Community Conversations About Housing: 
Dialogue not Debate 

Peggy Jensen, Deputy County Manager 
ICMA Conference  October 22, 2019
A community collaborative working to close the jobs/housing gap
DECREASING JOBS/HOUSING RATIO

2010-14: 24
2010-15: 19
2010-16: 16
2010-17: 12
Approach

New Housing

Funding

Housing Policies

Land

Community Support

New Housing
Manager and City Council Interviews

Group interviews with **eight cities** during summer of 2017

Home for All commits to developing a new approach to community engagement

The vast majority of city managers interviewed feel that their councils are supportive of additional housing.

There is significant support among elected officials for affordable and workforce housing, though funding and the cost of land are seen as barriers.
Inviting the Pilot Cities

**The Ask**
- Help develop a new approach to community engagement
- Commit staff time
- Documented Council & City Manager support

**The Offer**
- Up to $30,000 in unrestricted grant funds
- Consulting support from Common Knowledge
- Staff support from Home for All
Four cities piloted the new approach in the winter of 2017 and spring of 2018.

Continuing engagement with six more cities in 2019 and 2020.
Engagement Program Participants
What Community Members are Learning

• Everyone is affected by high housing costs
• There is no one solution; many are needed
• There is more happening than I realized
• The problem is huge but together we can make progress
• There are many ways to stay informed or involved
What Cities are Learning

• There is broader support for housing solutions
• Advocates don’t represent the whole community
• Engaging residents builds trust
• Ongoing communication maintains trust
• The process can be used input on other issues
What Communities are Doing

• First 100% affordable housing project approved
• ADU regulations modified to promote more units
• General Plan updates moving forward
• Renter assistance ordinances approved
• Home sharing promoted
• Using approach to discuss climate readiness, business district improvements, transportation plans
A Different Approach to Engagement
Engaging the “Missing Middle” on Community Issues

- Strong Opposition
- Slight Opposition
- Not engaged
- Slight Support
- Strong Support
Mind Shift: Inviting a Helpful Public

• Taking **the city** out of the center

• Reframing to put **the issue** and **the community** at the center
Invest in Learning Before Decision-Making

INVITE PERSPECTIVES

Community outreach

Learning Space

SHARE UNDERSTANDING of key issues and each other

Decision Space

NARROW CHOICES

Review options and trade-offs

Decisions or actions
Traditional Public Meeting

City broadcasts information and collects input from residents
People engage with and learn from each other, elected officials and city staff listen and learn.
Our Process

• **Invite** more diverse participation
• **Listen** for community information needs
• **Learn** together and build shared understanding
• **Sustain** two-way communication and encourage collaborative action
Event Planning

• **Invite** more diverse participation
• **Listen** for community information needs
Outreach Goals & Activities

• Bring in **new perspectives** beyond advocates and people with fixed positions
• Find people who **care about the community** but are not civically involved
• Invite people to **help improve** their community instead of debate policy specifics
Using Existing Networks

- List of stakeholders
  - Businesses and Non-profits
  - Community organizations and groups
  - Religious and Cultural groups
  - Schools and Parent groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Contact(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arm's groups</td>
<td>Peninsula Museum of Art 1777 California Drive</td>
<td><a href="http://www.epmuseum.org/">www.epmuseum.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business (large)</td>
<td>Putnam Car Dealer</td>
<td>Kent Putnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auto-Rox Car Dealer</td>
<td>Kent Putnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broadway District Car Dealers</td>
<td>Cameron Wallman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trolley</td>
<td>Olga Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotel chairs (Bayfront)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business (small)</td>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>Geas Halverson, Economic Development Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coffee Shops (Nets, PMZ, Starbucks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber(s) of Commerce</td>
<td>Burlingame Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Geas Halverson, Economic Development Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burlingame Broadway Business Improvement District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burlingame Downtown Business Improvement District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last updated: 12/14/2017
Combination of Outreach Methods

- Newsletters/social media
- Online survey
- Intercept interviews
- Pop-ups
- Visit existing meetings
- Community partners
  - Local organizations
  - Individual “super connectors”
Inviting People Multiple Ways

- Flyers
  - Coffee shops, Rec Center, Train Station, City Hall, Library, etc.
- Facebook Page – Videos!
- Eventbrite
- Affordable Housing Interest List
- “Key Communicators”
- Press Release

“Talk to us about housing in Burlingame”
with our short 3-question survey

Let’s take our survey! It’s a chance to learn more about housing in Burlingame.

Join this community conversation about the future of housing in Burlingame. What mix of housing will help our community thrive?

Please RSVP at burlingamehousing.eventbrite.com

or go to www.surveymonkey.com/r/BurlingameHousing

These questions will help us understand what's on the top of people's minds when it comes to housing in Burlingame.
Event Design

- Invite more diverse participation
- Listen for community information needs
- **Learn** together and build shared understanding
Hosting a Learning Conversation

• Design for **mutual learning**

• What does the **City need to learn** about the community and housing?

• What do **community members need to learn** about:
  - The issue? Each other?
  - The city? Ways to be involved?
Meeting Format

• Warm Welcome
  o Share a meal
  o Provide childcare
  o Offer translation

• Talking Together
  o Assigned seating at tables of 8
  o Trained facilitator at each table
  o Two-hour meetings with 90 minutes for table conversations
1. How does the current housing climate affect you and the people you care about?

2. What are your hopes for the future of our community?
1. Based on your hopes for your community, which housing solutions should the city consider?
Ongoing Communication

- Invite more diverse participation
- Listen for community information needs
- Learn together and build shared understanding
- Sustain two-way communication and encourage collaborative action

Diagram:
- Reach out to invite more of your community
- Offer multiple pathways to sustain engagement
- Create occasions for learning together
- Listen for community understanding and information needs
Staying Connected

- Meeting Reports
- Website Updates
- Newsletters
- Additional Meetings
Core Service Agencies

The County's Core Service Agencies provide safety net services to San Mateo County residents in need of food, emergency housing assistance, emergency utility assistance, shelter, and other basic needs. The range of services each agency provides varies, but can include services such as immigration assistance, tax preparation, and health, wellness and education initiatives among many others.

Agencias de servicios básicos

Las agencias de servicios básicos del condado brindan servicios de red de seguridad a los residentes del Condado de San Mateo que necesitan alimentos, asistencia de emergencia para vivienda, servicios públicos, refugio y otras necesidades básicas. La gama de servicios que ofrece cada agencia varía, pero puede incluir servicios como asistencia de inmigración, preparación de impuestos, y programas de salud, bienestar y educación entre muchos otros.
Housing Resource Guide/Guía de Recursos de Vivienda

Redwood City and Community Partner Housing Resources

Redwood City y Asociados Recursos de Vivienda de la Comunidad

We are all connected. What happens to one part of the community impacts us all. Safe and affordable housing is important to our well-being. For parents with families, housing relates to good schools, a quality education and successful futures for their children. For working professionals, housing close to their employer means more living and less commuting. For those retired with adult children, affordable housing means that your children can have children and live close by. Affording a home in Redwood City and the broader Bay Area is becoming increasingly more challenging. The lack of affordable housing threatens our community’s well-being and our vision of a community for all ages. Achieving housing security for all in the community is a priority for the City and why the City Council is working to address this issue.
City of Burlingame: Projects Around Town Story Map

Projects Around Town Story Map

1. 1431 El Camino Real
2. 1491-93 Oak Grove Avenue Residential Development
3. 1740 Rollins Road & 842 Cowen Pump Station
4. 2019 Sidewalk Repair Program
5. 21 Park Road
6. 240 Lorton Avenue Mixed Use Development
7. 300 Airport Boulevard Development Project
8. 920 Baywater Avenue
9. 988 Howard Avenue Mixed Use Development
Community Engagement Manual

Home for All
Community Engagement
Resource Manual

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Community Engagement Program is an initiative of Home for All designed to experiment with the most up-to-date forms of community engagement in select communities within San Mateo County.
Peggy Jensen, Deputy County Manager
pjensen@smcgon.org

HomeforAllSMC.com
@HomeforAll SMC
www.SecondUnitCenterSMC.org
Susan Clark at Ckgroup.org