

City of Stockton Housing Element Update Stakeholder Workshop #1 Summary

March 12, 2009

Workshop Overview

On March 12, 2009, the City of Stockton Revitalization Department held a workshop for key stakeholders and community members on issues and trends as part of the Housing Element Update. Workshop participants listened to a short introductory presentation about the Housing Element Update process and preliminary findings from the Housing Element Background Report. Participants then participated in an interactive roundtable discussion where they were asked to identify key housing issues, barriers to and opportunities for creating affordable housing, and possible solutions to provide affordable housing. The following summarizes the comments that were made during the roundtable discussion.

Housing Issues

- Housing needs to be built on smallest possible footprint to avoid premature conversion of agricultural land
- How will we house the next generation of residents?
 - How can we avoid the “brain drain” that is happening (i.e., young people leaving the city)?
- Need a variety of housing types.
- How will the Housing Element fit within the 2035 General Plan?
- Does the City have enough capacity for high-density housing?
- Foreclosures are a key issue:
 - Visionary Home Builders: has seen about 1,000 foreclosures from May 2008 through December 2008
 - Foreclosures are leading to blight and crime
- Need to look at where we failed in the last Housing Element and make sure we don't repeat history.
 - Last Housing Element failed to properly address different income groups.
- Permitting and processing issues – need creative solutions.
- Not enough employment opportunities to provide stable incomes; need to improve the housing to jobs ratio to help stabilize the local economy.
- Need affordable single-family and multi-family housing for persons of all incomes and special needs.
- Housing Element needs to address green building techniques.
- Investors (i.e., out-of-town owners) have taken over older neighborhoods, leading to neighborhood instability.
- Concerned about the economic status of the City.
- Stockton has not been producing housing that matches the incomes of its residents (i.e., low-income units).

- Housing needs of the working population are not being addressed.
- There is a lack of affordable housing for single people (e.g., single room occupancy units (SROs)).
- Homeless shelters are seeing increased demand as a result of foreclosures.
- Need to address the housing needs of young people so they can become independent.
- Infrastructure in infill areas is inadequate—developers are burdened with fixing old infrastructure.
- Development impact fees are high (e.g., more than \$55,000 per single-family).
- Lower-income housing is concentrated in South Stockton, near freeways.
- Need to change the perception of the city.
- In 2006, subsidies for affordable housing were about \$80,000-100,000 per unit (today, only about \$20,000 per unit).
- Need moderate-income housing.
- It is easier for realtors to work with investors instead of first-time homebuyers.
- Condominiums were not being built because of liability issues; however, legislation has changed this.
- NIMBYism against high-density housing.

Housing Solutions (i.e., Program Ideas)

- Need to focus on infill development in the downtown
 - Streamlining permit processing for infill development in areas where infrastructure already exists.
 - Change fee schedule to lower fees for infill housing (e.g., City of Sacramento has reduced fees for infill development).
- Provide foreclosure counseling programs.
- Encourage creative housing types.
- Develop programs to make private sector responsible for affordable housing.
- Need to allow and encourage higher densities, especially in the Downtown.
 - 20-25 units/acre, highest density being built in Stockton, not very common.
- Fee waivers and other incentives for affordable housing.
- Could modify development standards to allow for more creative housing solutions
 - Do we need such wide streets?
 - Do we need sidewalks on both sides of the street?
- Encourage public-private partnerships between City and developers.
- Infill coordinator could assist infill projects.
- Need to examine implementation of density bonus law.
- Need increased coordination between City departments such as Public Works, Municipal Utilities, and Fire Departments.
- Need affordable housing component in new subdivisions.
- Ensure that affordable housing is dispersed, not concentrated, to create more diverse communities.
- Provide incentives for more balanced communities.
- Incorporate green building techniques into new development, to reduce energy consumption and save money.
- Promote dialogue between City and development community.

- Create more job stability.
- Need a comprehensive plan to address housing issues.
- Provide incentives for realtors to work with first-time homebuyers.
- Need to make sure impact fees follow decreasing housing prices (e.g., fees cannot be \$50,000 per unit if homes are only worth \$100,000).
- Remove use permit requirement for higher-density housing (could be allowed by right).
- Need programs for better property management of multi-family properties (e.g., current program: Crime Free Multifamily Housing Program for all new development projects).
- Combine community policing with housing programs.
- Foreclosed properties are potential source of affordable housing.
- Market should be able to take care of moderate-income sector, but instead has been serving only the needs of above moderate-income sector.
- Now is the time to address housing needs—land has zero to negative value.