

CITY OF SACRAMENTO – Housing Element Update

Stakeholder’s Meeting

June 5, 2007

The following is a summary of responses from the small group discussion exercise conducted during the Stakeholder’s Meeting on June 5, 2007. Questions and answers are provided below:

Q1. How does the City of Sacramento compare to other cities in providing accessibility/visitability of its housing and residential neighborhoods?

Streets and Sidewalks

- Need wider sidewalks, curb cuts, friendly streets to pedestrians so they can access
- Need pedestrian friendly streets – integrated safe – wider sidewalks, curb cuts
- Need developments that are accessible from property to public areas
- Utility poles impede accessibility depending on where they are placed – underground utilities
- City has installed curb cuts throughout the City which is good

Land Uses and Density

- Provide and encourage mixed use neighborhoods (2)¹
- Emergency shelters – need to be accessible also/ understand that this is costly
- Medical resources concentrated so that the need/resource matches, currently there is a mismatch
- Travel to services is a problem in the community
- Transit Oriented Developments are part of the solution
- Low density is not an answer

Design and Development

- New housing offer accessibility & visitability
- Set backs in older buildings and sections of the City is not available to provide ramps and renovate to ADA compliant
- Older historic buildings = difficult to make ADA compliant (2)
- Urban design consideration calling for raised structures a challenge
- Density may work against accessibility – elevators or ramps required

Regulation and Implementation

- Start of doing a good job = relax zoning requirements, understanding infill
- Infill specialist @ the City = good, responsive, and knowledgeable
- Improvements in understanding and make entitlements win and building code.
- ADA + accessibility = not a part of Planning handled by bldg dept
- Separation from services
- Offset costs through new program
- multi-story bldg renovations
- Design neighborhoods to and from
- Cost and subsidies needed

¹ Number in () indicate number of times comment mentioned by the three groups.

- Must work on solution

Questions posed:

- How does high density address Accessibility & Visitability?
- Accessibility for neighborhoods as a whole?
- How will this be addressed?

Q2 How can the City of Sacramento better implement its housing infill programs?

Financial/ Cost Issues

- High costs of infrastructure – where can subsidy come from?
- City permit process is quick/transparent and being used as an example
- Complete citywide CEQA – costly but beneficial?
- Affordable Housing is expensive in infill areas
- Housing Element should focus on existing need as well as new development
- Focus on rehab Affordable Housing projects
- Implement housing trust fund
- Financial support for Affordable Housing (2)
- Housing Trust Fund

Needs

- Have shovel ready sites = sites with infrastructure in place or readily available (3)
- Have off-site infrastructure improvements/repairs, curbs & lights where the City wants to densify (2)
- One of the biggest issues with infill sites is storm drainage, need assistance with this issue
- Concern/interest by agency
- Pre-development acquisition and off-site infrastructure (storm drains) (3)
- Difficult to build
- Density does not ensure it is affordable
- Single lots – inventory needed
- Under-utilized properties

Regulation and Implementation

- Lack comprehensive infill policy
- Infill not clearly defined
- A comprehensive affordability policy might answer these + other questions. Must address economics for small projects
- Carrots for infill
- City infill specialist is good
- Fee reductions + waivers (by right/no fights)
- Flexibility in zoning codes to respond to market
- Fees are far below other areas in region

General Comments

- Central city and infill areas
- Greenfield is easier for Affordable Housing; infill focus on rehabilitation
- In denial/outreach discussions to public
- Different culture/needs/desires
- Current centers may need to adapt

- Housing Element should address segregation through mixed income policies and consideration of race and opportunity.
- Targeting specific population
- Take market rate subsidies from redevelopment (take from 80% TIF)
- Funding ongoing operations of ELA a challenge
- Redevelop low-density housing authority sites
- Sell-off land
- Rebuild upward
- Rebuild mixed-use
- Allow Housing Authority to become developer

Q3 The General Plan will emphasize higher density housing on infill sites and mixed-use developments:

- What is the feasibility of these development types?**
- How can the City assist the development community and affordable housing providers in making these development types feasible?**

General comments

- Currently marginally feasible, not really feasible – cost a lot (2)
- Rental units = more financial funds available to help private/public = high density
- For sale totally different cost structure, value & buyers, not feasible
- Providing parking is very expensive
- Developing new housing = expensive; Rehab existing inventory for middle class is less expensive than building new housing; need to be careful of gentrification. Can't develop new housing in mid City but can in periphery
- Infill development can provide rentals = many programs for people w/lower income. 15 percent income group difficult to build for need venture partnership w/affordable housing developers
- Density development – more difficult (Nimbism); greater opposition due to locating in an existing neighborhood
- Look to a difference mix/flex space
- Horizontal mixed-use works best

Higher Density/ Close to Transit helps with infill development

- Density, design, 1st time homebuyer assistance
- Attached/detached townhomes; non-traditional single family homes
- Condos/attached homes – no property manager - how to address problems
- Yes TOD would make it work better, all things being equal (2)
- TODs create value/commitment to an area = walking distance to transit, creates value increase (2)
- Transit allows you to spend more on housing = location is an important aspect in desirable area and has shopping/schools
- Lower construction cost (fewer parking spaces needed within TOD)

Subsidies needed

- Will need to subsidize to make it work, otherwise difficult
- Leverage local, state and federal funds (2)
- Challenge to finance

- Different lending criteria for residential/commercial – city could educate lenders

Q4 Feasibility of providing housing for the middle class:

- c. **Can the development community produce housing affordable to the middle class in Sacramento? What will housing developers need to do so?**
- d. **In specific, ownership housing for households earning between 80 percent and 120 percent of median income.**

General Comments

- Capitol Village - \$300 – 400,000 attached homes in suburban
- Dense variety of type of homes in a neighborhood
- Developer fee for over mod-middle class
- Above 80% begin program deferred second
- Can obtain loans to develop rental housing in mid city
- Less cost in Greenfield areas; small lot Single Family or townhouse
- Rentals
- Existing housing stock
- Outlying areas is where new housing can be developed
- Smaller lots

Q5 What can the City do to help the housing market produce ownership housing affordable to moderate and middle income buyers (generally those earning between 80 percent and 150 percent of median income)?

- This is the income group that currently are the buyers of homes, the City just needs to produce more products for this income group
- Down payment assistance for moderate income households

Q6 What are the best ways to provide housing for extremely low-income households (less than 30 percent of median income) without diverting resources from housing for very low and low income households?

General comments

- ELI – should not compete with LI/VLI – create special fund for ELI (100% HTF (one suggestion))
- Expand City inclusionary policy to include ELI in new growth areas
- Bring back “rooming house” smaller – easier to manage than if mixed income – no operating subsidy - SRO
- Need Subsidies and funding for operating and maintenance costs
- Density is an important element
- Provide high density Infill developments
- What will market demand be? (probably not Sun City model)
- No federal commitment. Resources available = where you put it. Place housing for ELI residents near the jobs that pay these wages

Promote community stability

- Need schools; only 1 school in central city, E Sac = 2 schools; Arden Arcade - closing schools

- No schools for families = can't build communities
- Housing for different stages in life. 3-story rentals for Sacramento seniors
- Central City = attract all except young families because there are no schools
- No answer = ELI can include those in poverty and young people starting out
- This segment of the population does not have a loud voice

Q7 What should the City do to plan and provide housing for the upcoming generation of seniors?

- Provide affordable, accessible, visitable housing developments for ALL income levels (2)
- Pedestrian friendly, close to services
- accessibility = multi-generational
- help age in place
- Specialized product
- Campus Commons/Del Web/marketing central City – elevator/lofts
- Seniors – fastest growing part of population
- Need to rethink boomers as seniors
- Boomers may not retire

Q8 Are there other high priority needs for which the City should plan that haven't been mentioned?

ELI

- New orders developed should include mixed incomes
- Expand inclusionary policy to include ELI in new growth areas

SROs

- Encourage development of rooming housing – much smaller; easier to manage
- Get land in smaller segments if mixed no operating subsidy
- Special Needs Housing – diverse com housing and supportive services
- Zoning issue

Schools in Housing Element = adequacy issue – Public Facilities & Service = school capacity issues.

Other High Priorities

- Urban/central City schools - diversity

Other Comments:

- Include handicap accessibility in planning not just in building
- Need comprehensive infill policies
- Reach out to lenders to educate about lending for mixed-use projects
- Special ELI funding – difficult need supportive services as well
- Expand First Time Homebuyers Program for middle-income residents – townhomes/options in infill communities
- ELI – rooming houses
- Housing Element should address existing needs and future needs

- May need experts related to various themes provide input on proposed theme
- ELI – do not use default (50%) but more precise measurement; need baseline data to determine actual need

Other Themes:

- Dispersal – no over concentration – mixing and integration of housing
- Social aspects – safety, health, education for healthy community, community stability (sustainability)
- Diversity/racial integration – ELI has theme and greater discussion who is in this group?
- Dealing with affordability and quality – affordable and quality housing construction