

## **Burlingame Housing Workshop #1: Questions and Comments**

\*Questions raised by those in attendance at Housing Workshop #1 on 3/18/14

*What can happen if the City doesn't follow State law and adopt a Housing Element certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)?*

**The City opens itself up to legal challenges. It could also represent a loss of local control in planning, in that if there is a legal challenge a judge could determine a remedy to a challenge.**

*How do smaller communities meet Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) targets?*

**Projected housing need is generated by the State and allocated by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) based on community characteristics, such as size and proximity to transit, as well as population and job growth projections for each community.**

*Has Burlingame challenged the need to plan for these allocations?*

**No city that has challenged the need to plan for housing allocations has been successful. However San Mateo County cities worked together in distributing the County's allocations, and Burlingame was successful in challenging the initial allocation it was assigned.**

*Can the City drop out of ABAG?*

**Dropping out of ABAG would not change the requirement that the City would still need to address the housing numbers, which come from the State.**

*How do you stop the State from wanting more units than their current target [863 units]?*

**The existing Housing Element already plans for 1004 units, higher than the 863 units in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation. In this sense, the City already has a buffer it can work with and does not need to change any land use or zoning designations to meet the current target. This current Housing Element Update process will review the opportunity sites identified in the previous Housing Element to ensure the sites continue to meet community objectives, will meet the target, and continue to provide a buffer.**

*Is one strategy to turn existing homes into more units?*

**The City would avoid pursuing this option. The analysis typically focuses on determining sites with development potential – these sites may be vacant, underused or have a potential for reuse. In the last Housing Element Update, ample sites were identified with capacity without requiring any existing homes to be converted into more units.**

*Can we or how do we include accessory units (i.e., "in-law" units or "granny flats")?*

**The City already has policies and standards for allowing accessory units on properties where there is sufficient lot area and ability to provide additional parking. These policies and standards are anticipated to continue.**

*Do smaller units attract developers?*

**The City has found that there is a market for smaller units. As part of the Downtown Specific Plan, the City mandated smaller units in new residential projects, and there have been a number of new projects featuring smaller units being approved or under review.**

*Comment: there is a need/desire for mixed use (lofts over shops).*

**This will be examined and considered in the Housing Element. In general, the Housing Element should identify a range of types of housing so to accommodate a variety of households and income levels.**

*Will programs look at fee generation through a variety of means?*

**Yes, the City can look at linking fees to housing demand. The City is participating in a County-wide nexus study that will evaluate the relationship between the economy and housing demand. The study may consider tools such as impact fees, inclusionary housing provisions and other considerations.**

*Comment: There is rental pressure. People who can afford rents are already living here, high rents can force larger households into smaller apartments.*

**The Housing Needs Assessment, as part of the Housing Element update, will look at topics like overcrowding and overpayment. There can be additional focus on market characteristics in the City.**

*Any other considerations about people leaving San Francisco for Burlingame because they can no longer afford to live there or want to spend their money on better homes in Burlingame?*

**The City is required to meet the RHNA targets for each income level (276 Very-Low, 144 Low, 155 Moderate, 288 Above-Moderate). The household incomes of those moving into Burlingame would not influence the number of units that must be planned by each income level. In other words, the City would still need to plan for 276 Very-Low Income, 144 Low Income, 155 Moderate Income and 288 Above-Moderate Income units within Burlingame regardless of where people moved from and what their income levels may be.**

*Can you look at the percentage of renters versus homeowners compared to countywide percentages?*

**Yes, it will be included in the analysis.**

*What is the difference between using averages and medians in analysis?*

**Generally averages are not used for this type of analysis because very large or very small numbers could skew the results. Medians (the midpoint of the full range) generally provides a more reliable measure.**

*How do we account for senior income in analysis?*

**The U.S. Census provides data on senior income, age and tenure. This information is presented in the Housing Element. HCD also requires consideration of senior populations as part of the Housing Needs Assessment for each Housing Element.**

*More information*

**The City will prepare an FAQ on the City's website and upload documents from the meetings.**