

# San Jose Anti-Displacement Community Forum

Seven Trees Community Center

August 15, 2019

## Agenda:

- Welcome
- City Presentation
- Community Testimony
- Small Group
- Large Group Debrief
- Next Steps / Evaluation
- Close

## Welcome and Introductions

Total attendees: 40

Human thermometer activity:

- *Do you know someone who had to move in the last six months because they couldn't afford housing?*
  - ~20 people agree
- *Do you know someone who has had to choose between buying food or paying rent?*
  - ~24 people agree
- *Do you believe San Jose is a great place to live?*
  - All but 3 agree
- *Do you believe that dealing with displacement is a community matter?*
  - All but 3 agree

## City Presentation

- Jacklyn's Presentation on Displacement:
  - ~ 3 people raised hands saying they know someone displaced from San Jose

## Community's Testimonial

- *Why did you come tonight?*
  - The reason why we came is that housing is becoming an important issue right now. (Vietnamese speaker)
  - I came because I am a worker and I believe every human being has a right to housing and as workers we have the right to let the city know what we need, want, and deserve (Spanish speaker)
  - We cannot stay in San Jose no matter what we get paid, and will likely need to leave within 3 months because housing is so expensive
- *Testimonials:*

- Maria: Has genetic disease which makes it hard to work, but does not let it prevent her from providing for her daughter; her mother has to work 2 jobs, sleep 3 hrs/day; has needed to get expensive ear implants to try to work to afford housing; lower-cost housing would help her stay, and although Fresno would be cheaper, wants to stay in San Jose
- Single mother, born and raised in San Jose; small amount of child support each month only; only living in San Jose thanks to cousin, with whom she lives along with 6 others; works in construction, and cannot afford a place of her own; its good to see there are other also struggling; San Jose is **our** city, I went to public schools here, work here, and want daughters to grow up and live here too, even though Los Banos might be more affordable.

### Small Group Conversation Summary

## Vietnamese Language Group (Facilitated by Jacky & Shiloh)

### PRODUCTION

- more housing in south everywhere so it's fair for everybody
- where the jobs are
- build near where we're living now. We don't have a choice – anywhere
- near public trans for seniors
- If it's concentrated in just one place it's impact someone – Gilroy will be too far, commutes a disaster, accidents
- Now low income in Saratoga and costs is still expensive - groceries – build where people won't be impacted by costs of living
- Political will
- Housing for seniors for anyone – seniors really need alt. Lived here all my life, it doesn't make sense
- Build higher – Quimby senior housing / Buy the land and build more units there
- Why doesn't the City build higher? Is it because its an earthquake state? But SF builds high?
- Acquire low rise (1-2 stories) & build higher
- Evictors – problem
  - Harassment is a problem
  - Females rent a room – not as pretty as landlord. Husband keep looking – jealous – harassed and evicted her.

### PRESERVATION

- Building new housing over older – do residents get to comeback after construction – where do people go? Shelter for 5 years?

- No international investors to move people out & mobile homes and build skyscrapers
- Gov sites for AH & Small Units, people can live & be happy (simple)
- Gov build skyscraper, small units, don't need luxury just something to live & make a living
- City/County need to preserve housing. Residents need to find affordable housing
- Just asking for a place, small units
- City force high rise housing developers to pay for affordable housing – impact fees
- Adjust income limits because incomes are higher in this area – window of eligible incomes is too narrow
  
- Do you know AH resources?
  - There's a lot of AH but now vacancies – waiting lists are closed
  
- Lots of migration here, local people can't stay. the new \$15 /hr can't survive here, college kids can't afford their own place – we can't support kids & seniors (parents). We don't know what to do, where to go
- House owner passed away - new owner , \$1200→ \$2350 so renters moved
- We don't qualify – too tight, can't get low income, or too high enough to afford. Stuck in the middle
- For every homeless person in street, think about everyone living crowded & in garages
  
- What is the biggest problems?
  - Political will, leaders just care about people like him
  - No land
  - Build more we'll be like NY – but deal with traffic & parking
  - need more AH
  - rent control

### **PROTECTION**

- 50% of international investor & new housing need to be for existing residents – 100 unites – 10% not enough
- rent control on newer units
- tell the investors if we put all our money to rent we wont have \$\$ for anything else
- Housing emergency – what would you do? What help you need? Shelters – how long can we stay there? If someone lose their housing/job need at least 3-6 months to stay. Gov. can provide food
- Some people get loopholes to qualify for low income housing but they have money - fraud – put their property in their children's name then move to AH
- Not enough AH – really poor people can't access AH, rich people - fraud
- Monitor AH & Senior housing – Audit Section 8

- Large rent increases
- Trump didn't get down to level to people who really abuse the system (did the right thing to crack down on fraud)
- Evictions

## **Spanish Language Group (Facilitated by Victor and Imelda)**

### **PRODUCTION (Producción)**

- Norte/Sur/Oeste/Este / *north, south/ west / east*
  - Junto con transortacion public / *near public transit*
  - Junto las escuelas / *near schools*
  - Junto las tiendas / *near stores*
  - Areas de desplazamiento / *areas of displacement*
    - Contstuir en diferentes area / *build in different areas*
  - Donde haya transporte, escuela y comercion / *where there's transportation, schools and commerce*
- Que clase de vivienda es accessible para ti? ? *what type of hosuing is accessible for you?*
- Basado en el costo de vida / *Based on cost of living*
  - Formas alternativas para tramitar y aplicar en las viviendas / *alternative ways to apply for housing*
  - Analisis de gastos de cada hogar / *analysis of costs per household*
  - Impuesto a las companias grandes p'que se utlice para construir casas accesibles en la comunidad / *tax large companies in order to build accessible housing in the community*
- Que preguntas tienen para los representates? / *what questions do you have?*
- Porque siguen constuyendo para clases media y altas? ? *why are they building for medium to high income*
  - Si construyen condominios que un porcentaje sea tambien para condominios accesibles todos en un edificio (juntos) / *if they build condos a percentage should be accessible for others in the building*

### **PRESERVATION (Preservacion)**

- Conoces los servicios?: NO / *Are you aware of the services?*
- Cual ha sido su experiencia s/aplicar a casas accesibles? *What has been your experience in applying for housing?*
- Comprobantes deificiles de tener SSN, Contratos, Recibos de Servicios / *providing proof like SSN, contracts, receipts for services*
  - Falta de proteccion a casas / *lack of protection for housing*
  - Listas de espera muy gdes / *waiting lists are long*
  - Falta de regulacion con el costa de renta / *lack of regulating rents*

- Muchos documentos p'aplicar (idioma, traducción, pagos de / aplicación, p/ background) / *lots of documents required, language, translation, payment for application*
- Aplicación sencilla y con traducción ! / *simple application process with translation*
- Crear política de preferencia local / *creates a preference for local politics*
- Formas alternativas para aplicar: / *Alternative forms for applying*
  - Ex – ITIN- diferentes comprobantes / *different types of proof*
  - Comprobantes de las escuelas de nietos/hijos / *proof of grandchildren/children's school*
  - Comprobantes de doctor de nuestros hijos y nuestros / *proof of children or our own doctors*
  - Reglamentar a los realtors / *regulation for realtors*
  - Comprobantes de impuestos p'hacer dueños de casa / *proof of taxes so we can be homeowners*

### **PROTECTION (Protección)**

- Rent Increases? (aumento de renta) 18
- Evictions (desalojo) 3
- Harassment (acoso)
- Difficult to qualify (difícil para calificar) 18
- Adequate size of home (tamaño de casa)
- Lack income (falta de ingresos) 18
- Political will (voluntad política)
- Other (otro razón)
  
- Sueldo bueno / *good salary*
- Sueldo equitativo / *equal pay*
- Protección en todo tipo de vivienda / *protections for all types of housing*
- Salario al igual costo de vida / *Salaries equal to cost of living*
- Residentes locales les den trabajo (capacitación para trabajar aquí) / *Build work capacity for local residents*
- Prioridad para residentes locales / *give priority to local residents*
- Inversión en la comunidad / *Invest in the community*
- La ciudad debe negociar con las compañías grandes para que den los beneficios a los residentes locales / *city should negotiate with big companies to give benefits to local residents*
- Ciudad subsidiar a la comunidad para completar la renta / *city provide subsidy resources to meet rent*
- Priorizar a la comunidad / *prioritize the community*
- Seguir invirtiendo en la comunidad / *Keep investing in the community*
- Que las compañías grandes contraten a gente de la comunidad (minorías) / *Big companies should contract people from the community*

- Que la ciudad invierta en 25-50% en gente de bajos ingresos pa'tener acceso a la vivienda en los proyectos e la vivienda / *city should invest 25-50% in low income people so they can have access to AH housing*
- Educarnos y pasar la voz unidos / *educate ourselves and collectively spread the word*

## English Language Group (Facilitated by Michael)

### PRODUCTION

- *What type of housing would be affordable and realistic for you?*
  - Housing should reflect diversity of people and income levels in San Jose, the rules should be the same for everyone
  - There is too much crime
  - Housing should fit in with the neighborhood, but we can't just have single-family homes everywhere and we need greater density to find places for people
  - We need more modular housing – small, easy to build, can be built on existing lots
  - Granny units/ADU's for low-income renters (but parking issue should be addressed)
  - Should focus on extremely low-income housing, housing is not affordable to folks on SSI, others with fixed income that may make only a few hundred dollars a month
- *What do you think holds the city back from producing more housing?*
  - The units that are produced are not selling (vacancies in commercial properties)
  - Measure A Affordable Housing Bond: it has been difficult to find places to put affordable housing because there are a lot of misconceptions about affordable housing and the people that live there
  - Affordable housing producers cannot compete with market-rate production
- Where do you think most new housing in SJ should go?
  - North/East/South/West?
  - Near public transit?
  - Near good schools?
  - Near grocery stores?
  - Near areas w/high displacement?
- Post it comments from participants:
  - “Affordable Housing – is not affordable – who get's the rent?”
  - “Near transit, near retail, North & East (BART)”

- “Close REID – HILLVIEW Airport, put housing there”
- “Near public transit, south near schools, near grocery stores”
- “Housing – schools, better community, close to work opportunities”
- “You should build houses (affordable) everywhere”
- “Develop vacant lots”
- “East San Jose”
- “Modular housing / low income housing”
- “North – Senter Road is not safe, high level of child molesters in the area released”
- “Classrooms are already crowded”
- “producing but not affordable. Need to support affordable /low income housing / developers market-rate being produced and not even being filled.

## **PRESERVATION**

### ➤ **Areas:**

- Should put low-income housing in all neighborhoods and everyone should be required to accept that housing to prevent segregation
  - E.g., redlining created a scenario where disinvestment has primed areas for displacement
  - Should not push low-income housing into particular places
- Should focus areas at-risk of displacement: Downtown, Alviso, Mayfair, East Side
- Places where land is used inefficiently like golf course and Reid-Hillview
- Mobile home parks and other areas where there is naturally-occurring affordable housing

### ➤ **Post it note comments:**

- Not incorporating solutions from other cities
- Rising Housing costs - “Nickel & Diming”
- All fo the above dynamics- present in all parts of the city
- Jobs (skills) \$
- New Units are NOT AFFORDABLE
- Losing rent control units - Ellis

## **PROTECTION**

- We need to teach people how to improve/give people opportunities to afford something more expensive than affordable housing and advance their careers and livelihoods
- Existing Services:
  - Destination Home (rental assistance)
- Things that would help:

- Incentives for LL to hous folds (All the Way Home)
- Rent Control - limiting amoint folks need to pay – expand existing control
- Bridge Housing
- Expanding Rapid Re- housing program to all
- Local preferences policy
- Eliminate C. Hawkins
- Protect Ellis Act Ordinance
- Build on site for inclusionary housing ordinance instead of pay
- Grants for home repair

### **Large Group Debrief / Q&R**

*Surprises from small group discussion:*

- I thought I was the only one facing these issues, but it was surprising to hear so many are in the same situation”
- What happens next? What solutions will San Jose implement for us?

### **Next Steps / Evaluation**

➤ *Did this meeting work for you?*

~16 people raised their hands

➤ *What can we do better?*

- Need more information ahead of time so that people know to come
  - Facebook, TV, Public Library, information provided through schools
  - Radio (4 hands)
- Too much repetition between 3P’s
- Need these kinds of meetings more often

➤ *Which P should be prioritized?*

- Protection: ~ 13 hands raised
- Preservation: 1 hand raised
- Production: ~13 hands raised (lots of repeats)
- Several comments that all three are important