Ventura County Farmworker Housing Study & Action Plan

2026 HOME Conference: October 1, 2026







COORDINATED BY THE COUNTY OF VENTURA, AND ALL TEN CITIES; AND IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HOUSE FARM WORKERS!





Grant funded by:

SCAG
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

PRESENTED BY:

COUNTY of VENTURA
Resource Management Agency

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY
HOUSE FARM WORKERS!

Phase 4 and 5 Consultant team:

ARUP Estolano ADVISORS EPS

Introduction to the Study & Action Plan Effort

Purpose of Study

- Implements County's certified 2021-2029 Housing Element Program HE-E

- Initiated in 2021, in collaboration with all ten cities, and in partnership with local nonprofit *House Farm Workers!*



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CITY OF OXNARD CALIFORNIA

City of Thousand Oaks

What is the Study & Action Plan?

Research Baseline

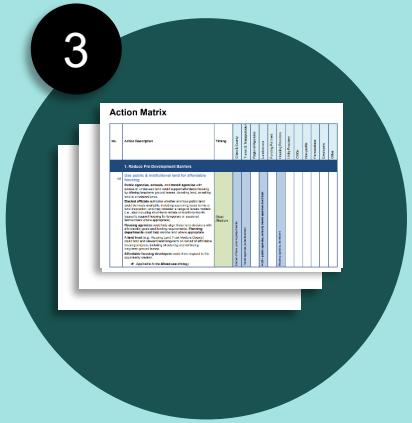


Survey Summary Report



Research Report

Action-oriented Roadmap



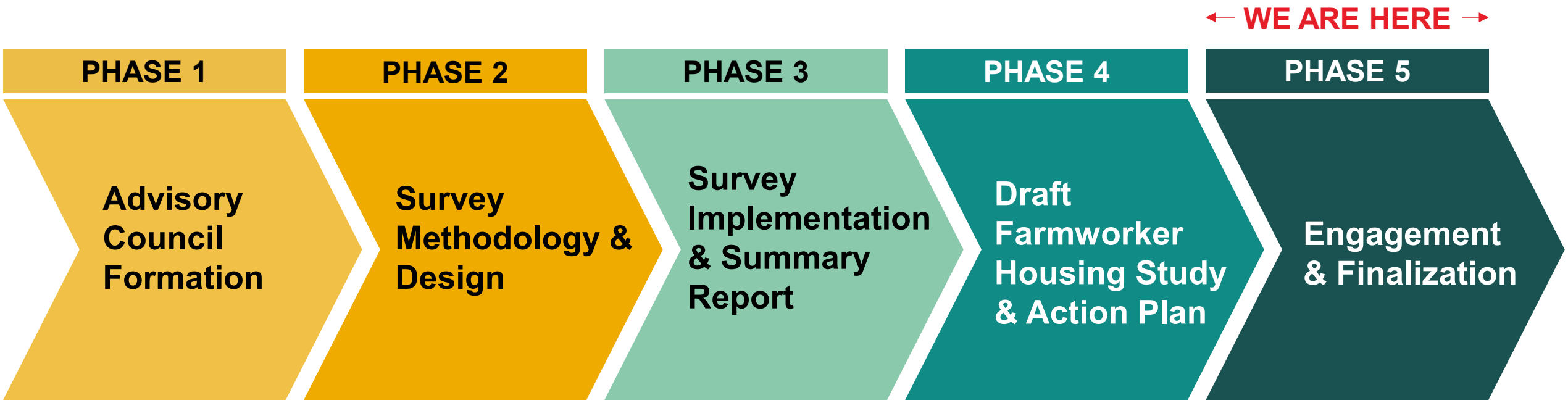
Action Plan

Strategies + Matrix of Potential Actions

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What is the Study & Action Plan?



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Phases 4 and 5

Project Breakdown



Project Coordination Committee
Jennifer Coile, Ruchita Kadakia, Dave Ward, Ellen Brokaw
Debbie Jackson & Gabrielle Vignone

client team

- Ventura County
- HFW!
- SCAG

project management & study direction



Co-Project Managers
Gabrielle Vignone & Ruchita Kadakia

guides, provides feedback

Advisory Council

consultant team

- Arup
- Estolano Advisors
- EPS

lead, data analysis, engineering insight, action planning, policy research

funding and financing

ownership models, engagement

bae

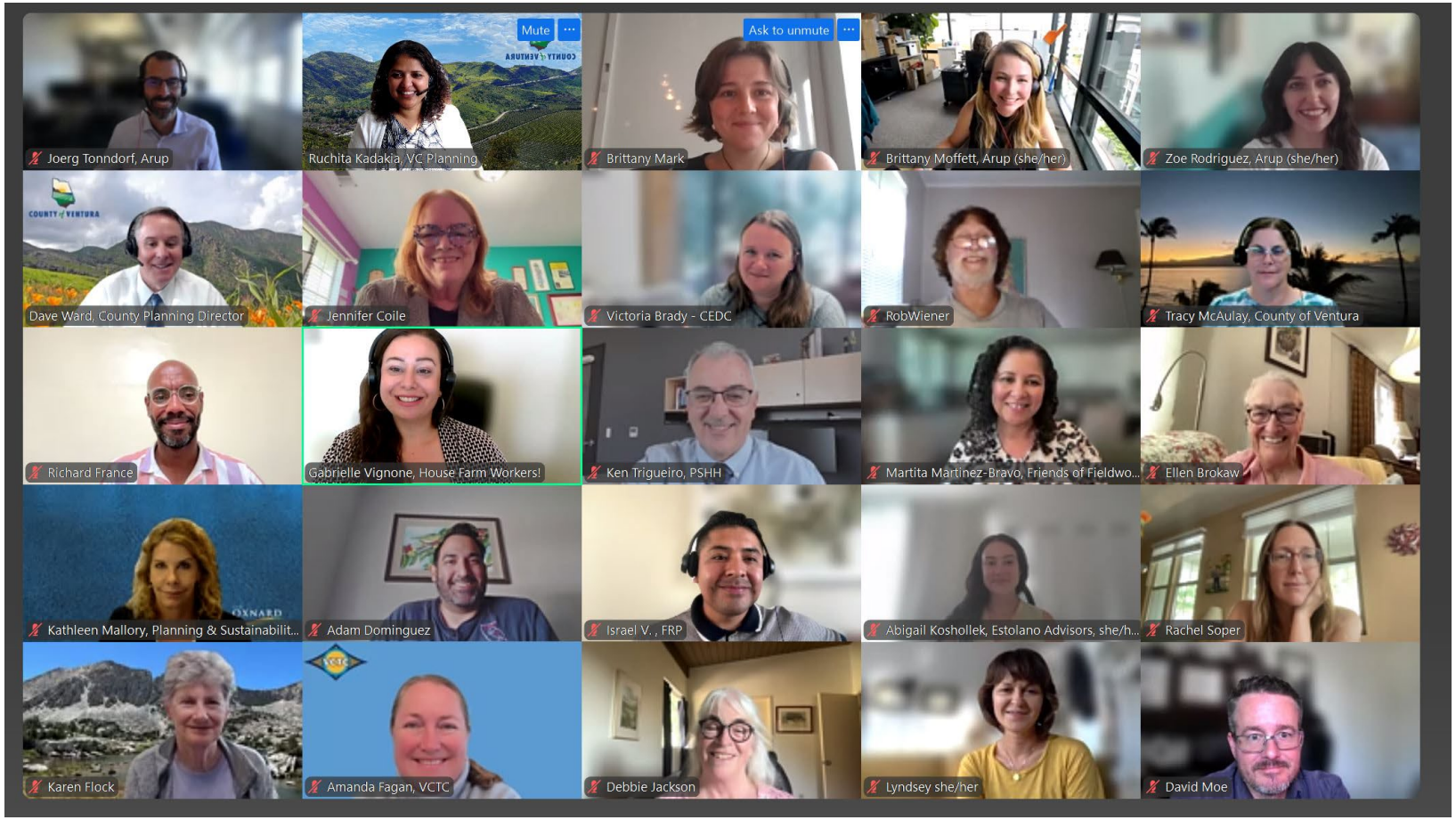
Consultant who supported on survey (Phases 2 & 3)

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Key Role of Advisory Council

The Advisory Council provided **guidance and oversight throughout the study**:

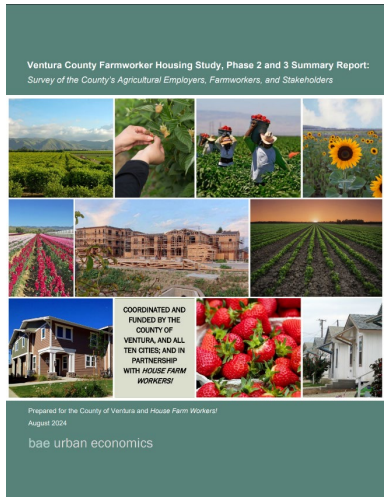
- supporting consultant selection
- shaping survey design and methodology
- reviewing key study components and draft actions

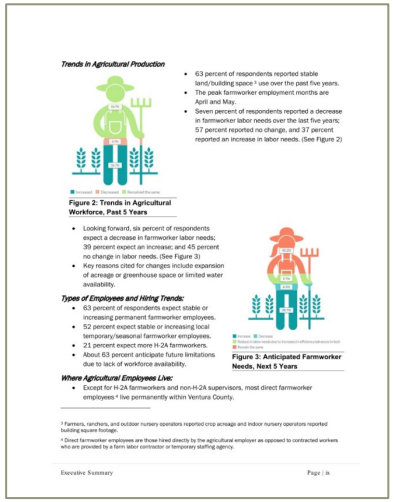


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The Products

1 The Survey Summary Report





Survey Summary Report

bae

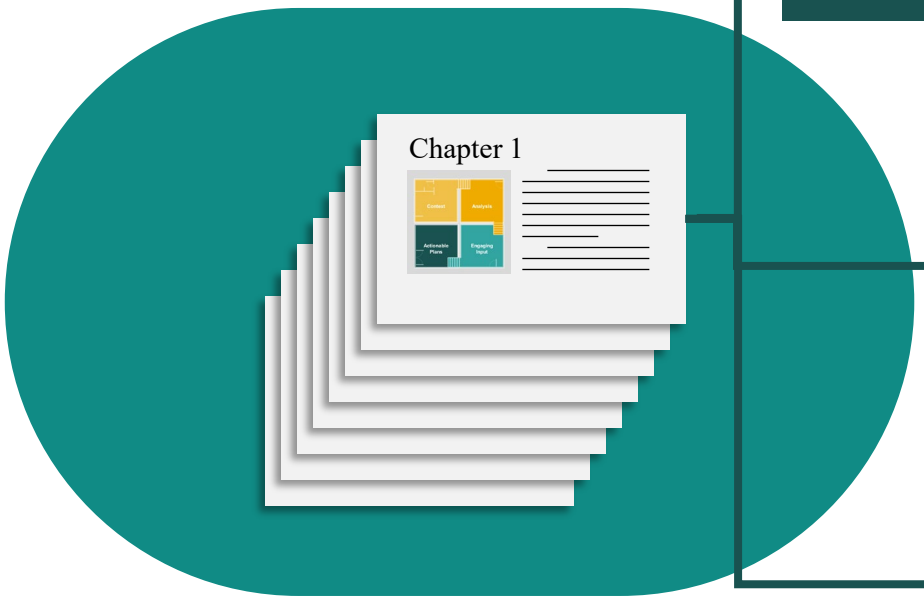


- Provides insights into housing needs for local farmworkers
- Presented to Board of Supervisors, September 2024

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2 The Research Report (Proposed)

Supporting research and analysis



Context and Research

What is

Analysis & Investigation of Potential

What could be

Identifying Potential Solutions

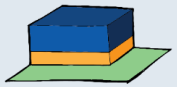
What would be strategic

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3 Action Plan (Proposed)

Recipes

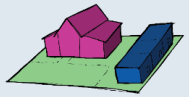
01 Mixed-use



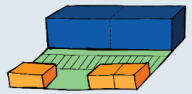
04 Accelerating ADUs



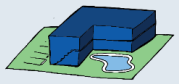
02 Residential on Faith Land



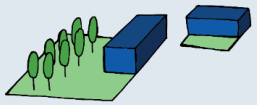
05 Upzoning



03 Hotel Motel Conversion



06 Employer-Provided



Six (6) potential housing **Strategies** illustrate how it could come together, what's new and novel that could be impactful locally

Ingredients

Matrix of Potential Actions

No.	Action Description	Timing	Cities & County	Transit & Transportation	Regional Agencies	Landowners	Funding Partners	Housing Providers	Utility Providers	CBOs	Non-profits	Farmworkers	Employers	Other
	1. Reduce Pre-Development Barriers													
1A	**Use public & institutional land for affordable housing** **Public agencies, schools,** and **transit agencies** with excess or underused land could support affordable housing by offering long-term ground leases, donating land, or selling land at a reduced price. **Elected officials** authorize whether and how public land could be made available, including approving lease terms or land disposition, and may consider a range of tenure models (i.e., also including short-term rentals or month-to-month leases to support housing for temporary or seasonal farmworkers where appropriate) **Housing agencies** could help align these land decisions with affordability goals and funding requirements. **Planning departments** could help rezone land where appropriate. A **land trust** (e.g., Housing Land Trust Ventura County) could hold and steward land long-term on behalf of affordable housing projects, including structuring and enforcing long-term ground leases. **Affordable housing developers** could then respond to the opportunity created. ➔ *Applicable to the **Mixed-use** strategy*	Short /Medium	Elected officials, planning departments,	Transit agencies (as landowners)		▶ LO – public agencies, schools, transit agencies; land trust		Housing agencies, developers						

Matrix of Potential Actions enables key actors to quickly scan and identify where they could take action to advance housing development at both the project level and the broader system level

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Action Plan:
Preview of Strategies

Structure of each potential strategy

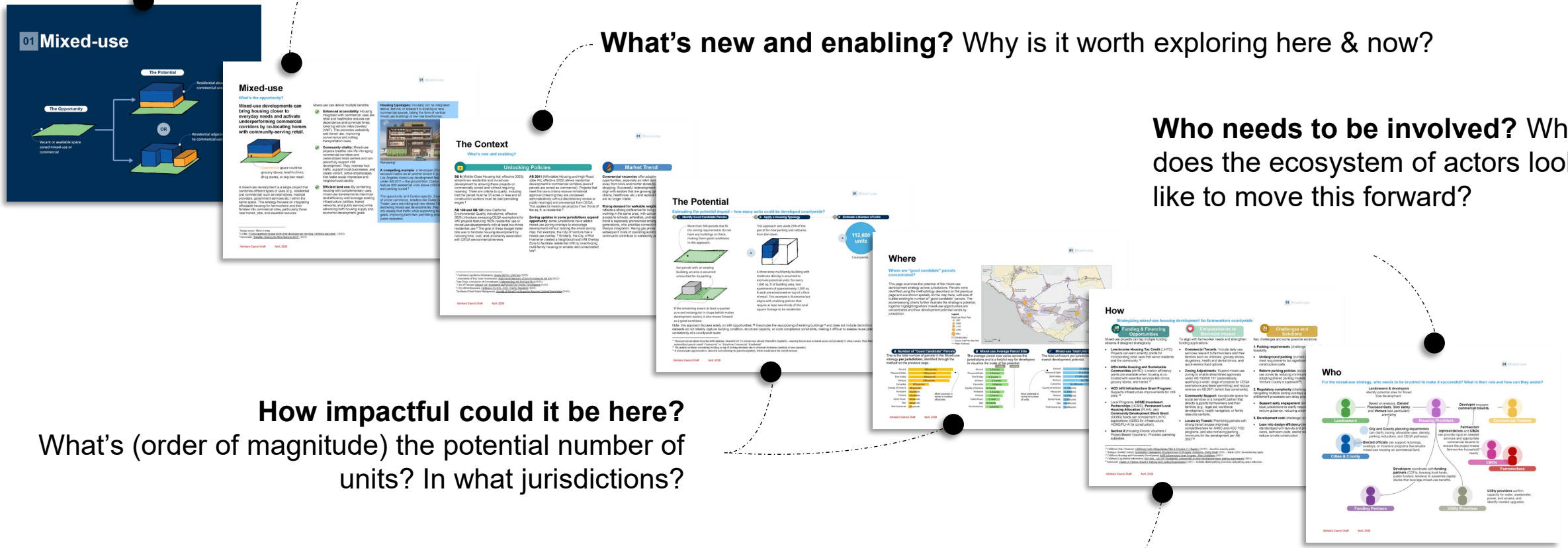
What is the strategy?

What's new and enabling? Why is it worth exploring here & now?

Who needs to be involved? What does the ecosystem of actors look like to move this forward?

How impactful could it be here?
What's (order of magnitude) the potential number of units? In what jurisdictions?

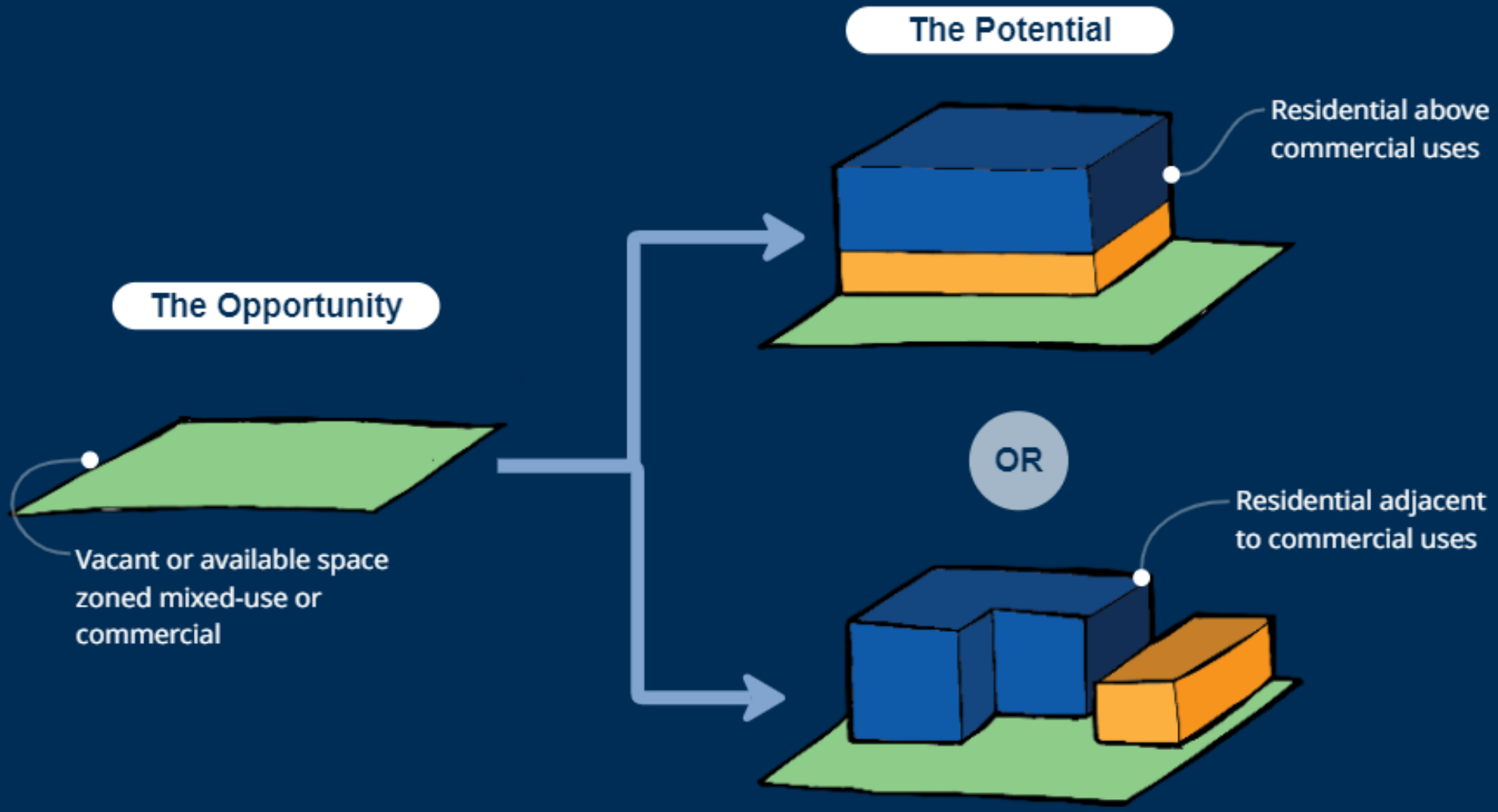
What would be strategic?
To overcome barriers or increase benefits



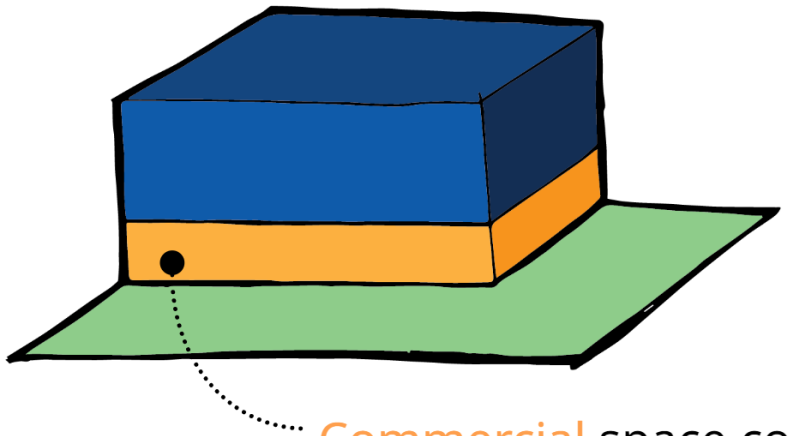
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01 Mixed-use


The Potential
Residential above commercial uses
The Opportunity
OR
Residential adjacent to commercial uses
Vacant or available space zoned mixed-use or commercial

Mixed-Use



Commercial space could be grocery stores, health clinics, drug stores, or big box retail.

What it is:

- Transform underperforming strip malls/shopping centers into mixed-use developments

What's new / why now:

- Could update zoning to allow more residential/mixed-use in service-connected places
- Builds on a moment where many retail sites are ripe for right-sizing and reinvestment

Why it's impactful:

- Adds housing and preserves everyday goods/services by engaging existing ("legacy") tenants early
- Turns already-developed sites into housing without needing brand-new land supply

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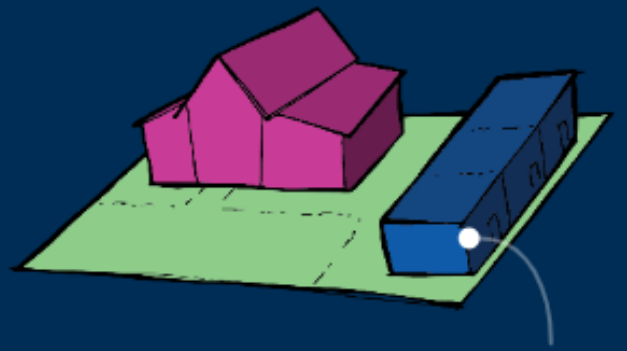
02 Residential on Faith Land

The Opportunity



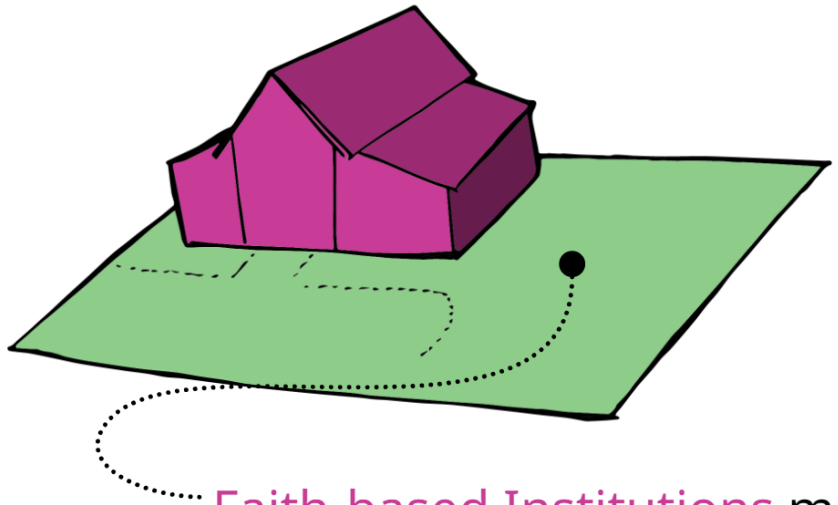
Faith-based organization with surplus land

The Potential



Low-rise multifamily, townhomes, or tiny homes as to not overwhelm the scale of any pre-existing institutional buildings

Residential on Faith Land



Faith-based Institutions may have spare space on their lots or own vacant land.

What it is:

- Partner and activate underused land held by faith-based institutions for affordable housing
- Pairs mission-aligned land with development partnerships (e.g., ground-lease / turnkey approaches)

What's new / why now:

- New supportive legislation
- Developers could offer faith-based–specific development packages to simplify and reduce upfront legal/process burden

Why it's impactful:

- Directly addresses one of the hardest constraints: access to land that could be made available for affordable housing

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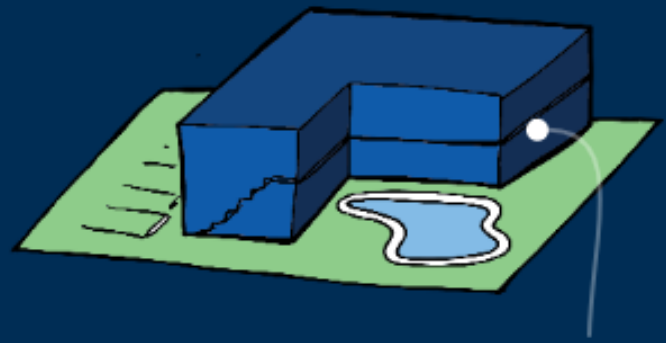
03 Hotel Motel Conversion

The Opportunity



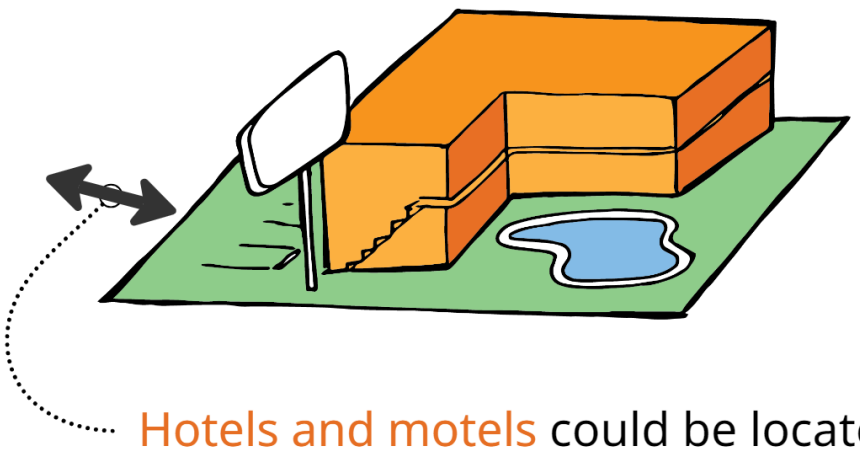
Underutilized hotel or motel

The Potential



Converted to affordable rental units

Hotel / Motel Conversion



Hotels and motels could be located close to various services such as public transport, parks, schools, or shops.

What it is:

- Convert underused hotels/motels into residential units

What's new / why now:

- Target extended-stay hotels where possible for more cost-effective conversion
- Front-load "holistic assessments" (e.g., infrastructure capacity) and leverage energy-efficiency incentives to offset upgrades

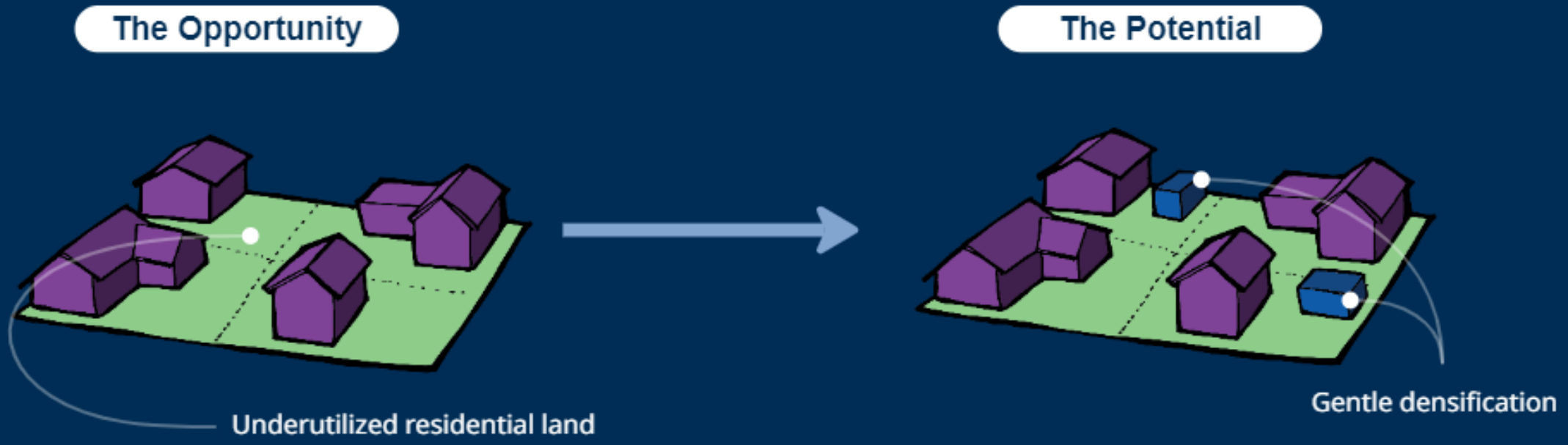
Why it's impactful:

- Potentially faster/cheaper than ground-up
- Could help revitalize neighborhood

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04 Accelerating ADUs

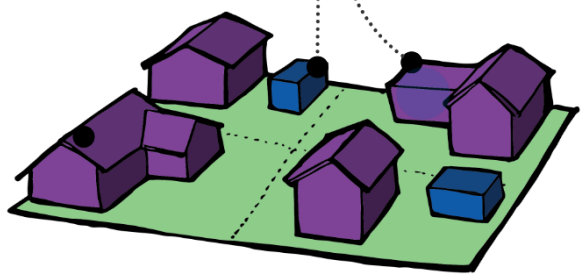
ADUs = Accessory Dwelling Unit



Accelerating ADUs

ADUs could look like **standalone units** (detached or attached).

JADUs (Junior Accessory dwelling Units) refer to **converted spaces** (such as a garage, basement, attic, or spare bedroom).



Additions could be above-garage or rear extensions

There are also **Multifamily ADUs** (up to 8 detached units allowed on qualifying parcels).

What it is:

- "Home-grown," small-scale way to add housing (vs big, concentrated projects)
- Allows for more privacy

What's new / why now:

- Recent state policy shifts making ADUs faster and more feasible
- Opportunity to build on local momentum with standardized plans and growing demand with "accelerator" help desks

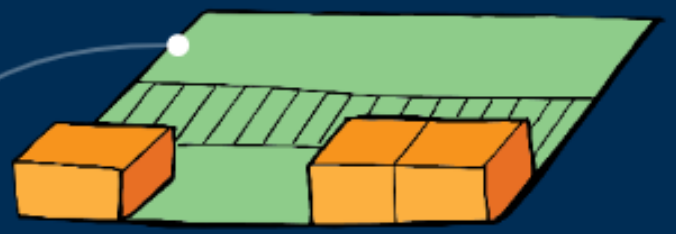
Why it's impactful:

- Location near community resources and services
- Key: pairing with incentives like forgivable loans tied to renting to farmworkers.
- Addresses comment received from farmworkers for more privacy/single-family like homes

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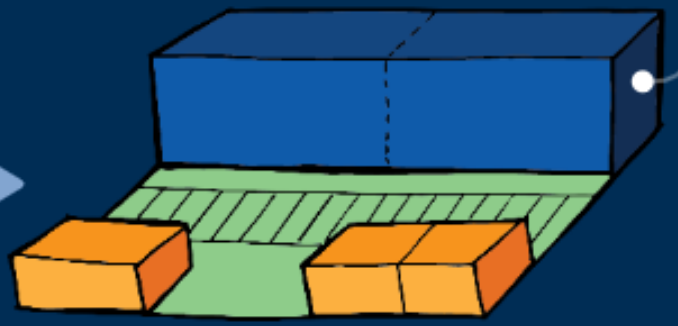
05 Upzoning

The Opportunity



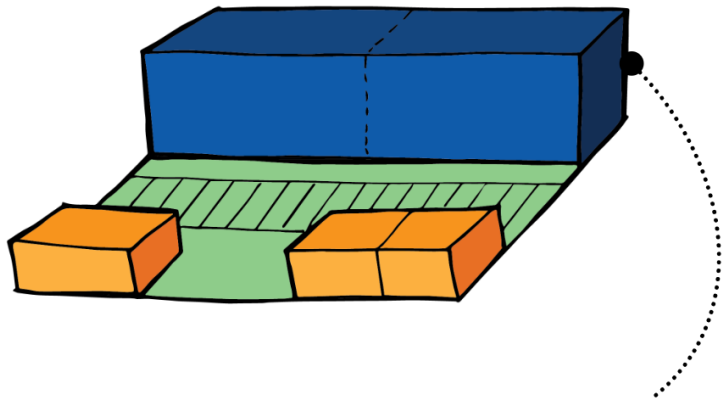
Available space in commercial or transit corridors

The Potential



Local upzoning initiatives could increase allowable density in exchange for affordable housing

Upzoning



More intensive development could mean taller buildings, additional units, or mixed-use configurations.

What it is:

- Allowing more housing units on parcels that are currently limited by zoning in exchange for affordable housing set aside

What's new / why now:

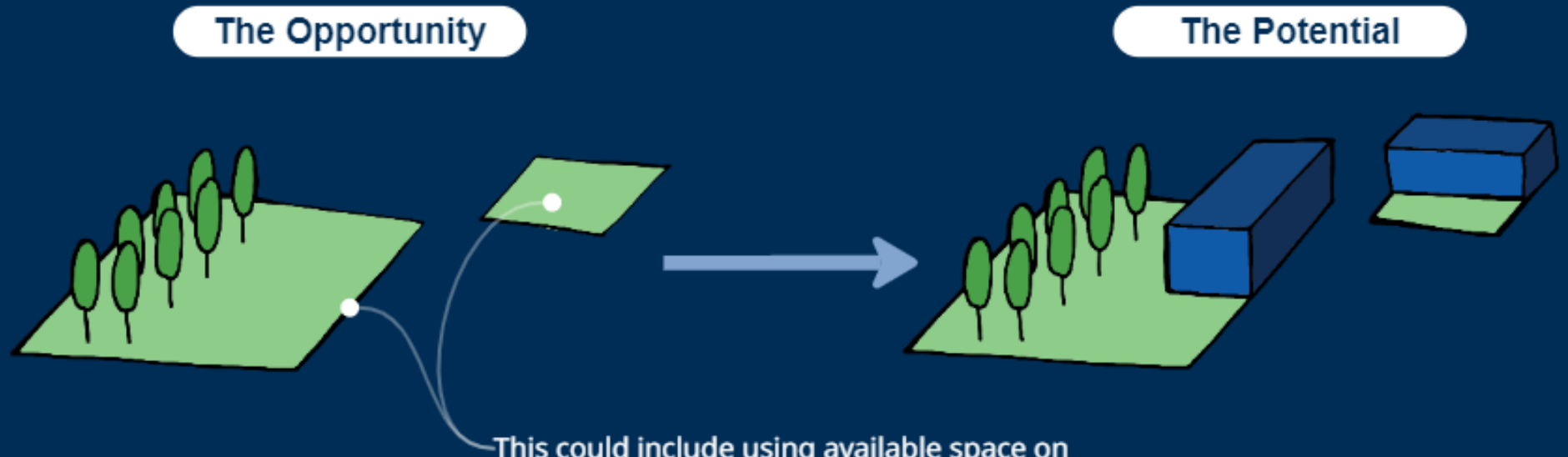
- Opportunity to move beyond compliance-driven rezoning toward intentional upzoning in high-impact locations (near jobs, transit, services, agricultural employment centers)

Why it's impactful:

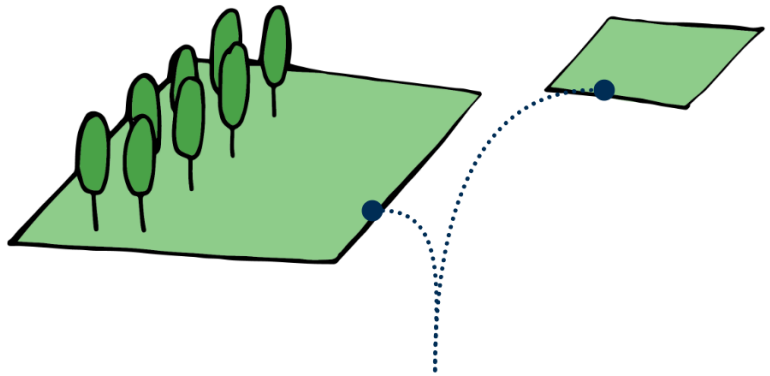
- Could create long-term housing capacity by unlocking sites that are already developed and serviced

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06 Employer-Provided



Employer-Provided



This could include using available space on farmland, or employers partnering together to develop housing in a nearby community

What it is:

- Focuses on reducing employer hesitancy driven by unfamiliar regulatory requirements and long-term ownership/operations concerns

What's new / why now:

- Move from "interest" to "implementation" via dedicated technical assistance: handbook, case studies, standardized guidance on permitting/financing/operations
- Add a farmworker housing "ombudsman / single point of contact" to coordinate across departments and connect employers with experienced partners

Why it's impactful:

- De-risks the pathway so employers don't have to become housing experts to contribute meaningfully

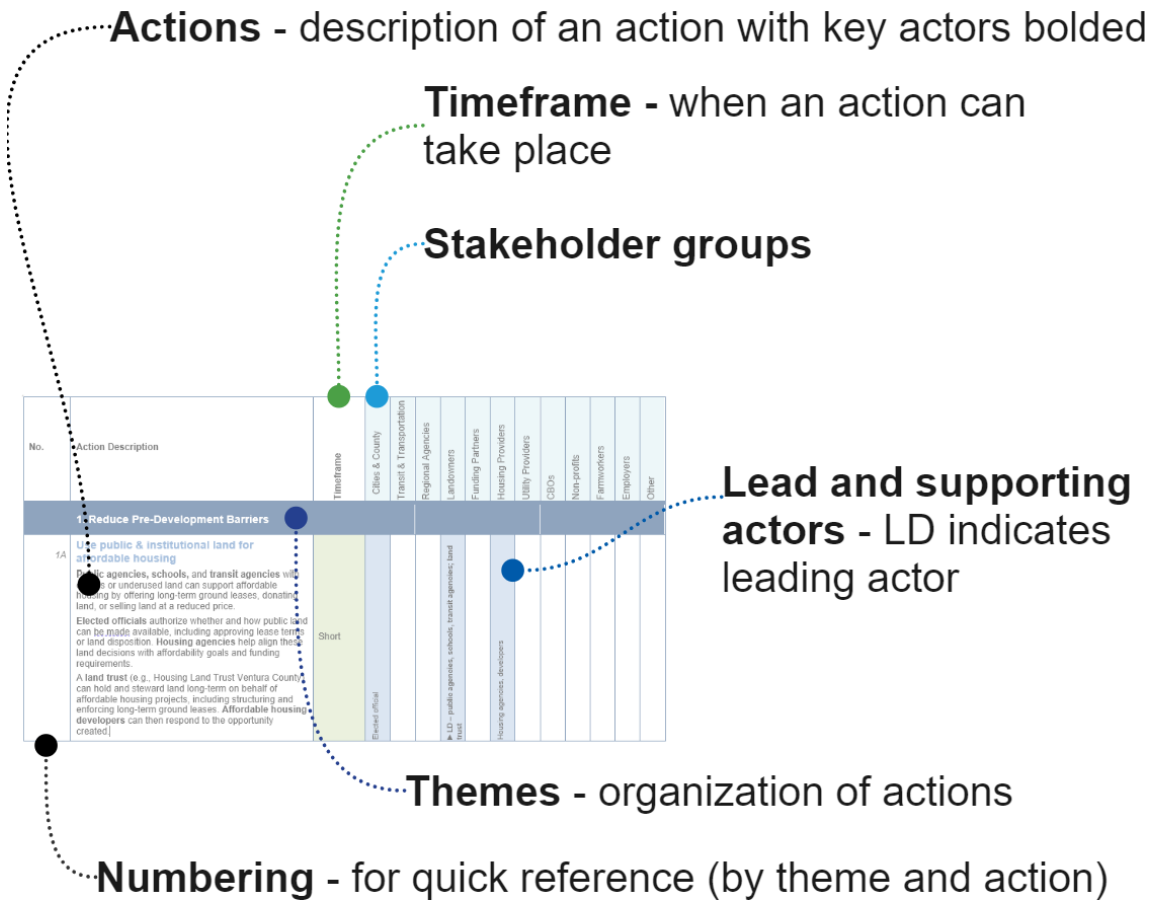
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Action Plan:

Matrix of Potential Actions

Matrix of Potential Actions

How to read



Implementation timeframes used in the matrix:

- **Short-term (now–2029)**: Actions that could be implemented by the time the current housing element (6th RHNA) ends;
- **Medium-term (2029–2037)**: Actions that could be completed in alignment with, and could be considered for inclusion in the future housing element (i.e., the 7th RHNA cycle); and
- **Long-term (2037 and beyond)**: Actions that focus on structural changes or actions that would need to be ongoing efforts to be successful.

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Matrix of Potential Actions

Actors

Actor Category	Who This Group Includes
Cities & County	• Elected officials (e.g., city councils, Board of Supervisors) • Planning departments • Economic development departments • Building and safety departments • Public health departments and agencies • Public works / engineering departments • Farmworker Resource Program • Housing agencies / community development
Transit & Transportation	• Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) • California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Regional Agencies	• Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) • California Coastal Commission • Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) • Air Pollution Control District (APCD)
Landowners	• Growers (also listed in employers) • Faith-based organizations • Schools/colleges and school districts • Land trusts • Public agencies (also included in Cities & County and Transit & Transportation) • Commercial (retail property owners and hotel/motel property owners)

Actor Category	Who This Group Includes
Funding Partners	• Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) • Housing trust funds • Private lenders • Philanthropy / foundations • Cities & County (also its own category)
Housing Providers	• Housing authorities • Property management (companies or organizations) • Grower-linked developers • Non-profit developers • For-profit developers
Utility Providers	• Special districts (e.g., flood control) • Dry utilities (electric, gas, broadband) • Water providers • Sanitation / wastewater providers
CBOs* (examples include, but are not limited to those included in this list)	• Neighborhood associations • House Farm Workers! • CAUSE (Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy) • Poder Popular • Friends of Fieldworkers • UnDocUFund805 • Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project • Mariposa • Líderes Campesinas • Local housing advocates
Non-profits	• Service providers (e.g., clinics, legal aid organizations, tenant rights organizations)
Farmworkers	• Individual farmworkers • Unions (e.g., United Farm Workers, UFW)
Employers	• Growers • Grower associations • Farm labor contractors • Farm Bureau of Ventura County • Processing facilities / processors
Other	• e.g., “legacy” long-standing retail tenants

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Matrix of Potential Actions

22 Actions Organized in Four Themes

1 Actions that reduce pre-development barriers

Improve broader policy, funding, and coordination for farmworker housing projects.

2 Actions that reduce development barriers

Reduce project-level barriers; make viable projects easier to finance, permit, and develop

3 Actions that reduce construction & operational costs

Increase capacity of agricultural employers to participate in housing solutions through education and engagement

4 Actions that enhance outcomes & long-term stability for farmworkers

Maintain momentum with stakeholders after approval of proposed Action Plan by retaining a collaborative, countywide effort

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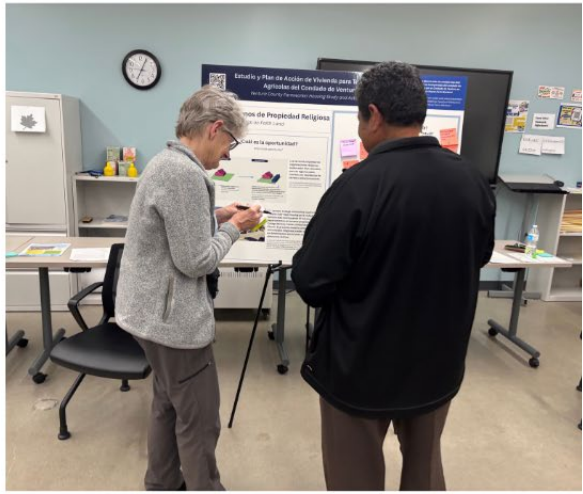
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Outreach & Engagement

Robust Community Engagement
(Research Report, Appendix E)

- Advisory Council
- Jurisdictions and Agencies
- Priority Populations (e.g., Youth, Farmworkers)
- Public Review Draft: May 20, 2026 to June 22, 2026
- Countywide Engagement
  - Stakeholders, agricultural community, developers, etc.
  - Feedback Sessions on Public Review Draft (May and June 2026)





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House Farm Workers!

Community Engagement

Input provided by:

- More than 200 farmworkers
- 37 property managers
- 20 housing industry professionals
- 56 youth (ages 13-18 years)
- 2 housing finance experts
- 1 religious leader
- 5 agricultural employers
- 3 agricultural worker housing providers
- 8 farmworker advocates
- 104 community members, not classified by employment
- Representatives from all ten Ventura County's cities and the County government
- Numerous public comments received

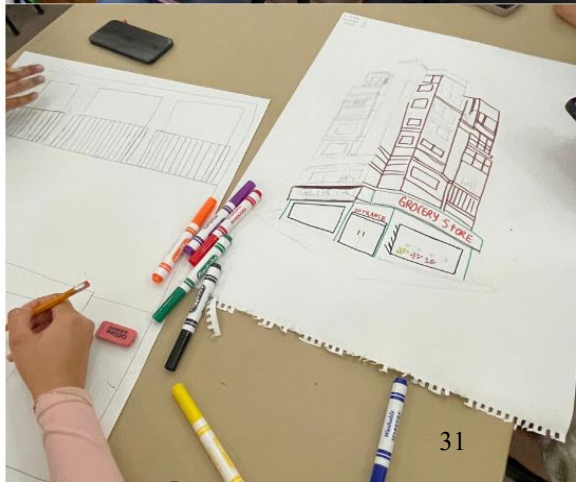
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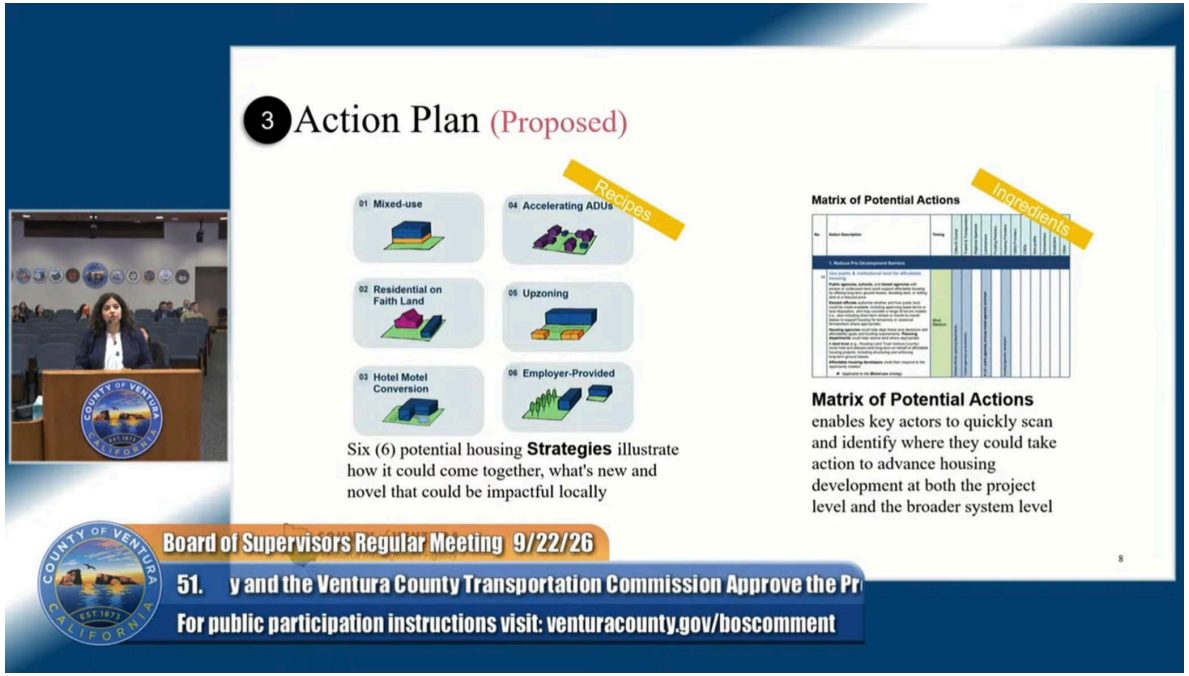






Approval & Implementation

- Ventura County Board of Supervisors Hearing – September 22, 2026
- **2026 Ventura County HOME Conference – October 1, 2026**
- Spanish movie premiere for Ventura County farmworkers – October 15, 2026
- Presentation of Study and Action Plan by all cities/agencies to their City Council/Commissions
- Engagement by *House Farm Workers!* with all stakeholders



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Questions

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Dave Ward
Planning Director
Resource Management Agency

Ruchita Kadakia
Planning Manager, Housing and State Mandates
Resource Management Agency

Debbie Brokaw Jackson
Project Consultant & Facilitator
Brokaw Jackson Consulting

Gabrielle Vignone
Executive Director
House Farm Workers!

Project Website: *https://rma.venturacounty.gov/divisions/planning/ventura-county-farmworker-housing-study/*