



General Plan Update Taskforce Co-chairs Teresa Alvarado and David Pandori
Taskforce Staff Michael Brilliot, Planning Dept.
via email, sent 8/20/2020

re: Opportunity Housing

Dear Co-chairs Alvarado and Pandori, and Planner Brilliot,

The District 6 Neighborhood Leaders Group (D6NLG), an association established over a decade ago, is comprised of officers, boardmembers and involved community representatives from the multitude of neighborhood associations across District 6 in San José. We have been involved for years in advocating for developing San José into a safe, attractive, and inviting city.

We have been following the General Plan Update with considerable interest, especially in regard to “Opportunity Housing.” According to the maps presented at last week’s Taskforce meeting, proposed changes could affect significant swaths of the city, including a major portion of District 6.

We are concerned by a number of Opportunity Housing’s potential impacts. We want to feel sure that the proposals have been carefully evaluated, and thoroughly and publicly discussed, so as to minimize any “unintended consequences.”

As we understand it, “Opportunity Housing” is a proposal to allow “by right” the conversion or replacement of any qualifying single-family house in the zone with a duplex, triplex, or four-plex in defined areas of the city. Combined with existing policies allowing two Auxiliary Dwelling Units (ADUs) plus a “mini-ADU”, this seems to allow the replacing of any qualifying single house with up to seven dwelling units. We understand the desire to provide a solution to “the housing crisis,” but we would like the Taskforce and the city to take the time and effort to thoroughly study the implications of the proposed changes.

- Will this make San José even more of a “bedroom community,” and further exacerbate the city’s structural budget deficit by reducing the “jobs per employed resident” (J/ER) ratio?
- What are the impacts on the city’s infrastructure? Will the collected development fees be sufficient to provide the park expansions and improvements needed to accommodate the additional residents? Do the streets and sewer systems currently have adequate capacity, or will funding be available to provide any necessary expansion?
- What are the socio-economic impacts of the proposal? Will this result in significant conversion of single-family housing into multiplexes, resulting in a shortage of “entry-level” housing? Since one can’t buy a single unit in a multiplex or an individual ADU, the development of Opportunity Housing seems likely to make the parcels more valuable,

The logo for District 6 Neighborhood Leaders Group features a stylized 'D6' in a blue square, an 'N' in a red square, and an 'L' in a yellow square. To the right of these squares, the text 'District 6 Neighborhood Leaders Group' is written in a bold, black, serif font.

District 6 Neighborhood Leaders Group

which in turn will further divide our residents into “landlords” and “renters”, rather than “home-owners.”

- What are the impacts on established neighborhoods? Will our residents continue to be willing to invest in remodeling and improving their homes, given that their neighbors might instead opt to “scrape and replace” their homes to replace them with multiplexes?
- What are the environmental impacts of these proposals? Will they result in the loss of the city’s tree-cover and of water-permeable landscape as backyards are converted into dwelling units and associated hardscape? What are the implications to the greenhouse gas (GHG) and urban runoff policies?

We join others in encouraging solutions to the city’s housing challenges, but we are concerned that the Opportunity Housing proposal may be rushed through without an adequate consideration of its consequences, both intended and unintended.

Please allow enough time for a thorough and public consideration of implications of the Opportunity Housing proposal.

Thank you.

James Rincon, Chair, D6NLG

cc: Mayor Sam Liccardo, City of San José
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