

Pasadena Housing Element Task Force

Meeting #2 Summary

May 11, 2021



Introduction

The City of Pasadena Housing Element Task Force conducted its second meeting on May 11, 2021. The meeting focused on laying groundwork for goals, policies, and programs by exploring three topics:

1. Increasing the supply of affordable housing
2. Identifying innovative housing types
3. Meeting special housing needs (e.g., seniors, unhoused persons, disabled)

Task Force members were provided a summary of community comments from the April 15 and 22, 2021 workshops, as well as current Housing Element goals, policies, and programs.

Task Force members in attendance were: Chair William (Bill) Bogaard, Joel Bryant, Phillip Burns, Julianna Delgado, Megan Foker, Akila Gibbs, Allison Henry, Leonard Hernandez (for Leslie Barnes), Sarah Letts, Charles Loveman, Anne Miskey, Rita Moreno, Phyllis Mueller, Andrew Oliver, Phlunte Riddle, Stan Rushing, Barry Storch, and Noel Toro.

City staff in attendance were Arlene Granadosin-Jones, David Reyes, Andre Sahakian, David Sanchez, and Jim Wong.

The meeting was conducted in an on-line format due to restrictions on public gatherings imposed by COVID-19.

Presentation and Discussion

The consultant team leading the Housing Element program—MIG, Inc. and Veronica Tam and Associates—provided a summary of public comments received at the first community workshop and the current housing policy framework. City staff gave an overview of the General Plan development caps applicable to the specific plan areas. The Task Force then divided into three groups to discuss the three topics presented above. Following the 30-minute group discussions, the Task Force reconvened to share highlights from the breakout sessions and have a brief follow-up discussion.

The breakout group and Task Force conversations were recorded in writing; those summaries are attached as a record of the meeting.



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Breakout Discussion - Group #1 - Increasing the supply of affordable housing

Facilitator Laura Stetson

Recorder Joey Nielsen

Increasing the supply of affordable housing	Identifying innovative types of housing Meeting special housing needs (seniors, homeless, disabled, fair housing)	Chat & Questions
<p>The way we look at affordable housing covers a broad range of income levels (persons who are experiencing homelessness up to middle income). All the programs out there focus mainly on the low and very low income brackets. There is nothing for middle income housing support, especially in the public sector. There is a need for housing middle income folks. Increasingly our focus is on the moderate and middle income brackets. Affordable housing needs span a wide range of income levels, especially with such a wide range of income brackets that fit the affordable housing bracket</p>		
<p>Initial funding from the public sector is beginning to flow but it is sparse. Would like to see the private sector supplement some of the costs for building affordable units.</p>		
<p>A lot of the conversation is centered around subsidies. Many people can't afford to buy a home in Pasadena in the median income brackets and lower. There is a shortage of accessible land that can be used, which doesn't allow developers to build affordable homes - this is especially present north of the freeway. Address some of these issues through zoning law, policies, and other methods to increase the affordable housing supply in the NW portion of the city.</p>		
<p>Land used from the City of LA's DOT (underutilized spaces) such as surface parking lots, which have been set aside for affordable housing, has been a significant program. Are there other types of real estate in the city where people do not pay property taxes (i.e., school properties)?</p>		
<p>Looking at schools that have closed sites within the community with declining enrollment rates and difficulty retaining students. Look at San Jose School District as a cautionary tale; they sold off some land and had a bump in enrollment and had a hard time finding spaces to meet the increased capacity.</p>		
<p>The declining school enrollment rates are directly correlated with the rising housing costs - families are not able to afford to live in Pasadena but were forced out. Could we look into church spaces with surplus properties for affordable housing units? Considering the lengthy process the City went through to approve the ADU ordinance, we should look to streamline the process for allowing churches to build units on surplus land as the desire to build is out there. Could we change or modify zoning laws to expedite this process? Like the idea of using underutilized spaces like parking lots but weary of the flexibility of the city to change.</p>		
<p>Laura Q> It's important to know whether churches have the proper zoning in place to allow for units on the property. - Andre answer - Actively working on an ordinance that would make it easier for churches to build units on site, but working through some kinks such as standards and zoning, requirements that are presently preventing units on church sites. Want to also make this a targeted effort as not all churches are in neighborhoods that would be a good fit for additional housing (i.e., churches in a single family neighborhood adding 20-30 units on that site)</p>		
<p>A church could have a specific plan that would allow these institutions to build units on a case by case basis. In regards to ADUs - in LA the City has pre approved ADUs that allow for a streamlined permitting process. Could Pasadena do something similar?</p>		

<p>When talking about creating affordable housing, we should acknowledge that we won't be able to build ourselves out of this housing crisis. We could look at some of the older homes that could be more affordable. We also need to look at the current status of rental unit inspections and holding property owners accountable for ensuring homes are up to code and safe. In my apartment we had to go into a neighbors unit to access the breaker box. Tenants should come together and ensure that landlords are keeping their affordable units safe and in good conditions. TOPA. Consider a program to allow long term tenants to purchase an older unit that is going up for sale as a potential co-op with other tenants to keep older affordable units affordable and accessible for lower income brackets. There are also a lot of employers who need their employees to live within the City, so is there a potential for incorporating some employers into this conversation to allow them to purchase units to house employees near their place of work. Can we begin to look at the City becoming a potential landlord for middle income and lower income units? Social housing where the City is the primary owner, but there is still some form of ownership that is granted to the tenant?</p>				
<p>Last round of trying to incorporate underutilized hotels/motels into housing for homeless or low income was shut down because of centralization of this type of conversion in certain areas of the City. Another potential was the Albertson's parking lot that could have been converted, but it was another site that was shut down.</p>				
<p>We have to acknowledge that we as a City want people of all income brackets to live within the City and address the economic biases that are present in the City.</p>				
<p>Other programs (other than the parking lot conversion mentioned earlier) that have been successful in other cities? Look at a redevelopment agency at the state level that could fund more affordable housing moving forward. Capitol is one of the biggest issues to building affordable housing</p>				
<p>Abuses of the redevelopment agency were egregious.</p>				



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Breakout Discussion - Group #2 - Identifying innovative types of housing

Facilitator Joan Chaplick

Recorder Ana Padilla

Identifying innovative types of housing	Increasing the supply of affordable housing Meeting special housing needs (seniors, homeless, disabled, fair housing)	Chat & Questions
<p>Consider the city zoning on group homes - CoHousing and CoOwnership - Especially single-family zoning area For Single/Adults/Young Families - Scandinavian model Now can have up to 6 unrelated people in a unit</p> <p>CoHousing - there could be an update - Single family districts may need to diversify the areas near commercial hubs to connect spaces - How to do so it the question - Duplex - What it the population density in the single family density ? Light changes to better utilize spaces.</p> <p>Resusing spaces/complete communities to change commercial space - shared multifamily housing with share green/gathering space - for young families</p> <p>Incentives for larger families - most housing is two bedroom - Variety of needs</p> <p>Inclusionary housing - no set number but there are usually a need for various bedroom units</p> <p>Micro units are interest - but 100% micro unit community in combination with larger units - diversity in types of housing types in one area/development</p> <p>Mix 3-4 bedroom units with micro units.</p> <p>Pasadena functions best with a community-based approach by mixing types of units.</p> <p>Live/work spaces in industrial/mechanical area for artisan spaces - to revitalize and vitalize areas.</p> <p>Evolution of ADUs - Zoning needs to adjust to allow them above a garage since there are impacts on parking - Affordable or market rate</p> <p>Live/work space: affordable or market rate</p> <p>Opportunity to work with religious intitutions' parking lots - positive feedback - affordable</p> <p>\$20 billion from federal infrastructure bill: cap I-710 from Union to Del Mar // Marengo to Wilson on I-210 to build green/housing space</p> <p>Students studying the potential to cap the 710</p> <p>I-210 major racial divide for the city and also look at Fair Oaks to Marengo.</p> <p>Church housing - think about also other non-profit entities and parking</p> <p>1- City stopping construction of housing due to parking issues 2- Changes the zoning for housing on Park</p> <p>Advocating for area-sensitive zoning - in favor of construction on underutilized space - critical to open up new/more land for affordable housing</p> <p>Using freeway stub - opportunities for transportation connections and green space</p> <p>Consider parking usage behavior</p> <p>CEQA and other limits due to the needs/environmental concerns - more housing in environmental challenging area - incentives to address concerns/toolkit to adapt the space</p> <p>Similar to measures for development near the freeways</p> <p>Housing is not in a vaccum - access to green space, transportation , parking - incentives for shared space/units/vehicle shares</p> <p>Consider the reality and impacts of losses - parking lost to garage ADU and constraints re on-street parking</p>		



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Breakout Discussion - Group #3 - Meeting special housing needs

Facilitator Amber Gregg

Recorder Jessie Hernandez

Meeting special housing needs (seniors, homeless, disabled, fair housing)

Very-low income, homelessness - biggest barrier is community pushback. City listens to few NIMBY voices.

Some City Council members won't allow affordable, supportive, special population housing in their districts.

Community pushes back on rental housing. Students, young people, etc. aren't ready for homeownership.

Student housing

Board and care

Fastest growing population of unhoused people are older adults.

Seniors are struggling to keep a roof over their head.

Transitional age youth (typically 18 to 24 years) that aren't limited to 3 years or youth aging out - not sure why contracts are limited to 3 year limit or age limit; throws youth into risk of homelessness again. Remove artificial timelines, provide services based on youth needs.

Need emergency shelters for transitional age youth and support staff who can spend time with them

People with mental health issues - what do we do about their underlying mental health issues? How do we help them become housed?

Community outrage over projects for the homeless; City cannot let the NIMBYs decide what happens.

Educating the community

Disabled community

Veterans

Where places are located - special needs housing is often tucked away; need to put people around activity hubs.

How do we connect people with services and green space and things in a vibrant way?

Increasing the supply of affordable housing

Identifying innovative types of housing

Need to create by-right housing for special populations that remove these barriers.

Carveout for homesharing - help seniors keep their homes

Programs administered through third party

[Match.com](#) for housing - help owners and renters find each other

Commercial spaces sitting vacant - how to convert commercial spaces to residential? Would it require rezoning?

Shared housing with seniors and youth

Case study in North Oakland of micro units - yes and no, if it comes with services then yes, or for people starting out like students

"Miracle Village" in Oakland - central kitchen, health care services, showers, free exchange store

SROs are not best practice for permanent housing, ok for interim housing..

Governor announced \$12 billion for homelessness, \$8 billion for Project Home Key

Convert old motels, shopping malls to permanent housing

Chat & Questions



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Report Back / Additional Questions

Report out

Amber

housing for disabled populations

Home sharing

Looking at not having an end date on transitional housing

better access to adjacent services - mental health etc.

Access to rentals

Concerns about having all decision makers' support

Laura

Using underutilized spaces: parking lots

Access to capital

Pre-approved/prefab plans for ADU to be efficient - City just received a grant

Tenant groups buying their unit/building

Revisit redevelopment

Resolve from decision makers

for more education about the different types of housing

Joan

Cohousing/Co-ownership

Diversity in location/housing types - Various family sizes - microunits

Federal infrastructure bill - to cap 710/ 210

Look existing policy, measures, incentives for construction

Additional Questions/Comments

Definition of gentrification - policy to refer to in NW on HE tip toes around it - integrating affordable for-sale units

How to protect the currently vulnerable populations in Pasadena?

State focus on homeless and housing - look at innovative use of underutilized spaces due to NYMBYs - should require a variety of housing

Look at vulnerable displaced populations - using church lots - case by case bases - what are the restrictions?

Displacement is the killer - the idea of also allowing other underutilized parking

Do increased outreach to Spanish-speaking residents for the Housing Element.