



# Summary –Special Needs & Affordable Housing Outreach

## 21 Elements

October 2013- April 2014

At the request of local jurisdictions, 21 Elements organized four panels of experts to provide information and policy suggestions on affordable housing and special needs populations. The following document provides a brief summary of their policy recommendations. Please see the end of the document for a complete list of panel participants. For more information see meeting summaries...

Several themes emerged from all the panels. Many speakers talked about the importance of multi-family housing in mixed-used, transit-oriented neighborhoods. This type of development is necessary because it accommodates seniors and people with disabilities who cannot depend on cars for transportation. The reduced dependence on cars and increased density also helps meet sustainability goals. Additionally, many jurisdictions in San Mateo County have little or no vacant land and therefore cannot meet their RHNA requirements without rezoning.

Panelists also discussed the importance of adding predictability to the development process and the necessity of removing excessive regulations to encourage development.

### **Policy Suggestions**

#### **People with Developmental Disabilities**

Collaborate with public agencies to identify sites and adaptive re-use opportunities for developmentally disabled persons. Create inclusionary zoning, mixed-use zoning and zoning overlays with requirements for ADA accessible dwellings/development.

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### **People with Disabilities**

In Housing Elements and other policy, be sure to use the statutory definition of people with disabilities. Include reasonable accommodation in Housing Elements.

### **Changes to Zoning Code**

Examine density and FAR requirements. If they are out of balance, consider a variable density system where small units or senior units only count as a fraction of a unit (21 Elements will prepare a variable density fact sheet). More generally, consider increasing the density beyond 30 to allow better design and accommodate more housing.

Reduce parking requirements, or creating separate parking requirements for affordable housing. Affordable housing residents own fewer cars than the general population, and so parking requirements both add unnecessary costs to affordable housing development and also are not a very productive use of land.

Benefit zoning and overlay zoning can be effective ways of incentivizing affordable or special needs housing development without altering the zoning code.

### **Other Policy**

Consider implementing policies to protect tenants such as anti-displacement ordinances, strengthened condo conversion policies, just cause eviction ordinance, and rent control.

Facilitate more public education and outreach. The political will and public support necessary to meet San Mateo County's housing need is hard to generate only once every eight years. Additionally, ensure that public participation is accessible to all: pay attention to the location, time and languages of public events.

Pay attention not only to creating new affordable housing, but protecting at-risk affordable housing such as mobile homes and older housing near transit.

Continue to work regionally; the nexus study is a great example. In another example, Redwood City collaborated with HIP Housing to fund an affordable project in Menlo Park.

Consider creating incentives for home sharing.

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Consider implementing programs to target the small group of chronically homeless individuals who generate the largest cost to the county through repeated ER visits.

## **Opportunities for Feedback**

MidPen Housing Corporation has offered to meet with jurisdictions to discuss available land inventory.

Law Foundation of Silicon Valley will also give feedback on housing elements to ensure that they are creating the legal environment for "fair housing choice."

## **List of Panelists**

### **Developmental Disabilities, October \_ 2013**

Golden Gate Regional Center, Preston Lam, Bill Pickel and Gabriel Rogin,,

### **Developers, December 5, 2103**

Mercy Housing , Tim Dunn  
MidPen Housing Corporation, Nevada Merriman  
Habitat for Humanity, Deven Richardson  
Van Meter Williams Pollack, Rick Williams  
Bridge Housing, Brad Wiblin

### **Advocates and Funders, February 6, 2014**

Vu-Bang Nguyen, Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
Heather Hood, Enterprise Community Partners  
Josh Hugg, Housing Leadership Council – San Mateo  
Karyl Eldridge, Peninsula Interfaith Action  
Melissa Morris, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley  
Paul Campos Building Industry Association

### **Special Needs and Sustainability, April 10, 2014**

Kate Harr, HIP Housing  
Pam Cohen, Disability Rights California  
Adrienne Etherton, Sustainable San Mateo  
Melissa Platte, Mental Health Association of San Mateo County  
Brian Greenberg, InnVision Shelter Network

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