



Continuing the Conversation: Pacifica Community Members Take Part in Second Housing Dialogue



Purpose

Over the last several years, the increasing cost of housing has created challenges for people throughout the Bay Area, including here in Pacifica. During the past two months, the City of Pacifica has hosted conversations to learn more about how residents have been affected by the issue of housing, and to explore ways we can work together as a community to address our housing needs. The City partnered with *Home for All*, a county-wide collaborative of local governments, schools, businesses and nonprofit organizations addressing housing challenges in San Mateo County, to host the conversations.

The purpose of these conversations was to provide community members a chance to talk and listen to each other, develop shared understanding about housing challenges in Pacifica, and identify solutions that reflect community values. Prior to the latest community conversation, the City has devoted considerable attention to the issue of housing and receiving community feedback:

- The Pacifica City Council's 2019-2020 adopted priorities include supporting housing affordability initiatives.
- The City reached out to teachers, small business owners, faith communities, and others to hear their concerns about housing and invite them to participate in the community conversation series. Outreach also included an online survey series¹ that asked community members to reflect on their experiences with housing.
- On April 13, 2019, over 100 people came together for the first *Pacifica Talks Housing* conversation. Community members, including new and longtime residents, business owners, and people who work in Pacifica but do not live in the city, listened to each other and expressed their opinions, dreams and questions about the future. Members of the Pacifica City Council, Pacifica Planning Commission and Jefferson Union High School District Board of Trustees, as well as County Supervisor Don Horsley, attended as listeners.



¹ <https://tinyurl.com/yysxnh93>



Format

The second conversation was held on Tuesday, May 21 at Ingrid B. Lacy Middle School. Over 100 community members attended, including some who participated in the first community conversation, as well as a large share of first-time attendees. Participant make-up was similar to the first community conversation, but included more diversity among age, length of residency, and race of attendees. Spanish interpretation was also provided.

The second community conversation followed up on the first conversation by continuing to discuss community values, exploring the City of Pacifica's upcoming actions around housing and land use, collecting feedback on future housing options, and connecting community members with resources to take action.

Community members were seated at either bilingual or monolingual tables with trained facilitators leading small-group discussions. Planning commissioners, elected officials and staff listened in on the discussion. Feedback was collected from the group discussions as well as individual input sheets.

Inclusive Outreach

Before the conversation, City staff and many Pacifica community organizations helped to spread the word. Whether at churches, community meetings, or personal face-to-face or phone invitations, the desire to encourage a broad-based participation drove the effort. The community conversation series was also promoted through a variety of methods including:

- [Connect with Pacifica](#), the City's weekly e-newsletter
- Next Door social network
- Facebook and other social media
- Flyers
- Announcements at public meetings

The City benefitted from tremendous community partners who helped the City reach diverse audiences. City staff was delighted to meet and engage with so many community members around these important housing issues and hopes to maintain these connections in the future.



Community Conversation Highlights

During the April conversation, community members said they would like to see housing solutions that align with community values and their hopes for the future. Based on this input, the City presented more detailed information about the following solutions during the May 21 meeting:

- Infill development
- Mixed-use development
- Below-market Rate (BMR) Housing
- Affordable housing
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

- Home sharing

The first portion of the May 21 meeting provided additional information about local housing conditions and revisited the values expressed in the first meeting. There was strong agreement in both meetings that Pacifica valued

having a tight-knit, diverse community with good transportation that was safe and respectful of Pacifica’s natural resources.

The second half of the meeting featured a presentation with details about the housing solutions listed above. Through table discussions, participants shared their thoughts about which solutions would best match Pacifica’s needs and fit into the City’s community character. The complete May 21 presentation is available on the [City website](#). For residents interested in directly helping to address Pacifica’s housing challenges, the City provided resources for building ADUs and home sharing through HIP Housing, a countywide housing nonprofit².

Key Takeaways from the Table Discussion

Community members at the first and second meetings shared similar values and experiences around housing. For many, the shortage of quality affordable homes in Pacifica has had adverse impacts on their families and friends. Several participants shared that the people they grew up with in Pacifica were being pushed out by the rising cost of rent or that they were at risk of displacement themselves. There was a broad consensus that Pacifica should be a community with people from across the income spectrum and that Pacifica needed to act to protect this economic diversity. Many Pacificans also wanted to preserve a safe, diverse, and environmentally conscious community. Residents wanted to know their neighbors, protect Pacifica’s beautiful open spaces, and improve transportation options (especially public transportation).



“Tough decisions need to be made, and people are talking about the issue, which is good.”

– Participant



² Home sharing is when a homeowner rents a room in their house to a tenant. [HIP Housing](#) is a local nonprofit that helps match homeowners with a spare room to low-income community members looking for an affordable place to stay, and provides informational resources to support a positive home-sharing experience.



Several options to tackle the shortage of quality affordable homes were widely popular with residents. The strategic use of infill and mixed-use development got the most enthusiastic reaction, with a theme emerging that housing types other than single-family residences will need to be part of Pacifica’s future. There was strong interest in finding ways to reduce regulations and streamline the approval process for new housing options. Community members were especially interested in housing teachers, seniors and those who worked in Pacifica. ADUs were quite a popular housing option. Several people said that loosened regulations or financial incentives should help boost the construction of ADUs. Although participants generally agreed there was no single solution to tackle Pacifica’s housing challenges, there was broad agreement that the community must come together soon to develop a comprehensive response to the current housing situation.

“I am more educated about the community and the need that we have here in Pacifica.”

– Participant

Upcoming City Actions Related to Housing

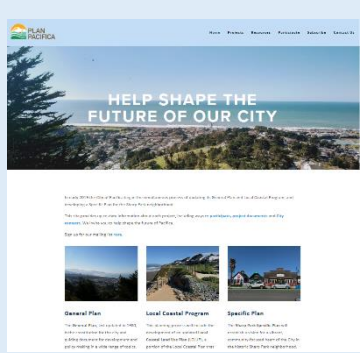
- Unhoused in Pacifica (UP) Task Force
 - Joint effort by City of Pacifica and Pacifica Resource Center to assemble diverse stakeholders to research and define the unhoused and over-sized vehicle challenges in Pacifica and assess potential solutions.
- *Plan Pacifica* Process
 - Community meetings in June and July to receive input on the General Plan, Local Coastal Program, and Sharp Park Specific Plan. These documents will guide Pacifica’s development for the next 20 years.

Next Steps

Pacifica residents were enthusiastic to continue the conversation and were eager to learn more about what the City will be doing around the issue of housing.

To stay involved and to learn more:

- Visit the [Plan Pacifica](#) webpage
- Subscribe to [Plan Pacifica’s Updates](#)
- Visit the City’s [Pacifica Connects](#) webpage
- Share this meeting report with people who were not able to attend
- Attend City meetings on the topics of interest to you



Stay Involved

To learn more about upcoming planning efforts, including the General Plan and Local Coastal Program, visit the Plan Pacifica webpage at planpacifica.org