



District 8 Community Round Table – D8CRT

To: All District 8 Communities:

From: District 8 Community Round Table – Steering Committee

Date: April 16, 2021

Subject: D8CRT Position on San Jose Opportunity Housing Proposal

On April 10, 2021 the D8CRT Steering Committee met to discuss and consider a position on the San Jose General Plan Task Force’s August 20, 2020 proposal on Opportunity Housing.

On a unanimous vote, with one abstention, the D8CRT Steering Committee position on the San Jose General Plan Task Force’s proposal regarding Opportunity Housing is as follows:

1. We **OPPOSE** the General Plan Task Force’s proposal to consider and study Opportunity Housing CITYWIDE.
2. We **SUPPORT** San Jose Planning Staff's original recommendation to study Opportunity Housing “**in areas generally a half-mile walking distance around Transit Urban Villages, taking into consideration natural, human-made, and neighborhood boundaries, and on properties adjacent to existing multifamily housing types or properties designated for multifamily housing.**” with the following additional recommendations:
 - a. The study includes extensive CITYWIDE community outreach.
 - b. The study includes input from a wide variety of stakeholder groups including, but not limited to: neighborhood community groups, non-profits, developer groups, real estate groups, worship communities, environmental groups, etc.
 - c. The study occurs over a long enough period to conduct outreach meetings to include ample input from these stakeholder groups.
 - d. Whatever the final recommendation outcome, any proposal for implementation of Opportunity Housing, including draft design guidelines, be put to a vote of San Jose’s general population for a final decision.

Reasons for our Recommendation:

1. The GPTF citywide proposal will not achieve the intended outcome of providing a meaningful number of affordable housing units.
2. The GPTF citywide proposal will not achieve the intended outcome of integrating communities of color into more “affluent” communities. This is primarily because the GPTF proposal EXEMPTS all single-family communities that were developed with Specific Plans or Planned Development zonings.
3. Older, less expensive homes and typically larger homesites will be highly sought after to develop the maximum density (up to 4 units with 3 additional ADUs), thus gentrifying older, less expensive communities. This will likely produce more expensive homes, the opposite outcome than what is desired.
4. Communities where Opportunity Housing is implemented citywide will experience more noise, traffic, parking shortages and higher city service needs than those where Opportunity Housing is NOT implemented.

5. The concept of Opportunity Housing has been implemented, or is being considered in other states. So far, the feedback has been inconclusive, with primarily negative results or long-standing litigation.
6. There is no clearly defined definition of Opportunity Housing qualifications including, but not limited to: FICO score, minimum expected down payment and expected family household income level.
7. There is no ceiling or cap on the Opportunity Housing pricing, especially for multi-unit complexes. The concern is that a unit in a tri-plex or quad-plex may cost more per square foot than the median price of single-family homes in a situation with multiple bids.
8. There is no information on what the value impact will be on existing single-family homes.
9. The GPTF study does not have clear data on how many people in Opportunity Housing will utilize public transit or how OH residents would affect local traffic impacts.
10. The Opportunity Housing seems to only address housing and not a comprehensive plan which includes needed services such as local businesses, jobs, restaurants, and grocery stores, all within walking distance. A prime example of this live/work/shop environment would be Rivermark Village in Santa Clara.

Therefore, the D8CRT Steering Committee submits to the general voting membership its position for additional consideration.

Sincerely,

D8CRT Steering Committee

NOTE: Here is additional background included for transparency in the D8 community letter. It may not be necessary in a letter to the SJ City Council or others familiar with the work of the GPTF:

BACKGROUND:

On August 20, 2020 San Jose’s General Plan Task Force 4-year review (GPTF) committee considered San Jose Planning’s proposal on Opportunity Housing. (For full transparency and perspective, we’ve included the positions of the District 8 members on the Task Force)

City Planning’s Proposal:

“Staff recommends continuing to explore allowing up to four units on parcels with a Residential Neighborhood land use designation **in areas generally a half-mile walking distance around Transit Urban Villages**, taking into consideration natural, human-made, and neighborhood boundaries, **and on properties adjacent to existing multifamily housing types or properties designated for multifamily housing.**”

After hearing public comment and extensive discussion by taskforce members regarding the Pros and Cons of Staff’s recommendation, the Task force voted on a modified proposal as follows:

“Task Force member **Juan Estrada** made a substitute motion to allow up to four units on properties with a Residential Neighborhood land use designation citywide and for staff to complete the workplan outlined in the August 13, 2020 Task Force memo. Councilmember **Sylvia Arenas** seconded the motion.”

Motion Passed 22 – 12 (Support: CM Sylvia Arenas; **Opposed:** TF Members Jim Zito, Bonnie Mace)

Another Motion was also proposed as follows:

“[Task Force member] Linda LeZotte made a new motion to recommend that “**during the period of study [for Opportunity Housing] that staff prioritize Urban Village implementation.**” Second by Lesley Corsiglia.”

Motion Passed 27 – 6 (Support: TF Members Jim Zito, Bonnie Mace; **Opposed:** CM Sylvia Arenas)