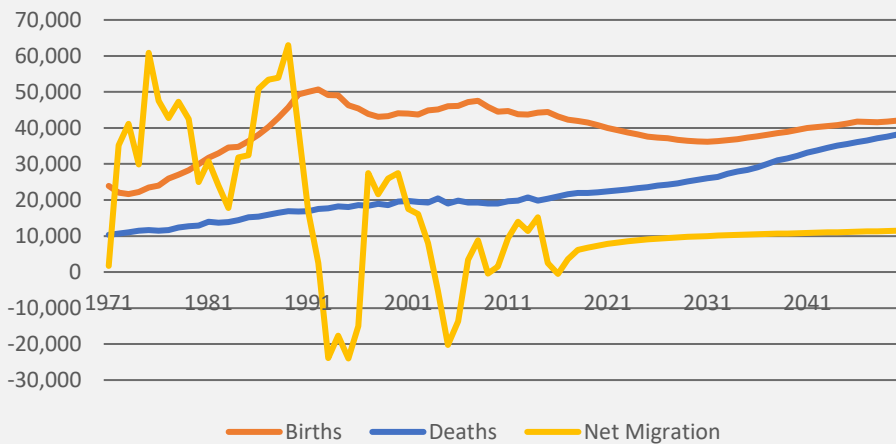
Source: California Department of Finance Population Projections (accessed 2017)

Figure J.3
San Diego Region Population
by Age and Gender
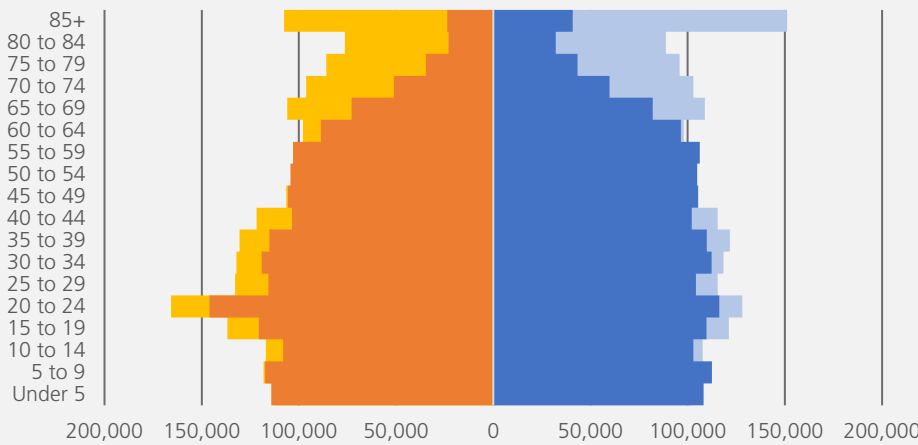
Source: SANDAG Regional Growth Foreacst, Series 14, Version 17

In terms of the racial and ethnic composition of the region, significant changes are on the horizon. The 2010 decennial census revealed San Diego to now be a "majority-minority" region – meaning no single race or ethnic group comprises more than 50 percent of the total population. In 2016 the two dominant race and ethnic groups were non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics, accounting for 46 percent and 34 percent of the region's total population, respectively. By 2050, however, it is expected that Hispanics will account for almost 40 percent of the total population while the non-Hispanic White population will decline to approximately 40 percent. The Asian population is expected to increase to 12 percent; up from 11 percent in 2012. Non-Hispanic blacks, non-Hispanic two or more races, non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaskan Native and non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders and groups in the "other" category together comprise a little more than 3 percent of the total population today and are expected to grow to about 5 percent of the population in 2050.[4]

It is important to emphasize that while the region's rate of population growth is slowing, the region is still growing. As we plan for the future, the forecast provides a tool that can aid in the formulation of local and regional policies.

Subregional projections

SANDAG staff worked extensively with the region's 18 cities, the County of San Diego, and other agencies that manage land use (e.g., the Department of Defense, tribal governments) to understand local land use plans and policies, including general plans, community plans, or specific plans, as well as constraints to development. That detailed land use information is incorporated into the future development and redevelopment projections that comprise the Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast.

The local land use inputs incorporate such information as existing development, general plans, constraints to development (e.g., floodplains, steep slopes, habitat preserves, historic districts, etc.), and permitted projects in the development pipeline. The final building blocks of the subregional forecast are assessing an area's proximity to existing job centers, proximity to transit and its historical development patterns. These factors help influence the probability and timing of an area's future growth.

Changing local plans

This forecast represents a continuing trend in the San Diego region to provide more housing and job opportunities in the existing urbanized areas of the region. Since 1999, the majority of the 19 jurisdictions have made or are in the process of making significant updates to their general plans. In 1999, SANDAG projected 21 percent of future housing growth would occur in the unincorporated areas of the San Diego County under the local general plans at the time. Today, SANDAG expects 18 percent of growth to occur in the unincorporated areas; much of that is focused in existing villages such as Lakeside, Valley Center, Ramona, and Alpine. As a result of these updates, the jurisdictions' general plans provide sufficient housing opportunities in the existing general plans.

The forecasted growth also reflects local general plans that have become more and more sustainable over time; this trend can be expected to continue. At the turn of the century, about 90 percent of vacant residential land in the cities was planned for single-family use. The Series 14 Forecast shows 77 percent of housing growth by 2050 being multifamily. Local and regional conservation programs also continue to protect more of San Diego's sensitive lands. Currently, about 50 percent of the region is preserved as open space, parks, or habitat, and SANDAG forecasts that an additional 20,000 acres will be preserved by 2050.[5]

General intensification of existing uses

As a result of changing local plans, SANDAG forecasts a general intensification of existing land uses within urban communities and along key transportation corridors. For example, National City's general plan update results in opportunities for over 10,000 additional multifamily units near the Blue Line Trolley and planned trolley connecting San Ysidro and Carmel Valley via the Interstate 805 corridor. San Marcos has adopted Specific Plans for the San Marcos Creek and University districts to create a comprehensive downtown core by adding mixed-use developments near California State San Marcos and the SPRINTER Rail Corridor. This information was provided by these local jurisdictions to SANDAG in the land use inputs that reflect the jurisdictions' general plans. Finally, over half of the growth in new housing will occur in the City of San Diego. Downtown will continue to thrive over the next few decades and the City of San Diego has updated community plans in North Park, San Ysidro, Encanto, Old Town, Midway/Pacific Highway, and Grantville that add thousands of housing unit capacities around transit stations in these communities. Additionally, the City of San Diego is upating community plans in Mission Valley and Kearny Mesa that will add housing units near transit and jobs.

In terms of jobs, SANDAG expects the existing employment centers to continue to thrive. The Sorrento Valley employment center, which includes University Towne Centre, as well as the area around the University of California at

San Diego, will remain the largest job center in the region, with almost 175,000 jobs expected in this area by 2050. SANDAG expects the Downtown San Diego employment center will add about 35,000 jobs by 2050. The Otay Mesa East and Otay Mesa Brownfield employment centers will become much larger job centers, together growing from about 15,000 jobs in 2016 to more than double that to 32,000 by 2050. The Kearny Mesa employment center will add about 20,000 jobs, making it almost as large as the Downtown employment center by 2050.

Figures J.4 through J.6 show the 2025, 2035, and 2050 housing and employment density, respectively.

Tables J.1 through J.3 present base year and forecasted population, employment, and housing data for the 19 local jurisdictions, respectively.

Collaboration with the San Diego County Water Authority

For decades, SANDAG and the San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority) have collaborated on long-range forecasting for the San Diego region. Under the terms of a 1992 Memorandum of Agreement between the agencies, the Water Authority uses SANDAG's official growth forecast, which is based on local land use jurisdictions' general plans and policies, to project water demands for the region. This coordination ensures linkage between local jurisdictions' general plans and the Water Authority's projected water demands. It also ensures the Water Authority identifies the appropriate resource mix to reliably meet future growth within the region.

Table J.1
Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast Population by Jurisdiction

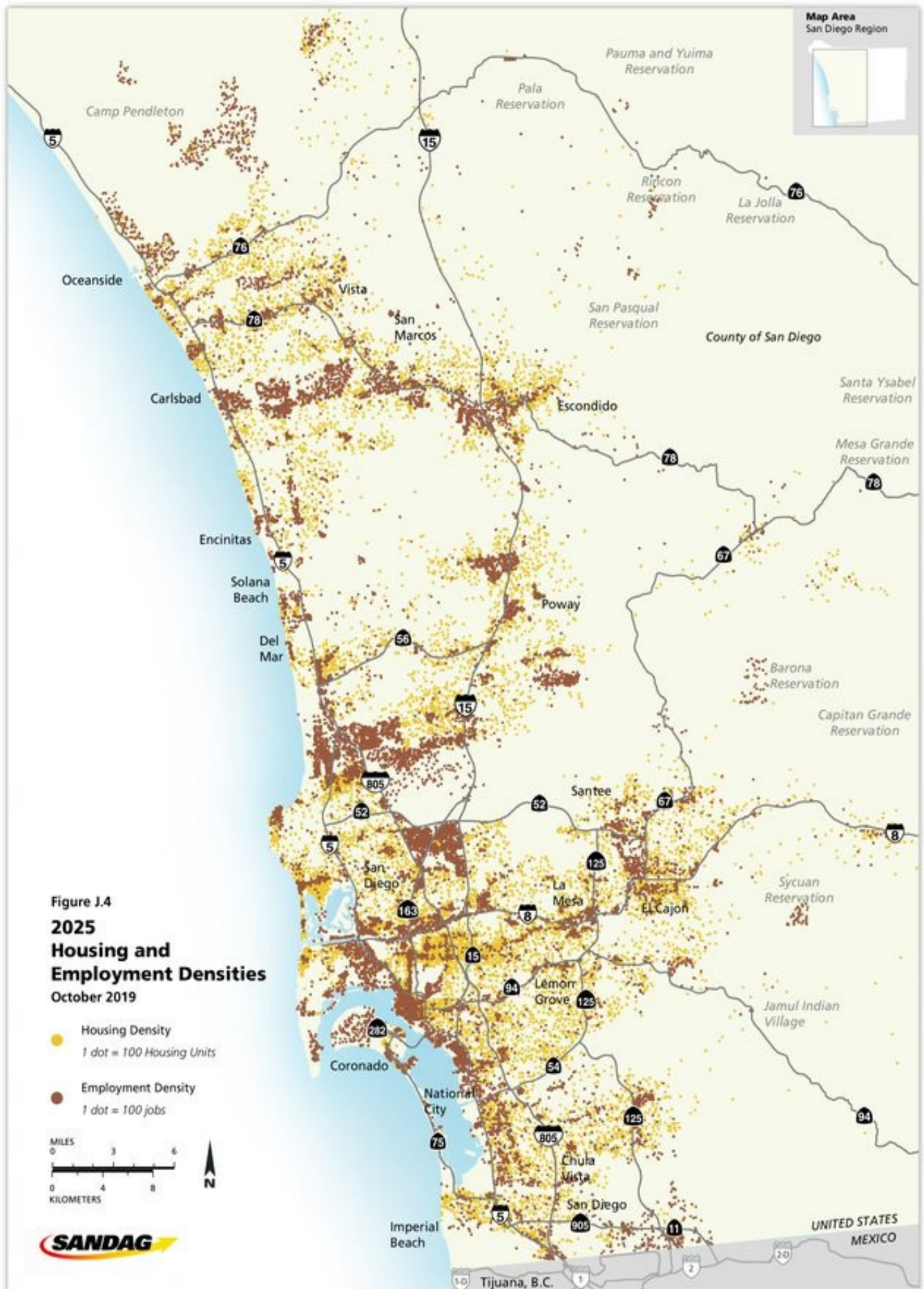| Jurisdiction	2016	2025	2035	2050	Change (2016-2050) Number	Change (2016-2050) Percent
Carlsbad	113,725	119,798	119,798	124,001	10,276	9%
Chula Vista	267,917	280,162	280,162	340,279	72,362	27%
Coronado	24,543	24,634	24,634	24,945	402	2%
Del Mar	4,297	4,320	4,320	4,415	118	3%
El Cajon	102,803	103,879	103,879	107,550	4,747	5%
Encinitas	62,288	62,963	62,963	65,357	3,069	5%
Escondido	151,492	166,653	166,860	182,154	30,662	20%
Imperial Beach	27,510	30,406	33,284	34,129	6,619	24%
La Mesa	60,286	61,402	71,068	75,519	15,233	25%
Lemon Grove	26,795	27,436	27,436	28,846	2,051	8%
National City	61,210	64,906	69,679	75,084	13,874	23%
Oceanside	176,461	183,541	183,541	187,728	11,267	6%
Poway	50,253	51,239	51,239	52,387	2,134	4%
San Diego	1,406,318	1,533,992	1,652,833	1,742,652	336,334	24%
San Marcos	94,042	102,461	103,820	122,173	28,131	30%
Santee	57,100	59,033	60,791	63,149	6,049	11%
Solana Beach	13,527	13,710	13,710	13,980	453	3%
Unincorporated	513,823	547,172	614,088	652,707	138,884	27%
Vista	101,797	107,366	109,525	114,090	12,293	12%

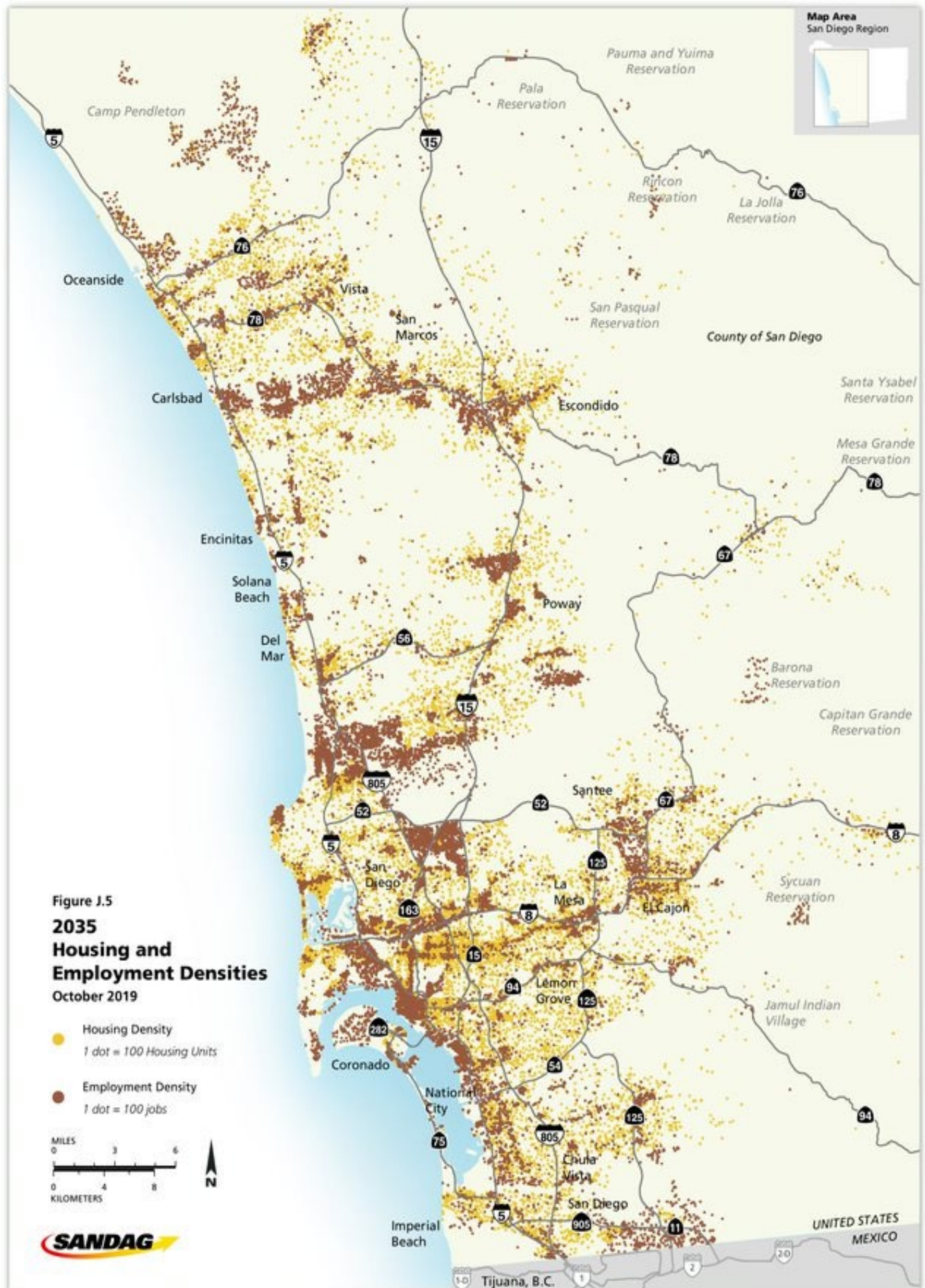# Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast Employment by Jurisdiction

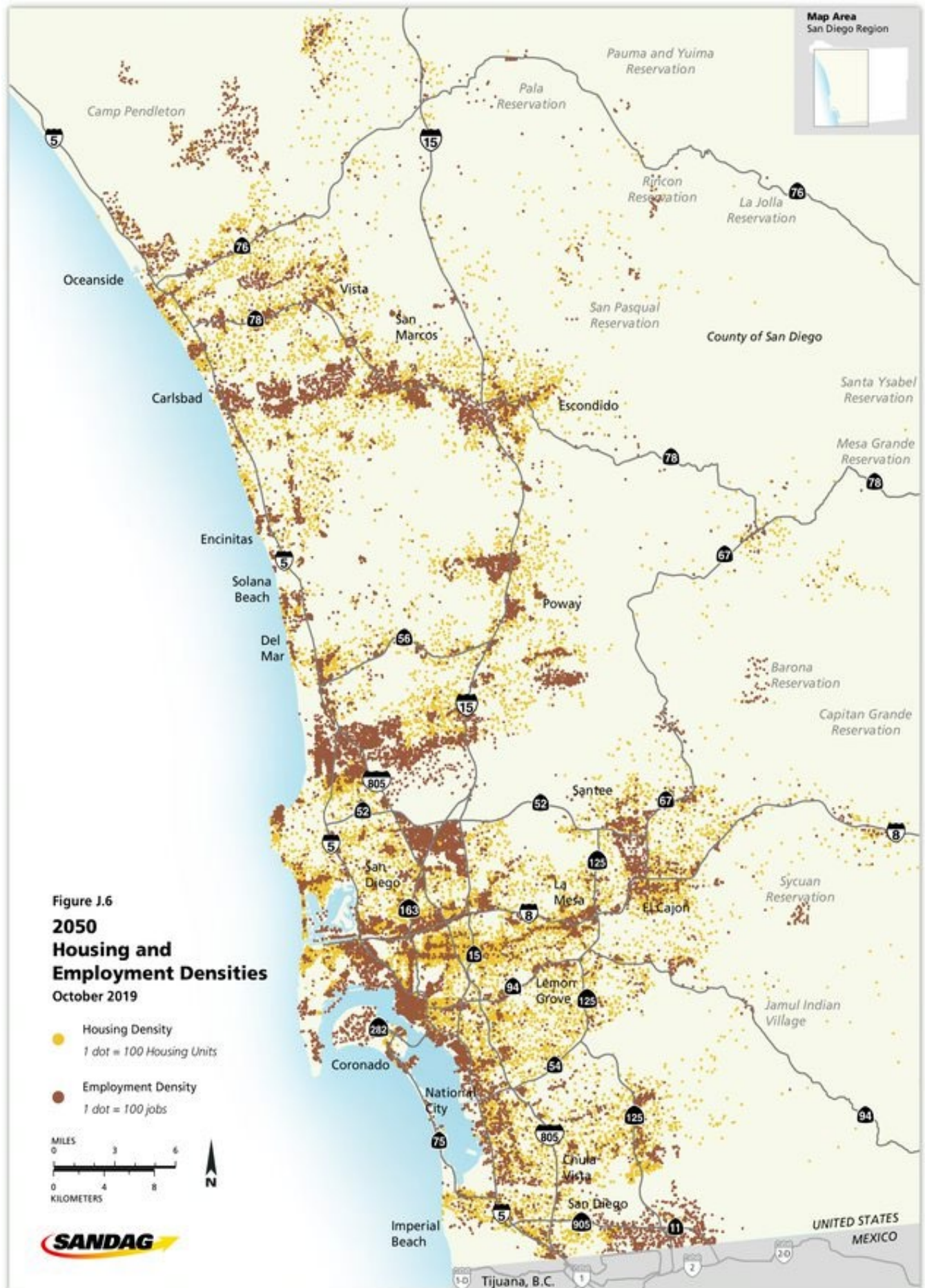| Jurisdiction	2016	2025	2035	2050	Change (2016-2050) Number	Change (2016-2050) Percent
Carlsbad	75,840	81,663	88,142	94,479	18,639	25%
Chula Vista	71,638	75,595	85,091	100,942	29,304	41%
Coronado	27,548	27,822	28,514	29,362	1,814	7%
Del Mar	4,473	4,751	5,051	5,284	811	18%
El Cajon	45,184	46,618	50,453	55,655	10,471	23%
Encinitas	27,810	28,237	29,276	30,494	2,684	10%
Escondido	53,839	61,179	64,068	67,736	13,897	26%
Imperial Beach	4,916	5,045	5,357	5,777	861	18%
La Mesa	29,596	30,519	33,969	38,460	8,864	30%
Lemon Grove	7,470	7,590	7,930	8,337	867	12%
National City	37,289	38,471	41,274	45,038	7,749	21%
Oceanside	44,898	46,379	52,286	56,767	11,869	26%
Poway	36,130	37,193	40,800	45,567	9437	26%
San Diego	915,295	957,496	1,036,088	1,125,661	210,366	23%
San Marcos	40,447	43,659	49,338	60,093	19,646	49%
Santee	18,437	19,558	21,907	24,914	6,477	35%
Solana Beach	9,120	9,230	9,593	9,970	850	9%
Unincorporated	153,357	161,427	177,953	200,810	47,453	31%
Vista	40,454	41,312	43,313	46,011	5,557	14%

Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast Total Housing Units by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	2016	2025	2035	2050	Change (2016-2050)	
					Number	Percent
Carlsbad	46,356	49,515	51,294	53,999	7,643	16%
Chula Vista	82,842	88,547	90,617	113,914	31,072	38%
Coronado	9,577	9,624	9,669	9,977	400	4%
Del Mar	2,611	2,619	2,651	2,739	128	5%
El Cajon	36,012	36,766	38,542	40,977	4,965	14%
Encinitas	26,053	26,761	27,450	29,147	3,094	12%
Escondido	48,583	55,037	56,538	63,314	14,731	30%
Imperial Beach	9,756	11,160	12,934	13,426	3,670	38%
La Mesa	25,986	27,022	33,794	36,615	10,629	41%
Lemon Grove	9,032	9,374	9,750	10,548	1,516	17%
National City	16,625	18,134	21,014	23,338	6,713	40%
Oceanside	66,200	69,725	72,246	74,913	8,713	13%
Poway	16,606	17,310	18,087	18,845	2,239	13%
San Diego	532,195	594,110	698,741	755,616	223,421	42%
San Marcos	30,559	33,960	34,183	42,093	11,534	38%
Santee	20,525	21,537	23,305	24,847	4,322	21%
Solana Beach	6,497	6,629	6,823	7,097	600	9%
Unincorporated	174,397	191,480	230,490	250,229	75,832	43%
Vista	32,233	34,892	37,784	40,337	8,104	25%

Figure J.4

**2025
Housing and
Employment Densities**
October 2019

Housing Density
1 dot = 100 Housing Units

Employment Density
1 dot = 100 jobs

Figure J.5

**2035
Housing and
Employment Densities**
October 2019

Housing Density
1 dot = 100 Housing Units

Employment Density
1 dot = 100 jobs

MILES
0   3   6

0   4   8
KILOMETERS

N

SANDAG

San Diego Forward: The 2019 Federal Regional Transportation Plan

Figure J.6

**2050
Housing and
Employment Densities**
October 2019

Housing Density
1 dot = 100 Housing Units

Employment Density
1 dot = 100 jobs

Endnotes

[1] SANDAG Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast, version id 17.

[2] State of California, Department of Finance, *E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2010-2019, with 2010 Census Benchmark*. Sacramento, California, May 2019.

[3] Hamilton BE, Martin JA, Osterman MJK, Driscoll AK, Rossen LM. Births: Provisional data for 2017. Vital Statistics Rapid Release; no 4. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. May 2018. Available from: https :// www .cdc. gov/nchs/data/vsrr/report004.pdf.

[4] SANDAG Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast, version id 17.

[5] SANDAG Series 14 Regional Growth Forecast, version id 17.