



Milpitas Housing Element Stakeholder Interviews Summary Results

1. Overview

The City of Milpitas is in the process of updating its long-term vision and implementation plan for housing, known as the Housing Element. The Housing Element is part of the City's General Plan, and its purpose is to facilitate the production of a variety of housing types, at different income levels, to accommodate all households and family types. Cities are required by State law to update their Housing Element every eight years, and the City of Milpitas is now updating its Housing Element to plan for the City's projected housing needs during the next eight years between 2023 and 2031.

To gain insight into the housing perspectives of a diversity of community members in Milpitas, the Consultant Team conducted a series of stakeholder interviews with participants representing advocates for the unhoused, businesses, the City, housing advocates in the nonprofit sector, nonprofit and for-profit developers, residents, and groups working with youth and families (particularly Hispanic/Latinx and Asian/Asian American). Another key purpose of these interviews was to reach and elevate the voices of those that have not been historically represented in planning processes. These groups include the Hispanic/Latinx and Asian/Asian American communities, groups working with youth and families, and advocates for the unhoused.

This report summarizes the stakeholder interview results by group, and will inform the Housing Element's assessment of needs and constraints.

The interview questionnaire consisted of general questions asked to all stakeholders and several specific questions relevant to each group (see Section 5 of this report for the list of questions.) The interviews were conducted from mid-February 2022 to early May 2022. A total of 31 representatives participated in this stakeholder interview process. The list of participating organizations and interview questions are included at the end of the report.

More information about the project is available at <https://www.milpitashousingelement.com>.



2. High-Level Summary

Housing Strengths

Affordable Housing

- City has tapped into county bonds and utilized land opportunities to tap into the County's Measure A
- Affordable housing ordinance
 - Commercial impact fee included helps with funding
 - Harder for developers to pay an in-lieu fee instead of building affordable units

New Development

- Planning and approval of new housing development has improved
- Formal approval of California Circle project with substantial housing designates as affordable for low- and moderate-incomes
- Planning grant for opportunity zones to increase density in residential areas and introduce residential and mixed use in shopping sites
- ADUs
 - ADU Monday has been a very successful model
 - City staff got a \$850k grant for an ADU toolkit that walks planners through the entire process
 - An online tool will be available for knowing if your location allows for attached or detached ADU, and potential costs depending on square footage
 - Incentive and legalization programs

City Services

- Rent relief program has been a success

Legislation

- SB 35 helped expedite construction
- SB9 will allow for split lots and duplexes

Housing Weaknesses

Homelessness Issue

- Needs to be addressed more holistically, such as:
 - Trust building through case management
 - Temporary financial assistance
 - Resources for people to clean their records, which is required to get a housing voucher
 - Shelter and soup kitchen, which the city currently does not have
 - Prevention focus
- More funding for nonprofits supporting this population

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- Requires regional collaboration but that also restricts city control (e.g., Home Key is county-funded so cannot have a say who goes into supportive housing)

Specific Groups

- Affordable housing needs to be accessible and provide on-site services for those with disabilities
- Need for assisted living for the senior population
- Essential workers (e.g., teachers, police, first responders, service industry workers) can no longer afford to live here

High Housing Costs

- The city has lost affordable housing:
 - Rents continue to increase
 - Few permits are allocated to lower income housing
 - Some affordable housing has become market-rate
- Consequences include:
 - Overcrowding
 - Younger generations not being able to stay
 - Homeownership becoming unattainable
 - Lower income people being pushed out
 - More people at risk of becoming unhoused
- Relate to other needs that are also rising in cost (e.g., food, clothes, daycare)

Development Constraints

- Can put a strain on existing infrastructure
- City staffing shortages delay process
- Uncertainty created by community and political objections to affordable housing
- Nonprofit developers have a hard time developing mixed-use projects. Any serious amount of retail makes it very hard, but around 1,000 square feet of retail can be accommodated
- Dispersing inclusionary units reduces financial feasibility
- Other barriers:
 - Fees
 - High land cost
 - Very little subsidy
 - Construction costs
 - Labor shortages

New Development

- Focused on smaller units which helps increase supply but does not help larger families and other groups with specific needs
- No extra land to develop
- Integrate better with other uses and services (e.g., shopping, food, school, transportation)

Housing Ideas and Opportunities

Zoning Changes

- Allow for homeless and rehab shelters
- Eliminate barriers to build ADUs, such as allowing garage conversion

Transit-Oriented and Mixed-Use Development

- Housing should be integrated in commercial areas
- Build more densely to also encourage walking and reduce traffic congestion

Education

- Housing program for landlords to be aware of state laws
- Language access

Looking Elsewhere

- Mountain View's Housing Plan for \$80 million for housing development up to six projects (including supportive housing)
- Fremont has had rent review since 1997 and amended it in 2018 to require landlords to register and pay fees (if five or more units). It helps to track termination of tenancy and the reasons why
- San Jose's affordable housing program
- Mountain View's program with office hours where housing staff provides counseling and education for people facing rental issues

3. Summary by Stakeholder Group

Advocates for the Unhoused

Understanding the Population

- Estimate that about one percent of this population has drug or alcohol additions.
- Most lost their homes due to high rent and no rent control.
- The majority of unhoused people are older, over 50 years old.
- At any given point, there are between 150 and 200 people unhoused.

Constraints and Failures

- To get a housing voucher, people need a clean record. The city needs to support people with resources to expunge their records.
- Case management is important to build trust with this community. Some case managers, however, leave people hanging and do not reach back again.
- Nonprofits helping this population need more funding.
- More housing is needed, as well as supportive services that help people build their support systems, including help with resume, job searches, and the like.
 - Important to have a full-service approach.
- The city's limited funds for hotel vouchers are no longer available.
- The funds for the Hillview project have not been well spent. It is better to build more housing, but this project, which has a lot of funding, is only serving 130 unhoused people, none of whom are from Milpitas.
- The Homeless Task Force submitted recommendations to the city, but the city has yet to respond to and act on them.
- Currently, the city does not have a shelter or soup kitchen.
- The process for housing people with County Office of Supportive Housing is long.
 - Currently, only around 65 people are housed in Milpitas with County Office of Supportive Housing.
- Some people do not have phones or transportation to connect with social services and housing opportunities.

Opportunities and Successes

- The city should implement zero interest investment and grant money in affordable housing.
- The city needs a more concerted effort around housing, such as building a robust plan and approach for housing that includes the unhoused.
 - This plan should be holistic and consider resources, such as food stamps, that go along with preventing homelessness.
- Changes to zoning should be made to allow for shelters, such as homeless and rehab shelters.
- Milpitas has done a good job tapping into county bonds, including for Sango Courts, and utilizing land opportunities to tap into the County's Measure A.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- In general, recommend that the city leverage outside resources, including state funding.
- There are opportunities for Milpitas to be more proactive and look at nearby examples, such as Mountain View's Housing Plan for \$80 million for housing development up to six projects (including supportive housing), and similar work in Morgan Hill and San Jose.
- The city reached a revenue sharing agreement with the County Office of Supportive Housing for 20 unhoused people, securing a \$200,000 general fund.
 - Advice to forge more intergovernmental partnership to tackle the homelessness issue and housing crisis.

ADUs

- The city could provide funding for homeowners to convert garages or build ADUs on their property.
 - Additionally, many people may have extra rooms to rent.
- The state gave control to cities to build ADUs in any single-family zone. The city should eliminate zoning barriers and be creative in finding funding sources for this.

Location

- There are many abandoned hotels and other properties that could be converted to housing.
- The city also has empty buildings that could be rehabilitated as affordable housing, temporary housing, and shelters, such as vacant or underutilized commercial buildings on Jacklyn Road and Main Street.
 - These buildings could have apartments at the top and businesses on the bottom.

Housing for Specific Groups

- The city can do more for its aging population. There is no affordable senior housing and only one that is private assisted living. Many seniors are moving out and it signals something about who the city is trying to attract.
 - There is also a need for assisted living, including elderly people with dementia.
- Affordable housing is also specifically needed for essential workers (e.g., police, teachers, first responders) and for people with disabilities.
- In general, for these groups, need to more specifically define what affordability means and what it is based on.
- In the case of young children, the main issue has been overcrowding which allows these families to stave off from losing their homes.

Businesses

Regional Connections and Issues

- Milpitas could be doing a better job in comparison to other cities in the Bay Area, such as Mountain View and Sunnyvale, regarding affordable housing production.
- The city's growth rate is low compared to San Jose and other nearby cities.
 - Yet, Milpitas is still experiencing housing demand because it is more affordable than the rest of the Bay Area.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Housing Concerns

General

- The decision of converting the Turing apartments to middle-income housing was controversial.
- In 2020, only 16 percent of permits were allocated to lower income households.
 - The majority of building permits issued are for building above-moderate income/market rate housing.
- Overall, need to focus on building more low-income, very low-income, and moderate-income housing.
- Families are concerned and want to ensure that their children have affordable places to live in Milpitas.

Gentrification

- While tech workers can easily afford rents, lower-wage earners are being left out and experiencing gentrification.
 - This impacts the availability of units, regardless of size, and does not incentivize landlords to keep rents affordable.
- Lower income service workers cannot afford rent in the area, yet the city still needs service workers. There is a mismatch between housing options and what is actually needed.
 - In some cases, these workers are commuting from 30 miles away because they can no longer afford living in Milpitas.

Overcrowding

- People are already very packed in homes and live that way to avoid losing their homes.

ADUs

- It is still expensive for homeowners to build them but believe that amending zoning to incentivize ADUs will help.

Homelessness

- Work heavily on the prevention side to begin with so people do not become homeless.

Very low-income designation

- Other cities have put policies in place to allow for very low-income housing designation. It is required for a city to thrive because it needs to house its service workers.
 - Milpitas needs to invest in very low-income housing production because it is a smart investment for the city and for businesses from an economic development standpoint.

The Role of Jobs and Business

- The city needs to be creating more jobs and an environment that is attractive to businesses.
- Industry brings jobs and overall growth which can translate to more financing for housing.
- Companies should invest in building affordable housing in their properties to provide some type of support for cities.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- The city would have to provide incentives for companies to support affordable housing production.
- However, it is difficult to figure out the role of business in housing solutions because of shareholders and because businesses are more short-sighted.
- Amazon and other tech companies could help with housing for workers.

Vision for the City

- Milpitas would benefit from establishing a clear vision of what it is and what it wants to be, which would determine how it wants to accommodate housing and growth pressure.
- Residents and the city as a whole seem to have an internal conflict between building high-rises and retaining a small-town character.
 - We are not being effective with real estate because we are not growing higher, despite limitations from the lack of vacant land within city boundaries.
- Milpitas needs to position itself as open to industry across the world, rather than have a narrow local vision.
 - Industry can connect the city to the rest of the area and the world, and drive growth.

Mixed Use Development and Density

- Envision the Main Street and Downtown area with mixed use and higher density, as well as multifamily housing so a range of people can benefit from walking to shops and services.
- In general, see the benefit of developing in a more mixed use and denser manner as a way to reduce the cost of living.
 - Overall, believe there is a market for higher density housing in Milpitas because people need to meet their needs.
- Tall buildings are seen in San Jose, but are needed in Milpitas too to make rent more affordable.
- The city should allow more smaller apartments and studios to be built. However, Milpitas codes may not allow for micro units (300 square feet).
 - Apartments can become more affordable the smaller you go.

Location

- A good area for housing would be all along Main Street and the Eastside of Milpitas where temporary homes were built after World War II for autoworkers and the military. These areas could be redeveloped to allow for more density.
- Development should also happen on Main Street because of its connection to Bart and because it is flatland and has better soil conditions than San Jose.
- But the city needs to balance new housing in Main Street with making it a cultural attraction site that brings all residents together.

City Leaders

Opportunities and Successes

- Planning and approval of new housing development has improved.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- There is growth in transit-oriented development. It is an opportunity to build more densely and near amenities to incentivize walking instead of driving.
- The affordable housing ordinance passed.
- Main Street and Midtown Specific Plan are the future of housing. Envision these areas to be mixed use.
 - However, must protect commercial as new housing is integrated in these areas.
- The rent relief program has been a success.
- Need rent-to-own options.
- There is an important opportunity with new development to make it more energy efficient and reduce its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.
- The city recently approved 1355 California Circle which will be 35 percent affordable.
 - About 70 units will be for Milpitas residents, including teachers and working families.
- SB 35 helped expedite construction.
- SB9 will allow for split lots and duplexes. Even though these have a higher construction cost than ADUs, they are a good option for homeownership.

ADUs

- ADUs can be a good option for seniors.
- ADU Monday has been a very successful model.
 - It can expand as it is currently fully booked.
- City staff got a \$850k grant for an ADU toolkit that walks planners through the entire process.
- An online tool will be available for knowing if your location allows for attached or detached ADU, and potential costs depending on square footage.
- The city is in the process of developing a program to legalize unpermitted ADUs.
 - The main concern is safety.
- The city has a lot of big backyards that can accommodate them.

Constraints and Failures

- There are concerns about affordable properties potentially not paying property taxes.
- Milpitas was recently the second fastest growing city in the Bay Area.
 - There are concerns about being able to keep up with services and more so with the quality of those services.
- Since water needs to be pre-purchased, it has become a constraint to growth.
- City has also run out of open space and vacant land.
- The rent control program did not pass.
- The Turing apartments project on the Great Mall parkway is only targeting luxury housing.
 - Could bonds be used to do this for lower income as well?
- ADUs are expensive to build and increase property taxes, so people may choose not to build.
- The RHNA numbers are not good in the affordable numbers, especially low- and very low-income.
- Milpitas does not have the funding of a big city like San Jose.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- The city introduced an initiative to provide hotel vouchers, with \$400k set aside for emergencies, but it did not pass.
 - It still managed to raise \$14,000 for temporary home stays with the help of developers.
- Affordability today is not including the very low-income, and the city has goals to provide more for low and very low-income people.
- The inclusionary policy was approved but not with a requirement above 15 percent because didn't want the requirement to be a constraint.
 - Would like input on the ramifications of requiring 20 percent.

Homelessness

- Home Key is county-funded so cannot have a say who goes into supportive housing.
 - It would be helpful if could change the rules on the county level to address city-specific needs.
- It requires help beyond housing as well.
- As a small city, need help at the county level.
- The city hired a person for social services to help this population with finding resources and services.
- The homeless population keeps growing and it is encroaching on the budget.
 - Would like to house these people and provide a navigation center but Council may not approve.

Location

- Some locations for new housing could be east of 680, west of 880, and open land by Ranch 99.
- Commercial areas with new housing could include on Montague and Main Street

Housing Advocates

Housing Concerns

Overcrowding

- Three different people or families with different incomes will all live in the same house to be able to afford it.
 - If one of these people or families slips, they can be in a serious problem.

Limited Scope

- Milpitas has a hard time integrating housing opportunities throughout the city.
- Growth is clustered/concentrated in the transit center area.
- As the city builds massive new communities, such as the BART area, ensure that there is a variety of affordable opportunities across housing types.

Renters

- The rental populations in single-family homes are vulnerable.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Seniors and People with Disabilities

- Sometimes the easiest solution for senior people with fixed income is to sell their homes and move out of the city.
- There are ongoing accessibility issues.
- Milpitas has a rapidly aging population and so needs supportive services in affordable units.

Families

- There is a push to build more units, which in many cases means making them smaller, but families have needs that are not served by a studio or a one-bedroom homes.

Opportunities and Successes

- Look at Fremont as an example that has had rent review since 1997 and amended it in 2018 to require landlords to register and pay fees (if five or more units).
 - It helps to track termination of tenancy and the reasons why.
- In terms of the policy side, the city can be clearer with setting a standard proportion of units that it is asking in new developments to be affordable.
- Education about housing programs is needed as landlords are often not aware of state laws.
 - Some landlords are also not complying with rent review ordinance, such as not sending required notices to tenants prior to rent increases.
- The city is in the middle of a planning grant for opportunity zones to increase density in residential areas and introduce residential and mixed use in shopping sites.
 - Overall, push for mixed use in commercial areas by adding housing.
- The commercial impact fee included in inclusionary housing ordinance helps with funding.

Homelessness

- City has invested in a mobile shower.
- There is a shared position partially funded by the city and the county to have an unhoused representative, an outreach position for homeless services.
- The city's homeless prevention emergency rental assistance program helped it process requests.

ADUs

- Some private single-family housing developers have been adding ADUs before they even sell.
- Council has been a big advocate of ADUs, such as creating an ADU toolkit for planners and launching ADU Monday.
 - It is also looking to launch an ADU incentive program and legalization program, hoping that encourages people to get permits.

Constraints and Failures

- Recent history:

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- Milpitas went through a period of building intense market-rate housing without inclusionary housing in place. In the process, it didn't think about how to generate local resources and affordable housing as it developed.
 - Although there has been some progress, there is still political hesitancy to commit to consistent support for affordable housing. Affordable housing has been politicized.
- The city still faces a big challenge when it comes to finding local affordable funding and has to seek external support.
- It's very expensive to extend the affordability of large apartment buildings when there is an expiring HUD restriction agreement.
- Staffing shortages at the planning department is a constraint, and there are a lot of moving chairs throughout the county with revolving planners.
- General public support and embracing collective accountability, shared need, and responsibility is a constraint in addressing these housing issues, particularly the dispersion of more sites to have affordable housing.

Specific Groups Needs

- People who are undocumented or have 290 status have trouble getting placed in supportive housing by the county.
 - County says that they cannot find spots for them in "coordinated entry system."
- Unfortunately, disability discrimination is still common, as well as discrimination against families with children due to assumptions that they will be noisier neighbors. Need to have tailor service for ethnic minority groups, such as providing language access and services for people with various immigration statuses.
- More funding, staffing, and training for people working with housing insecure or unhoused populations. This type of work includes providing housing options and placements in supportive housing programs.
 - Hire people with cultural competency.
 - Ensure that staff has a good foundation before going out and working with these communities.

Homelessness

- To prevent homelessness, an efficient solution is to give a check to people struggling (e.g., car broke down) for a temporary time.
- It is important to educate the general population to understand the root causes of homelessness.
- Recommend more prevention, mediation, and stabilization to help housing insecure people.

Nonprofit and For-profit Developers

Constraints and Failures

- Low staffing level in city departments can be a challenge such as slowing down the process.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- City cannot control income levels, so the income level of units is what is challenging to achieve, not the housing units per se.
- Another constraint is community and political objections to affordable housing.
 - This creates uncertainty for the developer which becomes another constraint. Council can sometimes condition projects to a point that they cannot be built.
 - Solutions:
 - As such, ensure by-right development that cannot be negated by council or community.
 - Another approach is to go to community early in the HE and HOZ processes so that they approve by the time they are adopted.
 - Make the process more transparent.
 - Take approval decision out of a discretionary and legislative process.
- The city needs to be affirmative if affordable housing is a priority and understand that if so, other things may not be possible.
- Several funding sources require supportive services, so affordable housing should be paired with supportive services, which are usually provided at State or County level.
- The city may not have high opportunity areas which puts it at a disadvantage in receiving funding when competing against other jurisdictions.
- Nonprofit developers have limited staff to take on projects, so cities have to compete with other jurisdictions.
- Nonprofit developers have a hard time developing mixed-use projects. Any serious amount of retail makes it very hard, but around 1,000 square feet of retail can be accommodated.

Costs

- Demand for open space makes it challenging to meet densities and adds to costs as park fees have grown exponentially.
- Development processes and hearing times also add to costs.
- Affordable housing is expensive, currently costing about \$850k per unit.
- Fees need to be reduced so the cost of affordable projects goes down.
- Other costs barriers:
 - High land cost
 - Very little subsidy
 - Cost of construction
 - Supply chain issues with delayed manufacturing and delivering
 - Labor shortages: rates are going up and need to recruit new, young people as many are retiring

Opportunities and Successes

- Beyond identifying sites for new housing development, consider property owners and developers willing to sell or buy to build housing.
- Mixed-use development provides the opportunity to unbundle parking and use shared-parking strategies between commercial and residential.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- The market reality is that people are not demanding as much parking, so there is no incentive to build them. Developers understand the worry from neighbors, but by and large, the industry is moving toward less parking.
 - Reducing parking ratios may help financially.
- Having consensus or clear direction from the Council through the HE and HOZ will be useful for future projects getting approval.
- The greater the difference between base zoning and affordable housing bonus increase, the more competitive it will be.
- The city should be open alternative construction techniques that are cost and time efficient, such as off-site prefab, modular construction, and light gauge.

Programs, Legislation, and Projects

- SB9 and flag lots are now allowed in some jurisdictions.
- Milpitas should look at San Jose's affordable housing program.
- HCD's AHSC program benefits disadvantaged communities through increasing accessibility of affordable housing, employment centers, and key destinations via low-carbon transportation.
- Continue to promote similar projects as Sango Court and put forward considerable funds to make it possible.
- Allow more height to provide more residential and maintain existing commercial.
 - This requires designing good transitions to balance height between these new developments and neighboring existing residential areas.
- Allow for split mixed-use parcels so the city can get a 100% affordable housing project on a portion of land.

Location

- Follow Specific Plan areas.
- Identify publicly owned land for affordable projects.
- Consider further development within 1-2 miles of Great Mall, VTA and Bart facilities.

Inclusionary Incentives

- Cluster development to allow more space for parks and open space.
 - Allow for flexibility on how to distribute open spaces.
- Allow for off-site affordable units.
- Allow extra height for development.
- Eliminate requirement to disperse inclusionary units throughout development.
 - It should be allowed to cluster to maximize developers' ability to maintain financial feasibility.
 - Can separate and apply for special tax credits or grants when affordable units are separated into an individual building.
 - If separate, may require exemptions from certain development standards like setbacks.
 - There is also the opportunity then to partner with an affordable housing developer.
- Streamline development for inclusionary housing projects.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

About Housing Element

- HE should explain that Home Key sites should not be considered similar to other affordable housing types.
- HE should stress importance of why cities should comply with RHNA.
- Need support of policy makers to support the RHNA goals.
- HE should acknowledge the ability to reposition market-rate projects as affordable projects.
- Continue to address underserved communities.
- Relate and reflect RHNA numbers in General Plan and Specific Plans.

Specific Groups Needs

- People with physical and mental disabilities are not being served in Milpitas.
- To help these groups, need commitment of local resources, city-owned land, and allowing changes in zoning or ROW requirement.
- Try not to mix chronically homeless with other special needs; because of Measure A, that can become a challenge in serving other populations.
- The city is losing teachers. One solution is to build workforce housing.
- Community college students also need housing.

Residents

New Development

Limitations

- Influx of new housing development around the Bart station is great, but the needs for affordable housing are still not being met.
- Milpitas has no extra land so there is no space such as “the outskirts” that the city can build in.
- New development is not seeing the benefits of dedicating housing in industrial or commercial areas, but that is a crucial solution to build more housing overall.
- Some senior residents feel that all the new development is leading to crowding and more traffic, as well as feeling less safe walking in their neighborhoods.
 - A few seniors have left their neighborhoods because of these reasons.
- Although new development near Bart and California Circle is good, it is also near light industry areas with no services.
 - Housing should be a community with access to shopping, food, school, transportation and so on.

Solutions and Successes

- Building up with taller buildings is a more realistic solution given lack of vacant/additional land.
- Parking conversion to housing is another solution.
- The new development on Montague expressway near the Bart station has a lot of amenities for all age groups.
 - People do not have to go far to get what they need.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- This type of development is attracting young families or young people looking to start a family.

Financing

- It's been encouraging to see more developers move away from feeling out of building affordable units and actually building them. This is good because the fees do not always translate to those units being built later on.
- Some councilmembers have stated that they should push away from fees and instead dedicate a certain consistent percentage to affordable units.

Location

- Corner of Victoria and Calaveras has a big piece of land near new development that could host new housing.
- Some areas that have older or vacant retail could also be partially converted to housing.
- The corner of Montague and Victoria has been in the process of being upgraded but it is still incomplete.
 - It has two or three vacant lots.
 - The area is central and could accommodate housing needs.
- County land by the jail (former Toyota site) could be a site for affordable housing since it is not far from school and a shopping area.
- Housing above shops along Main Street could follow an "EL Camino Real" type.
 - Would like to see something like the Junction in Seattle in this area of Main Street.

The Role of Infrastructure

- Building this much housing is good but needs to be matched with essential infrastructure, such as grocery stores and hospitals, to meet people's basic needs.
- There needs to be enough resources to take care of the population and ensure everybody's safety.
- Currently, there are only two supermarkets and no hospital in the city, rest are in the county. As such, people have to go to Fremont, San Jose, or Mountain View.
- Similarly, there are only two roads that are adequate for leaving and entering the city. This would need to be addressed to accommodate for growth without straining existing infrastructure and contributing to more congestion.
- So far, Milpitas is doing a good job regarding access to parks and open spaces, which have been especially helpful during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- With younger families moving in, there will also be an increasing need for capacity in schools.

Affordable Housing Concerns

Homelessness

- Numbers are increasing every day, and the issue needs to be dealt from two ends: providing services to the existing unhoused population and implementing measures to avoid more people falling into it.
- The city needs to protect and support low-income people because it is an at-risk population that can lose their homes.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Overcrowding and Other Conditions

- Apartment tenants will create subunits within their apartments to be able to afford it, but this creates overcrowding conditions.
- At least near Rose Elementary School, low-income renters do not live in the most appropriate apartments, e.g., converted garages without all needed amenities.
- Very little affordable housing is designed or designated for larger low-income families.

Limitations

- Sunnyhill apartments are at risk of losing their affordable (income-restricted) status because the HUD contract is expiring next year.
 - Many who live there are elderly and Vietnamese refugees.
 - If affordability goes, they go too.
- Some proposals keep affordable apartments separate, rather than integrated, with market rate housing.

Constraints and Failures

- A proposed ordinance that would have implemented just cause eviction protection and limit rent increases to once a year, as well as consider cost of living, did not pass.
- Nonprofits cannot find the money to build more affordable housing, whereas market-rate housing is a gold mine.
- Land is a big constraint in Milpitas.
- People pay more than \$1,000 for one room and sometimes don't even have access to a kitchen.
- Short-term rental restrictions are not being enforced, and ADU and other apartments are being lost to people who actually need them for more long-term housing.

Opportunities and Successes

- The updated inclusionary housing ordinance makes it harder for developers to fee out of building affordable units.
- Milpitas should consider a program that Mountain View put in place that has office hours where housing staff provides counseling and education for people facing rental issues.
- The City's Community Advisory Commission has moved from only discussing specific needs of already-established communities to also consider all aspects of housing, especially given new development in recent years and the increasingly acute housing crisis.

Youth- and Family-Focused Groups

Understanding this Population

- There are families that are not related to each other but live together because of limited income.
 - They are at a higher risk of being kicked out and often live in unsafe situations.
- Latino family's needs range from rental housing to food, clothes, and hotel stays.
 - Further, with immigration, guardianship, helping students coming back from junior hall, and transportation passes.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

- Sometimes families can't get a house because they can't show they have credit or because they can't provide documentation due to their immigrant status.
- Other barriers that prevent housing access are language and digital literacy and access (e.g., basic tech skills).
- Families working multiple jobs and still can't afford their housing.
 - Some students have felt that they need to drop out to work and help their families.
- For this population, but also others, affordability means stability.
- 80 percent of families living in the Yosemite, Calaveras, Victoria, and Main Street area are low-income.
 - The only reason they live there is because it is easy to get a house without a lot of paperwork.
 - Sometimes there is no rental agreement and other times it is month-to-month.
 - But it also means that they can be taken advantage of, such as paying more for low-quality housing that is comparable in price to luxury buildings.

Opportunities and Successes

- Silicon Valley Independent Living Center and the Housing Department provide rent relief support including 30 days paid in a hotel.
 - 30-60 days is what a family typically needs.

Constraints and Failures

- Rent cutoffs and financial standards from federal HUD programs don't work because this area is more expensive.
- When the funds are not local, you cannot prioritize Milpitas residents over any other group.
- Applying affordable housing requires a lot of paperwork so it is easy to miss the deadline.

4. Participating Organizations

A total of 20 organizations participated in the stakeholder interview process, representing seven diverse groups: advocates for the unhoused, businesses, the City, housing advocates in the nonprofit sector, nonprofit and for-profit developers, residents, and groups working with youth and families (particularly Hispanic/Latinx and Asian/Asian American).

- Abode Services
- Bay Area BIA (Building Industry Association)
- Blach Construction Company
- Charities Housing
- Clear Peak Development
- Core Companies
- Destination Home
- Milpitas Homeless Task Force
- Hope for the Unhoused
- Milpitas City Council (Mayor, Vice Mayor, Councilmember)
- MidPen Housing
- Milpitas Chamber of Commerce
- Milpitas Community Advisory Commission Members
- Milpitas Unified School District
- Project Sentinel
- Sullivan Land Development
- SV@Home
- WeHope Dignity on Wheels

5. Interview Questionnaire

General Questions

1. Could you please describe your role in your profession and/or your community, and how it ties to housing work?
2. Are you familiar with a Housing Element?
3. What do you consider to be Milpitas's housing successes?
 - a. In what respect is the right housing available to the diversity of Milpitas residents?
4. What concerns you about housing in Milpitas?
 - a. In what ways are residents' housing needs not being met? Such as, for certain income groups? In certain neighborhoods? For people with special needs?
 - b. What do you think are the greatest barriers or constraints that are preventing those needs from being addressed?
5. Where in the city do you think more or different types of housing should be built? Are there any sites that you think are particularly well-suited for new or additional housing?
6. What type of housing would you say is primarily missing or needed in Milpitas?

Stakeholder-Specific Questions

For All Developers

1. Have you built below market rate housing? (question for non-profits) Have you built any below market rate inclusionary units? (question for for-profits)
 - a. If not, why not and what did you do instead (in-lieu fees)?
 - b. If so, what local and state policies, incentives, or programs help make it possible?
 - c. Likewise, what policies or barriers make it difficult or infeasible?
2. Have you built housing for seniors or others with special needs (such as persons with disabilities)?
 - a. If not, why not?
 - b. If so, what local and state policies, incentives, or programs help make it possible?
 - c. Likewise, what policies or barriers make it difficult or infeasible?
3. What are the biggest challenges facing your organization to build housing?

For Nonprofit Developers

1. What is your mission and focus?
2. How can the Housing Element help advance your mission?
3. What are the biggest challenges you face when building housing projects in Milpitas?

For Real Estate Professionals

Residential

1. Who is moving into Milpitas, and why do you think?
 - a. What types of housing are they looking for?
 - b. What do you think influences their choices?
2. Who is leaving Milpitas, and why do you think?

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Commercial

1. What is the trend in commercial leasing and the factors affecting this trend?
 - a. Has COVID impacted this trend?
 - b. If so, to what extent do you think it will be permanent?
2. Do you think there are (or do you know of) any commercial or industrial sites that would be appropriate for mixed use or residential development?
 - a. Which ones, and why?
3. Do you think there are (or do you know of) any opportunities for converting office or industrial to residential?

For Housing or Other Advocacy Organizations

1. What is your mission and focus?
2. How can the Housing Element help advance your mission?
 - a. What issues or concerns would you like to see addressed?

For Community-Based Organizations

1. What is your mission and focus?
2. How can the Housing Element help advance your mission?
 - a. What issues or concerns would you like to see addressed?

Community Engagement Questions

1. How do you get information about what is going on in your community?
 - a. Is there someone you know who does a neighborhood blog, social media page or bulletin board, etc.?
 - b. Who are the community leaders who you pay attention to? Such as, a business association or neighborhood business leader? A political leader? A “community connector”?
2. When you have questions or concerns about your community or the city, who would you bring your concerns and ideas to?
3. How do you typically hear about city projects and events?
4. Of the following, which are your preferred ways of receiving information?
 - a. Mail
 - b. Email
 - c. Phone calls
 - d. Text messages
 - e. Social media – which ones?
 - f. Television ads
 - g. Website ads
 - h. Letters/post cards
 - i. Other (Please specify)
5. We will be hosting meetings during this project. Would you prefer virtual or in-person meetings?
 - a. If in-person, do you have any suggested locations?

Closing Questions

1. Do you have any suggestions on who else we should talk to as part of this process? *(If appropriate, ask if they know of groups representing or advocating for low-income communities and communities of color.)*
2. Are there any other comments, suggestions or concerns you would like to add before we wrap up?