

**City of San Jose
Housing Element Update
Community Meeting Notes
August 27, 2008**

Comments/Questions about general presentation

- In thinking about the growing aging population and planning for housing, the City should be thinking about the percentage of people that cannot drive? e.g., the elderly, etc.
- The Coyote Valley EIR report says that the jobs/housing ratio will be 1.14 jobs:1 housing unit. The jobs/housing ratio should be 1:1. If we get achieve more jobs than housing does that mean there will be a shortage of housing in the City? No, the jobs/housing balance is intended to be a measure of whether our residents are commuting outside of the city to work and whether there is an adequate economic activity in the City that contribute to the General Fund, which pays for public necessities and neighborhood services. When compared to other cities in the county, San Jose is far behind in terms of the ratio of jobs per employed resident.
- Even with a 1:1 housing/jobs balance, there is no guarantee that jobs will be for people who live in San Jose. Planning around transit-oriented development is important.
- What path is being pushed forward to encourage jobs? The City is implementing Retail Strategy to encourage commercial businesses to locate in San Jose, and as part of the Mayor's Green Vision the City is attracting 25,000 new green technology jobs. The City Council earlier in the year adopted the Framework for Preservation of Employment Lands as a measure to prevent conversion of job sites to other uses.
- Demographic shift – there is going to be large senior population, is the fact that these residents won't be working factored into the jobs/housing balance? What has contributed to our structural deficit is that San José has historically been a bedroom community.
- What is the per capita deficit? For 2009, the Deficit is forecasted to be \$22.3 million. (Source <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/budget/FY0809/Forecast/Section%20%20-%20Base%20GF%20Forecast.pdf>). With a population of 989,496 (CA Dept of Finance estimate for 2008). This gives a per capita deficit of \$22.53. If we rely on the full forecast for the next 5 years (2009-2013) total deficit is \$72.5 million and the per capita deficit for that period is estimated to be \$73.3.

Questions for the Public

Question 1: How can San Jose meet its housing goals given the decreasing availability of land?

- Historically the City has been on the deficit side of jobs and retail. We shouldn't continue this trend going forward and not address the housing imbalance of other cities. At a different meeting, a woman from VTA said that the density for the proposed Berryessa BART station is higher, because other cities along the BART Line, such as in the Warm Springs area are not carrying their share of housing units.
- Do you have mandatory requirement for affordable housing projects? Yes, in Redevelopment areas of the City there is a requirement that new residential projects provide 20% affordable units or pay into an in-lieu fee that funds affordable housing projects.
- When will the City update its land use plan? The City is also working on the Envision San Jose 2040 comprehensive update of the General Plan. This Housing Element Update is a short-term strategy focusing between 2007 and 2014, while the General Plan update focuses on San Jose in 2040.
- Build smaller homes and more mixed-use developments.

- Build up – higher density.
- People do want their backyard but it isn't necessary to have it in your backyard. If you're going to build high density housing, you have to plan for adequate open space within a short distance so that people can have community gardens. This should be done for every development.
- There are existing single family homes that are impacted by higher density. In New York, most rural communities are outside of the city. In San Jose we have older building that are ready to be reconstructed, is there a way to incentivize this? There is a clash between single family homes and higher density homes.
- City should enforce guidelines and require adequate setbacks.
- We live near the Fiesta Lanes development. I have been doing research about HCD and pulled up their guidelines and the BEGIN application gives developers points for certain items. They benefit from certain items, such as or lower parking requirements. Developers get extra points to receive BEGIN financing. The City relies on BEGIN funding. A 5 year plan was just adopted by the City that has adopted the same guidelines from the HCD application. This is a conflict of interest. The guidelines have been lowered. If competition for HCD funds is so fierce that means they can get lower points? The City has Residential Design Guidelines and High Rise Residential Guidelines that seek compatibility between different land uses.
- There is income disparity in San Jose. I work for NHSSV. Everyday we face it. There is a large working class population that is farther away from reaching affordable housing. In European cities, the government has had to make accommodations for a growing working population. They have reduced the square footage of where people live because this is the only option they have. The families that come to NHSSV don't make the 60K required to afford an apartment. The City needs to start planning for multi-story units and reduce the size of apartments. There are many families that are doubling or tripling up in homes to afford to live there.
- This is a good idea, but important to keep in mind that in Europe they have public transit. We need the transit here. There has to be partnerships between developers and the City. If this doesn't take place there will be this vicious circle of low quality high density taking place in established neighborhoods. People in established neighborhoods are expecting quality infill development. The Fiesta Lanes project was approved in 2004 and this talk is wonderful but you don't know what it will really be like until you live this nightmare.

Question 2: How can San Jose meet its affordable housing goals, especially for extremely low-income households?

- For the Las Mariposas development on Alum Rock, NHSSV was able to put families earning 45K in a home. We thought that at some point non profits and City would pitch in and create homeownership opportunities for those earning less than 30K a year but after 2004 that dream went away. The construction cost/square footage needs to be reduced to make the apartments affordable. Encourage partnership between developers and nonprofits.
- It's going to take subsidies to get these low-income families into homes. They won't be able to come up with down payment. One idea is to go to churches and other organizations to see if people are willing to donate to help these people.
- We foresee that for low income households the only option is subsidized rental housing. We cannot dream about homeownership.
- If you look in other countries, everyone does not own a home. We cannot take care of everybody. What we can do for families earning 30K/year is increase their earning capacity and subsidize training programs, child care, etc. If we can actually subsidize people at lower income levels and help them move up, we are better off as a city.
- Retail is a great goal, but people have to make money to shop. Before 1995, San José was a manufacturing area. People can't afford to have manufacturing facilities here. How about working towards providing manufacturing jobs? This provides better quality jobs.

The City is encouraging manufacturing jobs; you may have heard from recent media coverage of the City's efforts to attract solar companies and an electric auto manufacturer to locate in San Jose.

- Do you know the growth of service industry jobs and how it compares to other types of jobs in this area? Has there been growth in service industry over other types of jobs?
- The Mayor has tried to stop them from tearing down commercial properties. When you take away commercial properties then they have to relocate some where rents are higher. Many of these businesses will go out of business. I'm a business owner now, if I had to go to a different location I would have to hire someone else. The City needs to stop tearing down commercial industrial properties.
- A lot of people who live in SJ can get jobs somewhere else. How are you addressing an integrated approach to the jobs/housing balance? The City is focusing on economic development while facilitating housing development to meet all segments of the population.

Question 3: What should the City do to plan and provide housing for the upcoming generation of seniors? For other populations?

- City should keep in mind that not all of them will be poor. Some of them will be selling their homes. They will look for quality retirement homes but they do require higher density zoning. These facilities should be near transit, health care facilities.
- The seniors would like to be within the cultural center of the city so they can take advantage of programs available. Have lifelong learning programs available to them. Need to have activities for them.
- Need higher density and small compact units. There will be a group of seniors with capacity and money to pay for nice environment need to also accommodate low income seniors. Need a balance and mix of senior housing options across different incomes.
- There are many cultures here in San Jose. The City has not done much to consider different household types. The City should think about the fact that many senior will be staying with families.
- Extra bedrooms are needed to accommodate extra family members. Build granny units. Partner with nonprofits to create senior communities. Consider if housing can be accessible and if people can age place.
- Affordable housing for seniors -- Are we going to keep mobile home parks? Yes, the City recognizes that mobile homes provide an important source of affordable housing in the City. There are no plans to convert any mobile home parks to other uses.
- Older aging people tend to navigate better on single floor dwelling units.
- Need to create developments, such as the mixed-income project in Japantown, where there is housing, church and services are close by. It was planned that way.

Question 4: Are there other housing needs that the City should consider in the Housing Element that have not been mentioned?

- Have you thought about asking SJ residents, through the newspaper, for ideas on different types of housing? Infill development? Asking them for good examples of infill development? Planners need to do this.
- With impending sea levels rising due to global warming, the City should consider houseboats as a future housing type.
- At the Hilltop Manor development, seniors pay according to their income. Need that type of housing for seniors. Also provide a semi-assisted living community like the one by Santana Row. Need affordable assisted living community.
- Need to plan to have hospital or acute facilities closer to seniors. Build facilities closer to hospitals.

- San Jose should encourage smaller lot sizes and compact housing development.
- The parking – people have been looking at 2 car garages. There are more compact cars these days, eventually if 1 long garage is built you can fit 2 small cars in there.
- Concerned about setbacks. All this infill is fine but if you're putting it on the back of people paying high mortgages, with decreasing property values. Fiesta Lanes was a test case and it was not pretty. High density is fine but it shouldn't be done on the backs of existing neighborhoods.
- When HCD funds come to City and it is based on cutting corners there is a conflict of interest. In 2008, the City Council adopted standards these standards.
- Create live/work spaces
- In downtown Oakland, there is good example of a co-op development.
- Job creation can be wrapped around the services that will be needed by the seniors.
- An AARP article featured a community in Boston of retired citizens. They all pitched in and they had their own driver, receptionist, plumber and electricians. They had a network of people that could help them. People were able to stay in their community longer. Need to have a service module.
- Some people may ask, what is the purpose of keeping elderly in San Jose? In many cities, it is the retirees who are donating their time to a lot of projects. They have time to give back to society. We need to recognize the contribution of seniors to our community because they volunteer at many community facilities.
- Seniors are big workforce. Many of them have to go back to work due to escalating fuel prices. They have to supplement what they receive from social security.
- Have a lot of commercial lots – small lots, some of these lots are eyesores we should redevelop these lots and use them.