



**SOCIOECONOMIC PROSPERITY FOCUS AREA:
Housing Policy Working Group
July 22, 2011**

Break-Out Group Policy Concepts/Statements

Explanation: The Housing Working Group concluded with a participatory exercise. Participants in each of four break-out groups, facilitated by Plan Tucson staff, spent time individually writing down on an exercise worksheet initial concepts/statements for consideration in housing policy development for Plan Tucson. Participants then shared their ideas with the group as a whole while group facilitators captured highlights on flip charts. Transcriptions of the flip charts are presented below. Transcriptions of the individual worksheets are presented in a separate document. The exercise instructions and exercise sheets are also available as separate document.

Break-out Group #1
(Facilitator/Scribe: Ann Vargas)

- Mixed affordability – promote housing for all levels. Not everyone wants a site built house or homeownership.
- Readapt and rehab distressed units with green building/energy efficient features to serve diverse populations (co-housing model for aging, low-income)
- Scarce resources for homeless services should target the variety of populations most at risk of becoming homeless.
- The City needs a bigger vision for older neighborhood preservation (not case-by-case). There needs to be a cohesive approach and a public education campaign.
- Issues like energy efficiency need to be highlighted for older neighborhoods and residents who have little understanding/access to information need education. E.g. older/senior residents need to learn energy efficiency through Pima Council on Aging (PCOA).
- There should be greater housing density in business districts.
- There should be an affordability requirement/program in transit oriented development areas.

- Where there is higher density mixed-use development there should be a requirement for developer coordination with stakeholders and a plan to provide housing and basic services with the new development (in context).
- Those developers building higher density projects in proximity to older neighborhoods need to buy, fund, and deed restrict properties for historic and housing preservation.
- There should be an incentive to maintain a balance between new development and preservation, and housing and other basic services.
- There should be a neighborhood-based needs assessment where new development is planned.
- There should be tax breaks for homeowners who revitalize their homes.
- There needs to be a new model for transitional housing so that residents are not forced to move out after transitional housing support or housing term expire. They should be allowed to stay in the unit.
- The community needs to work with the housing industry (e.g. landlords) to mitigate and reduce the barriers that prevent access to housing. (e.g. low credit scores, non-violent prisoners who are released)
- There need to be incentives for public-private infill projects including businesses on vacant, neglected parcels.
- Developers should be required to do asset-based development with a long-term investment in the area, not just turn a profit.
- There need to be new under writing standards to balance vertical financing.
- Neighborhood parks (especially those that closed) should be maintained.
- There should be a set-aside of affordable housing in high-end, luxury residential development.
- The City should have a sliding scale development fee schedule based on the amount of affordable housing that is developed.
- It is imperative to do an assessment of the local infrastructure for new housing development.
- Any loss of affordable housing should require one-for-one replacement. E.g. Coronado
- The City should track affordable housing units/stock including the terms of affordability, with a plan for maintaining housing.
- The City needs to enforce its own zoning; e.g. Jefferson Park and 207 issue.

Break-out Group #2

(Facilitator/Scribe: Chris Kaselemis/Mitchell Edwards)

- As a proposed policy or action: Can we speak to the homeless to get direct feedback about housing? Match their needs with available stock.
- * Location: Locate housing along planned and existing transit – encourage development of affordable housing along transit routes to ensure access to services.
- Transit hubs should include a variety of housing types.
- More housing similar to the HUD 811 (housing for the mentally disabled) – need is greater than supply.
- Promote green building, especially infill in lower socio-economic areas.
- * Prioritize the rehab and acquisition of historic vacant properties (to use as affordable housing).
- Dedicating more usable land to CHDOs (Community Housing Development Organizations) so they can develop new housing projects on usable parcels. Added by group: the land available for development should be along transit lines and within close proximity to the needed services for the particular population.
- Mandate desert landscaping.
- Use transfer of development rights to allow more dense development along the edges which can help preserve historic properties within the core of historic neighborhoods.
- Amenitize existing neighborhoods with parks, community gardens, farmers markets.
- Better enforce building codes. Promote buildings that are more appropriate to our location/climate (energy efficiency, building materials, home orientation)
- Offer additional incentives for home ownership to educators, police, public workforce (workforce housing).
- Subsidize the cost of rehab/renovation of older homes through discounted building permits.
- Utilize the Housing Rehab Collaborative to serve 10 – 15 Rio Nuevo neighborhood homes per year.
- Keep the “10% affordable housing” policy from current Gen Plan.
- Housing counseling should occur prior to going under contract – should also talk about pros and cons of renting (homeownership is not the best choice for everyone – renting is better for some).

- * Include a more comprehensive calculation of building energy costs (remove transportation of materials from calc.) in built environment – City of Tucson to certify – can advertise our methods.
- Revise current Gen Plan policy #5 to read, “Promote housing opportunities (rent or own) that meet the needs for all economic sectors of the population.”

* Group consensus for these

Break-out Group #3 (Facilitator/Scribe: Maria Gayosso)

Note: Participants discussed and reached consensus on all of the following policy concepts / statements:

- We have to establish the guidelines of the type of housing that needs to be preserved. Some considerations: affordability, demographics, amenities in the neighborhood.
- Establish a database with assessment of homes that need to be rehab/repaired/preserved.
- We need to encourage infill through higher density rezoning.
- Should be focus on affordability for all income brackets? Efficiency and high value in mind. Let’s talk about income scales.
- Create and use redevelopment tools to assist with land assemblage.
- Transportation/education/jobs needs to be integrated into planning and redevelopment.
- Land Use Code needs to be updated to current needs, to allow higher densities in corridors and employment centers.
- Housing mix needs to address income ranges, access to services.
- Probably less rentals are needed in some neighborhoods and more in others.
- A market needs to be created for higher density housing. People are switching to urban living, but markets change.

Note: Participants did not have sufficient time to discuss and reach consensus on the following items:

- Seattle’s urban village concept failed.
- How do we make attractive higher-density housing?
- Housing quality needs to incorporate what people can actually afford, as well as energy efficiency.
- We need to recognize the trend from home ownership to rental.

- Financial institutions are too much in control of decision-makers in government.
- Jobs/housing balance. How do we evaluate this? Connect the jobs/housing/development imbalance. The only way to do it is through redevelopment. For instance, we have industrial land that is not being used to its full potential.
- Any policy should be market-driven. City should provide incentives for energy/water efficiency.
- Define Housing Quality. Should include access to amenities and services.
- Imposing green requirements that do not actually result in efficiency/cost effectiveness could be detrimental to housing.
- Housing Design. Flexibility should be provided. No one size fits all policies.
- Resources. Funding Sources. Bond programs for energy efficiency and historic preservation.
- We need the zoning in place along the streetcar route.
- We need higher-density along corridors.
- We need to map the zoning designations outside city limits.

Break-out Group #4

(Facilitator/Scribe: Rebecca Ruopp)

Note: Some reordering undertaken in transcription to move ideas most specifically addressing housing first and other ideas relevant to housing, but broader, second. Participants did not voice disagreement with the broad concepts though discussion suggested that there might be some differing opinions about specifics.

- Policy #4 of the 2001 General Plan, which supports a mix of housing types, should be carried forward in some way. *(Policy reads: “Continue to coordinate plans for provision of a variety of types of quality housing and related services that include neighborhood revitalization, owner-occupied rehabilitation, home buyer opportunities, rental housing, transitional housing, and emergency housing.”)*

Clarification Requested. Someone asked whether the mix was being interpreted as different types of housing in different places or a mix of different types of housing in the same place. The participant who proposed the ideas said the latter.

Comment: Can't dictate mix of housing in subdivisions.

Suggestion: Reward builders for mixing housing types. Provide incentives – both monetary and through Land Use Code.

- Preservation of existing affordable housing – don't lose what we have – work toward a balance of homeownership and rental.

Comment: *More expensive to demolish.*

Suggestion: *Provide incentive programs.*

- If we have affordability goals, they should be tied to the Federal/HUD definition of “affordability”.

Discussion: *There were comments from several participants about the range of interpretations of “affordability.”*

Question Asked: *How do we increase affordability?*

- "Incentivize" energy efficiency for aging housing stock.
- Housing locations should be fully in concert with urban design (smart growth) plan

Suggestion: *Make part of regulatory process.*

Comment: *Were good ideas in plan done for Houghton area – but it was the wrong location*

- Make live work units possible.
- Prepare for aging population – affordability & accessibility

Suggestion: *Obtain input from lots of people – more accurate support data for affordability and accessibility needs. Have Ward Offices do focus groups – Where do constituents want to live?*

Comment: *Walk sores are useful in considering accessibility.*

- Preservation important, but not in isolation. There needs to be a balanced approach in urban design/land use scheme.
- Re-densify Tucson – provide intensity along transit corridors, etc. Barrios a good example of denser housing.
- Revisit neighborhood plans to allow density
- In thinking about neighborhood revitalization, should ask whether it will make any difference in getting people to move there?
- As part of a revitalization approach should provide a re-landscaping “pool” – that is, a place that people could go to and get native landscaping.
- Revisit City policy on where landscaping is permitted.