# Housing Element Workshop

**Workshop Summary** 

April 7, 2021



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# Housing Element Workshop Summary Introduction

On Thursday, April 7, 2022, the City of Petaluma hosted the first Housing Element Workshop. From an educational perspective, this workshop was meant to provide an overview of the Housing Element purpose, components, and process; explain the Housing Element's relationship to the General Plan Update; educate the community about housing issues and programs; and provide an update on the sites inventory. Most importantly, the purpose of the workshop was to gather community input on Petaluma's housing strengths and challenges, appropriate heights for future housing development, and policies, programs, and actions needed to achieve community housing priorities.

The workshop was held virtually using the Zoom platform and consisted of a presentation, a live survey using Mentimeter, and small group discussions in breakout rooms. Each breakout room discussed the same questions and had a facilitator and a notetaker recording participant comments and questions using the Miro platform. Approximately 13 members of the public participated in the workshop. Participant demographic statistics can be found in the Appendix.

The following summary describes the high-level feedback heard in the workshop. The Appendix includes the workshop data, comments, and emails sent by participants to City staff. The presentation slides and a recording of the workshop are available on the project website. Community input provided at this workshop will build upon the previous housing-related input the planning team has heard from the community and will be used to develop the Draft Housing Element.

# **Summary of Results**

# **Mentimeter Exercise**

The Mentimeter live polling exercise asked workshop participants to respond to demographic and housing-related questions. The housing-related questions are listed below followed by the word clouds generated from the participants' answers and tallies of the most common themes. For a complete list of participant answers, refer to the Appendix.

# What is working well with housing in Petaluma?

Most Common Themes:

- Historical (5)
- Unique Aesthetic (5)
- Diversity of types (4)
- Property values and market (2)

# What is working well with housing in Petaluma?

in-town development charm unique homes diverse neighborhood diversity historical aesthetic great market beautiful hoising history well maintained property value



# What housing issues or challenges need to be addressed?

Most Common Themes:

- Affordability (16)
- Lack of inventory (3)

# What housing issues or challenges need to be addressed?





# Future housing should be near...

### Most Common Themes:

- Public transit (10)
- Groceries and services (7)
- Complete streets and paths/trails (5)
- Jobs and retail (4)
- Downtown (3)
- Parks (3)

# Future housing should be near...





# Future housing should be kept away from...

### Most Common Themes:

- Environmentally sensitive habitats (7)
- Floodplain and sea-level rise zones (6)
- Freeways (4)
- Urban fringe (3)

# Future housing should be kept away from...





# **Miro Board Exercise**

The facilitators of the small group discussions in the breakout rooms asked participants to respond to the following questions. Notetakers captured the participants' comments, all of which can be found in the Appendix.

### Part 1: What heights are appropriate in...?

- Transit-Oriented Centers (Downtown SMART Station, Corona SMART Station)
- Corridors (E. Washington, Segments of McDowell, Segments of Petaluma Blvd N., Segments of Petaluma Blvd S.)
- Downtown

### Part 2: What should the City do to achieve community housing goals?

# **Heights**

Overall, participants noted that housing development, with a mix of uses, should be focused on the SMART station areas. Housing in the Downtown SMART station could have 4-8 stories, while the Corona SMART station area may be more suited for 4-5 stories.

The Downtown area should maintain its historic character but could allow development up to 4-8 stories.

The E. Washington corridor currently needs "placemaking" to complement future development. Future buildings in this area could allow up to 4 stories.

Similarly, some existing commercial uses along the McDowell corridor could be adapted into housing developments that allow up to 4 stories.

The Petaluma Blvd. corridor could benefit from allowing up to 4 stories.

In addition to area-specific answers, participants noted concerns and ideas that can be applied when considering housing heights in Petaluma:

- Build to heights to minimize the carbon footprint of new construction.
- Allow heights that accommodate the "economic sweet spot" for builders.
- Protect viewsheds.
- Ensure design that is consistent with the neighborhood context.
- Incorporate green space to break up the building massing.

# City Programs

Workshop participants suggested a variety of programs and strategies the City could implement to achieve community housing goals. All the participants' program and policy ideas are included in the Appendix. The summary below integrates existing programs (in black) with ideas City staff have been considering (in green), and ideas suggested during the workshop (in blue) by program area.

# **Homelessness Programs**

- Support community-based partners
- Safe parking program
- Services and housing combined in a community setting

# **Anti-Displacement Programs**

- Rent and resale controls
- Conversion prevention
- Universal design
- Renter assistance
- Tenant right-to-return and right-to-purchase
- **Tenant Advisory Board**
- Center equity and consider the racial legacy
- Rental registry
- Just cause ordinance
- Tenant and Community Opportunity to Purchase (TOPA and COPA)

# **Fair Housing Programs**

- Reasonable accommodation procedures
- Address complaints
- Proactive landlord and tenant education
- Landlord registration
- Targeted neighborhood improvements
- Address the historic wrongs (redlining)
- Housing close to grocery, services, resources

# **Diverse Housing Production Programs**

- Inclusionary zoning -- rethink
- Specific Plan
- Development standards
- Permit procedures
- Subsidies and fee reductions for affordable projects
- Funding: grants, linkage fee
- Expand the capacity of current single-family zoning areas
- Permit housing in additional zones
- Housing overlay zones
- Utilize city and institutional property
- Density minimums and banks
- Reducing parking requirements
- Restrictions on unit sizes in some cases
- Live-work, cottage, and other standards
- Workforce housing requirements
- Expanded density bonus opportunities
- Adjust fee structure
- Expand funding and financing pool
- Build complete, 15-minute communities
- Facilitate ADU production
- Prioritize affordability

### Summary of Results

- Adaptive reuse
- Public housing
- Diversity housing types
- Build special needs housing

# Homeownership

Homebuyer assistance

# **Housing Preservation**

- Amnesty for illegal ADUs
- Vacancy tax
- Regulate ownership of housing by large corporations

### **Other Comments**

- Align with climate goals
- Preserve green space
- Preserve viewsheds

# **Appendix**

# **Mentimeter Results**

Below are the original comments participants wrote during the live polling section of the workshop.

# What is working well with housing in Petaluma?

- Charm
- Aesthetic
- Unique homes
- Beautiful housing
- Unique
- Historical
- tradition
- History
- historical
- historic
- Diverse
- Diversity
- Mixed
- Options
- Property value
- Great market
- Well maintained
- Neighborhood
- In-town development

# What housing issues or challenges need to be addressed?

- Affordability
- price availability
- Price
- Too expensive
- affordability
- Expensive
- Affordability
- Affordability
- Too expensive
- Not affordable
- Affordability
- Affordable housing
- Affordable housing
- lack of low income
- Lack thereof extremely low-income
- Cost Inclusionary
- Sufficient
- Lack of inventory
- supply
- Lack of non-single family
- Missing Middle
- Aesthetics of new development
- Design
- Sustainable
- Water availability
- Infrastructure
- Community Spaces
- Mixed-use
- Overcrowding
- Property values

# Future housing should be near...

- Transit
- Transit
- Public transit
- **Transit**
- Multi-use trails
- Safe bike paths
- Walkable
- Complete streets
- Walkable spaces
- Grocery
- Healthy food retailers
- Close to food
- Groceries
- Commerce
- Retail
- Jobs
- Retail
- Services
- services
- Services
- Downtown
- Downtown
- **Downtown Core**
- Areas zoned urban
- Eastside

# Future housing should be kept away from...

- Environmentally sensitive
- Sensitive habitats
- Sensitive habitats
- Wetlands habitat
- Open space
- Wildlife corridors
- Our Greenfields
- Sea level rise
- Flood-prone areas
- floodplain
- The wetlands flooding
- Floodplain
- Petaluma river
- freeway
- highways
- The Freeway
- Freeway
- Washington corridor
- Urban fringe
- UGB
- Sprawl
- hazards
- High Wildfire Zones
- wildfire zones
- Harmful land use
- industrial areas
- Historical neighborhoods
- 5G towers

# **Miro Board Comments**

The tables below contain the comments provided in all the breakout rooms for the respective question.

# Part 1: What heights are appropriate in...?

Area	Comments
General Comments	
	Need to consider what it is that we are trying to achieve in these areas and with the increased heights?     More density that allows people to travel without cars     Concern about losing the rural character of Petaluma; concentrate density around transit
	Think Long Term  • Need to think about the future of the town, what will it look like? Should we be building the scale of the future?
	Carbon Footprint Matters     Carbon cost for building at scale is at 4-6 stories (a reference to Strong towns approach to regulation reduction)
	<ul> <li>Consider Economic Sweet Spot</li> <li>Construction costs drive heights. Certain forms are most buildable</li> <li>What are the thresholds for height and cost? When is it as cost-efficient to build mid-range to high?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Context Matters</li> <li>Building story increases should depend on local context and the heights of adjacent buildings</li> <li>What else is around the areas that allow increased height? It can be an upheaval to see a 6-story building next to an empty lot</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Design Matters</li> <li>Maintain green space/infrastructure along all corridors</li> <li>Too much bulk in new buildings without breaking it up and incorporating other features may not be as desirable as a building with mixed height levels</li> <li>Heights should depend on architectural design</li> <li>Greenery on rooftops; look at Vancouver</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Protect Viewsheds</li> <li>Keep views</li> <li>Heights should depend on the surrounding uses, viewsheds (emphasizing viewshed protection)</li> <li>Viewsheds could be given up if there are more rooftop gardens and patios that are accessible</li> </ul>

Area	Comments		
	1 Story Higher Everywhere		
	Potential straightforward strategy: increase stories by 1 floor		
	everywhere (ex. Areas where 2 stories allowed now have 3, areas		
	where 3 stories allowed now have 4, and so on)		
	Other Locations for Housing		
	<ul> <li>How is building reuse a part of the housing element conversation?</li> <li>Housing by Casa Grande HS</li> </ul>		
	Make a village for homeless residents over by Safeway?		
Transit-Oriented Centers			
Downtown SMART	As High as Needed		
Station	Allowing 4-6 stories makes sense here considering how flat the		
	area currently is, but if 7-8 is needed to create more housing, then		
	it might be appropriate in some places		
	<ul> <li>Why stop at 6? Need to think about the future – 30-40 years.</li> <li>Petaluma will be a city!</li> </ul>		
	Up to 8 Stories		
	8 stories but no higher		
	Up to 6 Stories		
	Models of European cities that keep to 6 stories – why go higher?		
	2 is not enough, not higher than 6. 4-6		
	These areas are perfect for 2-6		
	Up to 6 stories		
	Up to 4-5 Stories		
	4 stories feel right in this area		
	4-5 stories; 6 a little high		
	Depends on Mix of Uses		
	If the building is mixed-use, could have more variation in heights		
	Think about the SMART train and long-term planning. Bring		
	people back to this area.		
	No Change from Existing Conditions		
	Keep views: no larger than what is there now		
	Spread the housing out, there is the concern of congestion here		
	Attend Design/Landscaping		
	Landscaping between transit and housing, particularly along main		
	corridors		
Corona SMART Station	Include landscaping if we're going higher  Lots of Housing		
COTOTIA SIVIANT STATION	Lots of housing     Lots of housing here		
	Lots of nousing here     High density		
	Higher Near Station		

Area	Comments	
Alou		
	Should support more stories near the station	
	Up to 5 Stories	
	Larger is fine; 4-5 stories	
	Up to 4 Stories	
	• 3-4 stories	
	Integrate Mix of Uses	
	Couple with developments that make transit stations or a transit	
	hub	
	Connect to Mobility Infrastructure	
	Incorporate active transportation infrastructure. Bike parking	
	Establish a nexus point	
Corridors		
E. Washington	Needs Placemaking	
	This is not a place at the moment but a place to get through	
	Could be a gateway neighborhood	
	Depends on what happens with the fairgrounds	
	Issues of nothing there – placemaking issues	
	Up to 4+ Stories	
	Can go higher than 2	
	Can carry 3 and 4+	
	4 stories can make transit work	
	At least 4 stories	
Segments of McDowell	Up to 4+ Stories	
	Would like to see 3, 4+	
	At least 4 stories     At least 4 stories	
	Go taller when possible!	
	Adaptive Reuse of Shopping Centers	
	How tall should new buildings be when the reuse of shopping	
	centers and conversion into housing happen?	
	Heights should depend on the surrounding uses, viewsheds	
Segments of Petaluma	(emphasizing viewshed protection), and architecture design Up to 4+ Stories	
Blvd. North		
DIVU. INUITI	<ul><li>Can carry 3 and 4+</li><li>At least 4 stories</li></ul>	
	Go taller when possible!	
Segments of Petaluma	Up to 4+ Stories	
Blvd. South	Would like to see 3, 4+	
	At least 4 stories	
	Go taller when possible!	
Downtown		
Downtown	Maintain the Historic Character and Variety	
	<ul> <li>Keep historic character and similar to what's there now</li> </ul>	

Area	Comments
	<ul> <li>Preserve historic charm</li> <li>Keep the variety, would like to see it continued</li> <li>What mechanisms could help maintain the diversity?</li> <li>Sensitive area</li> </ul>
	Up to 8 Stories  • Not above 8
	<ul> <li>Up to 6 Stories</li> <li>Could sustain 6 stories in some locations, but don't want to see everything g up to 6</li> <li>Up to 6</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Up to 4 Stories</li> <li>Can carry 3, 4+</li> <li>Not higher than what's there now: 3-4 stories</li> </ul>

# Part 2: What should the City do to achieve the community's housing goals?

Topic	<b>Current Existing</b>	<b>Brainstormed Program</b>	<b>Workshop Ideas/Comments</b>
	Program	Ideas	
Homelessness	Support community-based partners	Safe parking program	<ul> <li>Services and housing for the unhoused –         opportunity sites for the entire neighborhood –         combine park and sustainability elements</li> <li>Focus on community development</li> <li>Small units and services in a village-type development</li> </ul>
Anti-Displacement	<ul> <li>Rent and resale controls</li> <li>Conversion prevention</li> <li>Universal design</li> <li>Renter assistance</li> </ul>	Tenant Advisory Board Tenant right-to-return and right-to-purchase  Tenant right-to-return and right-to-purchase	<ul> <li>Center Equity</li> <li>Consider the racial legacy behind RHNA</li> <li>Establish a Rental Registry</li> <li>Rental registry – could be a great database to know what is going on throughout the city</li> <li>A landlord would register the property with the city and the tenant board would oversee it</li> <li>Rental registry to get the data we need</li> <li>Just Cause Ordinance</li> <li>Protection ordinance</li> <li>Just Cause Tenant Priority for city council – housing preservation – anti-displacement</li> <li>TOPA and COPA</li> <li>TOPA and COPA</li> <li>TOPA/COPA tenant opportunity to purchase</li> <li>Rent-to-own measures</li> <li>Tenants have opportunities to purchase homes in unaffordable areas</li> </ul>
			Tenant Advisory Board

Topic	<b>Current Existing</b>	<b>Brainstormed Program</b>	<b>Workshop Ideas/Comments</b>
	Program	Ideas	
Fair Housing  Diverse Housing  Production	<ul> <li>Reasonable accommodation procedures</li> <li>Address complaints</li> <li>Inclusionary zoning</li> <li>Specific Plan</li> <li>Development standards</li> <li>Permit procedures</li> <li>Subsidies and fee reductions for</li> </ul>	Proactive landlord and tenant education Landlord registration Targeted neighborhood improvements Expand the capacity of current single-family zoning areas Permit housing in additional zones Housing overlay zones Utilize city and institutional property	Supports tenant advisory board     Want to address the historic wrongs (redlining)     Housing needs access to other resources     Consider proximity to grocery stores     Couple with supportive goods and services within walking distance  Build Complete Communities     Need to equitably create walkable and bikeable neighborhoods     Healthy food access and food deserts     Ensure affordable housing is near food options, or include that infrastructure     Mixed uses to put things people need where they
	affordable projects • Funding: grants, linkage fee	<ul> <li>Density minimums and banks</li> <li>Reducing parking requirements</li> <li>Restrictions on unit sizes in some cases</li> <li>Live-work, cottage, and other standards</li> <li>Workforce housing requirements</li> <li>Expanded density bonus opportunities</li> <li>Adjust fee structure</li> <li>Expand funding and financing pool</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Facilitate ADU Production</li> <li>ADUs make this a lot easier! - Make them efficient and affordable</li> <li>Streamline permitting of ADUs – incentivize inclusionary housing production</li> <li>Redevelop</li> <li>How can we reimagine our existing spaces to address climate goals?</li> <li>Strategy: adaptive reuse – use churches, large parking lots, unused areas than can transition into housing opportunities. Can also consider cityowned spaces adapted into housing or parks?</li> <li>Prioritize Affordable Housing</li> <li>More people consider creating affordability for people who work in Petaluma as a #1 priority</li> <li>Don't build above-market housing we don't need</li> </ul>

Topic	<b>Current Existing</b>	<b>Brainstormed Program</b>	<b>Workshop Ideas/Comments</b>
	Program	Ideas	
			<ul> <li>We end up with more market-rate than AH because it is expensive to build this way</li> <li>We need better market to AH ratios</li> </ul>
			Rethink Inclusionary Housing  • Discourage in-lieu fees
			Discourage in-lieu lees
			Public Housing
			<ul> <li>Priority for housing needed, and public housing entity</li> </ul>
			Diversify Housing Types
			<ul> <li>Increasing housing diversity is important – want more condos, apartments, etc. for all income levels</li> <li>Important to have options (ex. Diverse types of senior housing, starter homes, etc.)</li> <li>A diversity of units can lead to neighborhood development (allowing more ADUs, other densities, and uses in single-family neighborhoods, lessening distances people travel for their day-to-day needs)</li> <li>Tree house model – intergenerational housing</li> <li>Age in place</li> </ul>
			Workforce Housing     Workforce housing needs to live up to inclusionary onsite, dispersed, and part of the community to create more diverse environments     Workforce housing
			Special Needs Housing
Homeownership	Homebuyer assistance		Housing for foster children

Topic	<b>Current Existing</b>	<b>Brainstormed Program</b>	Workshop Ideas/Comments
	Program	Ideas	
Housing Preservation		Amnesty for illegal ADUs	<ul> <li>Vacancy tax</li> <li>Large corporation-owned sites need further regulation (large rental properties that are inconsiderate towards tenants and drastically increase rents)</li> </ul>
Other Comments			Align with Climate Goals
			<ul> <li>Only build housing that is needed, especially since construction has a high environmental cost</li> <li>Support for the question of how we decide what to build given finite resources</li> <li>Carbon budget allocation is based on priority of housing that is needed</li> <li>Targeted policy around carbon budget</li> <li>How do you determine the limits to construction based on environmental factors? What goes into that calculation?</li> </ul>
			Preserve Green Spaces
			<ul> <li>Petaluma has a lot of green spaces, but many have been given up through various development and planning processes – the community wants green spaces to be prioritized (do not displace existing spaces!), especially as the city becomes densified</li> <li>New housing developments need to accommodate greenery and increased access to light – this can be incorporated into objective design standards</li> </ul>
			Preserve Viewsheds
			<ul> <li>If viewsheds are taken by new and taller buildings, add rooftop gardens! And more accessible rooftop spaces and open spaces</li> </ul>

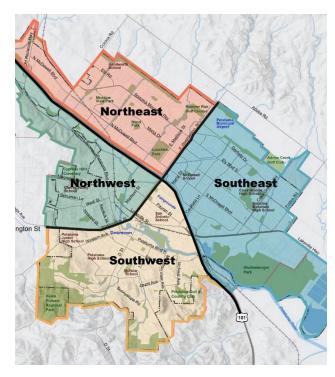
# **Demographic Polling Results**

# What type of housing do you live in?

Mentimeter







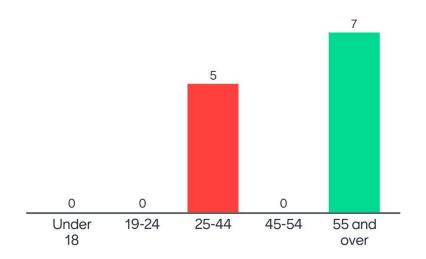
# What part of the city do you live in?





Age:

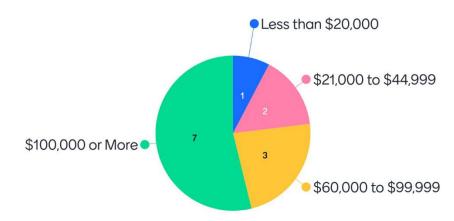
Mentimeter



12

# What is your annual household income?

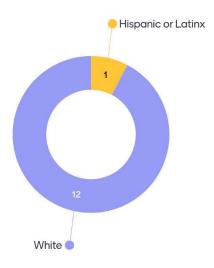
Mentimeter



13

# Race and Ethnicity: (may select more than one)

Mentimeter





# Homeownership: Do you rent or own your home?





# **Emailed Public Comments**

"Maybe I'm missing the point, but why is the city pushing for more housing when we are in an historic drought? Why are we bothering to drastically cut our water usage so the city can build more housing? I thought water was a finite resource. Aren't our streets / roads impacted enough? Do not see Marin County taking up the housing slack."

"After reading all these idealistic plans, I want to move! As it is, the increase of traffic from the Altura Apartments and the roundabout on Baywood/McDowell (people avoid that death trap and detour using St. Francis Dr.), I feel as though my neighborhood has become a freeway. It was very poor planning for the city to approve very limited parking for the Altura Apartments considering the neighborhood was already impacted with cars from the Baywood Arms. Why wasn't the bottom level of the Altura Apt. designated parking instead of more apartments as other apartments being built (as on Blvd. by Brodie's Tire)? I know people need a place to live, but people also need a place to park and all this cramming in with housing density is not only lowering our quality of life but impacting traffic making it dangerous to walk around the neighborhood. Not to mention the litter left by apartment residents who feel it is OK to empty the garbage from their cars on our lawns/ sidewalks. Since when is crowding people into an area a good use of space? Haven't seen the crime or traffic accidents diminishing. Unfortunately, this is why this socialistic/ social engineering agenda is backfiring. And where is all the building on the West Side???? Guess money talks.

Now the fairgrounds are being tackled with plans for high-density low-income housing??? Great, tomorrow's ghetto and future traffic nightmare and crime situation! Having planners from Oregon seems ridiculous as what interest do they have in this community other than getting a salary for their hair brain ideas?"