

Housing Element Report
Cupertino Community Meeting for Inclusive Housing
May 23rd, 2022, 6:30-8 pm, hybrid (Zoom and in person)
West Valley Community Services, City of Cupertino, and EMC Planning Group

Overview

On Monday, May 23rd, 2022, West Valley Community Services (WVCS) partnered with the City of Cupertino and EMC Planning Group to hold a Community Meeting for Inclusive Housing. WVCS is a nonprofit organization that has been providing safety net services to low-income and homeless individuals and families in the west valley region of Santa Clara County, including Cupertino, for more than 48 years. Because of WVCS' connection to the underserved, underrepresented, and most in-need communities of Cupertino, the organization hosted this meeting to amplify the perspectives of those facing barriers, bring community members together, and facilitate dialogue between individuals with different levels of privilege in Cupertino, as well as those who wish to live in the city but are unable to due to the high housing costs.

The Community Meeting for Inclusive Housing featured two breakout sessions during which community members joined one another for dialogue, a panel of four WVCS clients who shared their experiences with barriers and housing, and a brief presentation on the Housing Element and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). The panelists had lived experience in areas including homelessness, affordable housing, neurodivergence, disabilities, veteran status, and discrimination.

Agenda

The agenda for the evening was as follows:

6:30-6:35 pm - Welcome

6:35-6:50 pm - Presentation on the Housing Element and AFFH

6:50-7:00 pm - Breakout Rooms #1

7:00-7:25 pm - Moderated Panel

7:25-7:40 pm - Panelist Questions From Audience

7:40-7:58 pm - Breakout Rooms #2, Exit Survey

7:58-8:00 pm - How to Stay Involved, Thank You, Closing Remarks & Goodnight

Panelists

The meeting featured four panelists, all WVCS clients. They represented a variety of experiences, and openly shared both these experiences and the connections between them and housing. Each panelist was compensated \$200.00 for their time and vulnerability.

Mair Dundon - Neurodivergence, affordable housing

Joshua Pringle - Homelessness, affordable housing, Section 8 voucher

Kim Hing - Disabilities, Section 8 voucher

Yavante' Nazareth Rose - Veteran status, homelessness, Section 8 voucher, affordable housing

All - Discrimination, poverty

Event Outreach

Extensive and comprehensive outreach was done in preparation for this event, with the goal of attracting as many community members as possible to ensure the meeting was inclusive, effective, and diverse. Flyers¹ were displayed throughout the city, including in Cupertino City Hall, the Cupertino Library, the Cupertino Sports Center, Quinlan Community Center, and local coffee shops. An email in anticipation of the event was sent to 21 local commissions and community groups and 14 clubs and groups representing a variety of identities and interests from De Anza College, a community college in the City of Cupertino².

As the event approached, outreach was amplified through additional emails to the city's email list of over 1,600 individuals, those subscribed to the Housing Element newsletter, and the community groups referred to above. In total, 111 individuals registered for the event.

Attendees

Because the event was hybrid, it took place in two locations: On Zoom and in person at Cupertino Community Hall. On Zoom, 64 individuals attended the meeting. In person, there were about 20 attendees in total.

Event Content

Opening Poll

The event was facilitated by Josh Selo, the Executive Director of West Valley Community Services. Upon opening the meeting, Josh led a three-question poll for participants to answer. In person attendees answered the questions on paper. The three questions were³:

1. On a scale from 1 to 10, how strong of a sense do you think you have of other people's experiences related to housing?
2. Have you ever experienced housing-related challenges, such as housing insecurity, trouble paying rent, eviction, or homelessness?
3. How much do you know about Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)?

The responses were as follows:

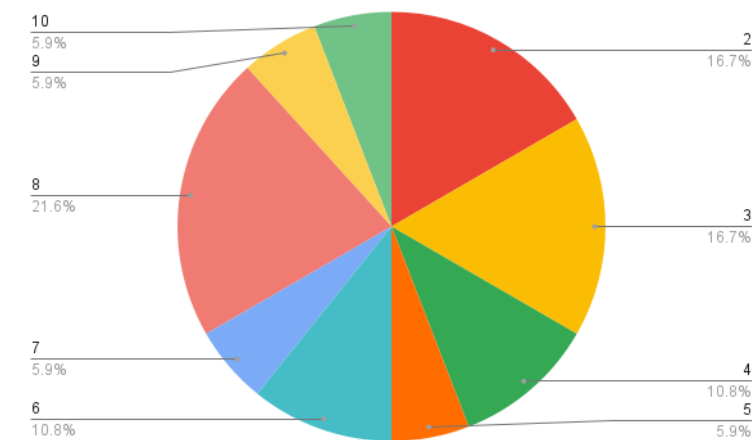
1. On a scale from 1 to 10, how strong of a sense do you think you have of other people's experiences related to housing?

¹ Appendix A: Event flyer

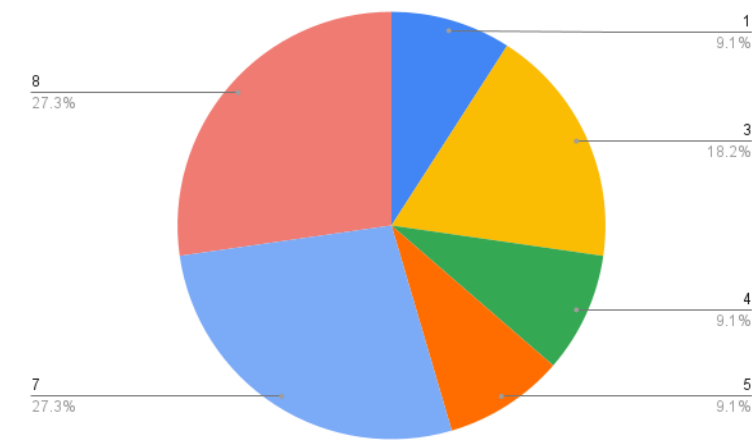
² Appendix B: List of groups outreached to

³ Appendix C: List of opening poll questions including multiple choice options

Zoom

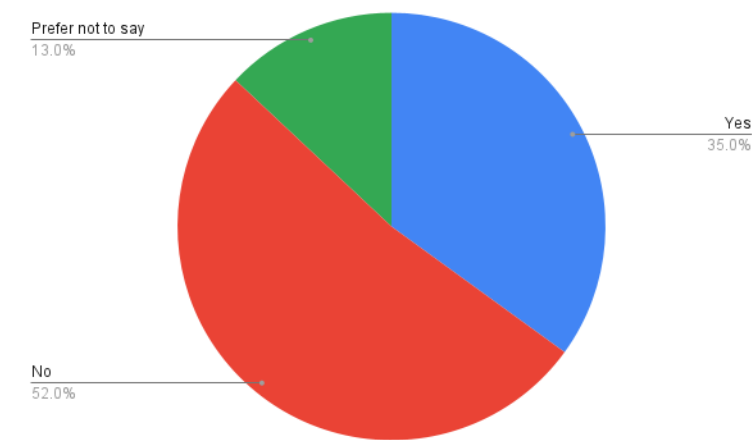


In Person

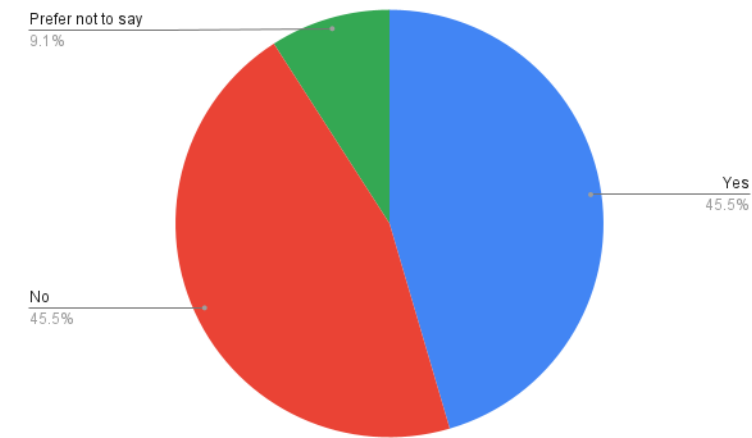


2. Have you ever experienced housing-related challenges, such as housing insecurity, trouble paying rent, eviction, or homelessness?

Zoom

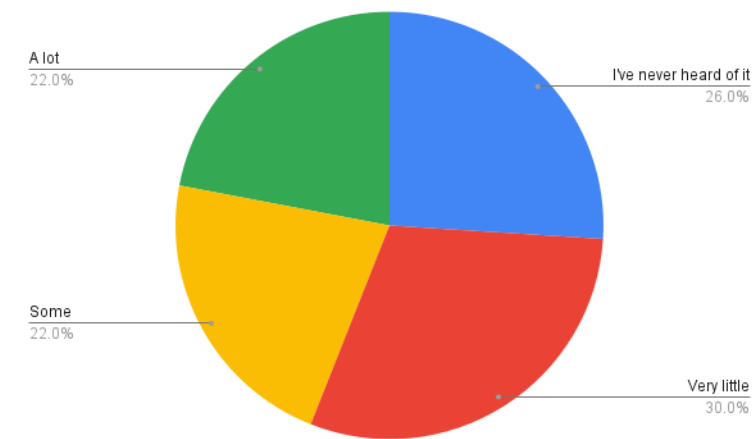


In Person

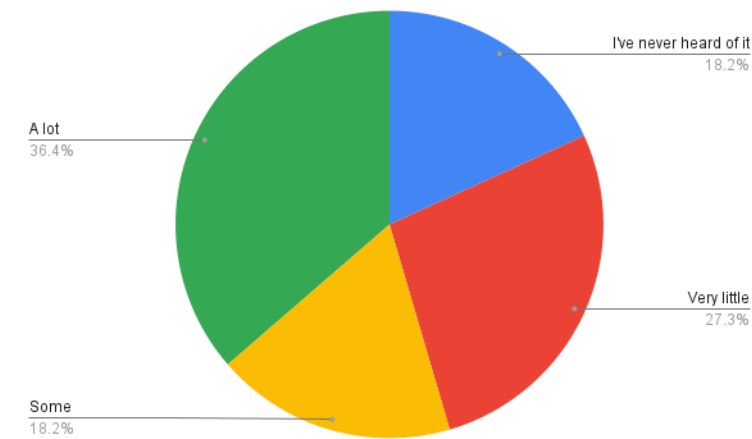


3. How much do you know about Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)?

Zoom



In Person



Presentation

After the poll was complete, Ande Flower and lea robinson from the EMC Planning Group team gave a brief presentation on the Housing Element and AFFH⁴. The goal of this presentation was to ensure that everyone in attendance had the fundamental understanding necessary to fully participate in the meeting and to dive deeper into AFFH than in previous community meetings.

Breakout Session 1

Following the presentation, attendees entered breakout sessions. On Zoom, these took the form of breakout rooms, and in person, the form of breakout tables. Each breakout group had one moderator who took notes, facilitated the conversation, and ensured everyone had the equal chance to speak. Attendees were asked to answer three questions in their breakout groups:

1. Your name and what brings you here tonight?
2. What do you think inclusive housing looks like in Cupertino? Who are some people that need to be included?
3. What questions do you want to ask the panelists?

Panel

When attendees returned from the breakout session, the panel began. The panelists first responded to eleven questions that had been pre-written and sent to the panelists ahead of time:

1. **ALL:** Tell us a little about yourself, one or two things you would like the participants to know about you, and why you agreed to take part in tonight's panel.
2. **ALL:** What is one thing you want tonight's attendees to know about you going into this panel?
3. **ALL:** What are some stereotypes you think people have about poverty, affordable housing, and homelessness?
4. **Mair:** You describe yourself as "neurodivergent," which is a term not everyone is familiar with. Can you tell us what it means to be neurodivergent, and how this relates to the term "disabilities"?
5. **Kim:** Kim, is there anything you would add from your own experience?
6. **Joshua:** What challenges did you face transitioning from being unhoused to finding affordable housing?
7. **Mair and Kim:** Now Mair and Kim, I want to ask you both, as people living with disabilities, are there any unique challenges you have faced when it comes to housing?
8. **Yavante:** Can you talk about your experience as a veteran and how it relates to housing? What was it like working to get and using a HUD-VASH voucher?
9. **ANYONE:** Can you share any experiences of housing discrimination you have faced in Cupertino? What does housing discrimination in our community look like, and how does this impact people across diverse identities, races, and abilities?
10. **ALL:** Is there one person, organization, program, or moment that was pivotal for you in your search for stable, affordable housing?
11. **ALL:** What is one thing you want tonight's attendees to take away from this panel?

⁴ Appendix D: Presentation slide deck

Following the pre-written questions, attendees had the opportunity to ask the panelists questions. These were submitted through the chat for Zoom attendees and by paper for in person attendees. The questions asked by the audience that were answered during the panel are:

1. After getting through your path to becoming housed, do you still feel today like your housing security is threatened, and in what ways? (Zoom) Related Que-Greatest Housing challenge you have faced and what do you think would have been helpful or supportive? (Zoom)
2. What price range is considered affordable housing in the bay area? It's hard to find any housing to purchase under \$500K in Silicon Valley (Zoom)
3. How do you define affordable housing? (this is from our breakout room but I want to make sure it gets asked) Does anyone know how much minimum wage would have to be in Cupertino in order to afford the average one bedroom apartment? (Zoom)
4. In person: How much of your current income do you spend on housing and what will define affordable housing for you? (in person)
5. Where do you think is a good place for homes relative to other parts of the community? For low income people? For neurodivergent/ disabled people? (In person)
6. As Cupertino looks to "affirmatively further fair housing" do you think it should take into account who cannot afford to live here? Or should it only focus on who already gets to live here? (In person)
7. The supply of affordable housing is already low since there is not enough funding to subsidize it. Now, some college students wish to have access to affordable housing too, since they chose to attend De Anza college rather than their own local college. The students are extremely low income too since they attend classes and study many hours a day. What do you think about that? (Zoom)
8. Could we ask the Governor to spend the billions of dollars in surplus in affordable housing? Otherwise, how do we get affordable housing? (Zoom)
9. What are some concrete examples of policies/actions that do affirmatively further Fair Housing, particularly in "High Opportunity" areas like Cupertino? (Zoom)
10. How did you maintain hope as you worked through the problem? (In person)
11. What has been the greatest housing challenge you have faced? (Zoom)
12. As Cupertino looks to "affirmatively further fair housing" do you think it should take into account who cannot afford to live here? Or should it only focus on who already gets to live here? (In person)
13. What is the amount of people per available homes? What is the breakdown of possible homes? (In person)
14. Where do you think is a good place for homes relative to other parts of the community? For low income people? For neurodivergent/ disabled people? (In person)
15. How much of your current income do you spend on housing and what will define affordable housing for you? (In person)

Each panelist participated fully, and all gave powerful, insightful, and enlightening responses. Some notable words from the panelists are below, though the full recording is the best way to understand the power of the panel.

- "People tend to look at you a little different knowing you're not in the same income bracket as them... They think of you as a little bit less" - *Joshua Pringle*
- "There's a lot of conversation about people making bad choices, and that's why they are in the place that they are. And I do often challenge that, because a lot of stuff happens to us that we have no control over. So, I do want people to stop and think about that before they make those kinds of assumptions." - *Mair Dundon*
- "People think it can't happen to them...people look at you differently, and it's like they know. Even if they don't really really know, if people even suspect that you are anywhere near being homeless, they treat you as less than a citizen... They forget that this could happen to them at any moment, and... anyone who's ever been homeless - that's something that we had to find out. This is nothing I raised my hand for and said 'yeah, I volunteer to be homeless.' This is something that

happened due to, in my case, things that were basically out of my control. That's the one thing I kind of want to get community members to see, is don't judge, because you could end up there yourself." - *Yavante Nazareth Rose*

- "We're talking about the whole process of housing - So maybe someone who is neurodivergent doesn't necessarily need the physical accommodations, but maybe they need some help within the process of filling out the forms, of going through the process of getting into the place, having the decisions, interacting with the people around things that are going on within that process. So that's why we are bringing neurodivergence into the conversation." - *Mair Dundon*
- [About process of moving from homelessness into housing] "It was really tough because before all that even happened, it was just the fact that I just needed somebody to give me a chance. It was so hard because I had no laptop, I basically lost everything that I own. So it was pretty hard for me to find where somebody could actually just help me out." - *Joshua Pringle*
- "Just to adapt to being inside a home again is kind of a struggle too, because you've been without a home for so long, it just feels weird." - *Joshua Pringle*
- "I think it's really important for people to understand that not everybody is really wealthy, but we still live in this city, and we need places to live, and it's important for people to understand that there's all different kinds of people that you may not think are actually living in this city, but we are here." - *Kim Hing*
- "I think that people have this misconception that low-income people should live someplace else, and I think there's an attitude that the area will become a ghetto if there's low-income housing. I don't understand why people think that those of us who work low-paying jobs would trash areas that we live in. I think people want us to work these low-paying jobs because the work needs to be done, but they want us to live someplace else. And I think people have an attitude that since they pay fair market rate, everyone should do that, and that includes low-income people, because they think that's only fair... I remember somebody wrote that they should put in micro housing for low-income people. And this leads me to believe that there's an attitude that low-income people don't deserve pleasant housing, like we should have these sub-standard housings just because we don't earn much money. I really think people believe we're low-income because we don't work hard and we don't want to better ourselves... There are reasons why I'm low-income. Talk to me and find out what things are going on, why I am in this category. Because I am Extremely Low Income, but there are a lot of reasons for it, and I probably don't fit in this stereotype that you may have for someone in this category." - *Kim Hing*
- "I walk with the rollator a good chunk of the time... I've literally had people back out of showing me an apartment because of that, several times... That was a pretty overt block of even being able to look at housing" - *Mair Dundon*
- "I don't know what it is about the credit score, but if your credit score is really low, most people won't even talk to you after that. You can fill out an application, but once they do your credit score, it's pretty much a wrap after that. I kind of think that's a little bit unfair, because for me, just because you have a low credit score, doesn't mean you can't afford the apartment you're applying for." - *Joshua Pringle*
- "I worked for the County of Santa Clara when my family and I were coming out of being homeless, and that credit score prevented us from getting into a lot of nice places. They didn't care how much I was making, and I was making a decent amount of money. People, when they think

about discrimination, they think about race, or gender, or something like that, but there's also financial discrimination that we have to overcome a lot of times. Also, the discrimination of 'where'd you live in the last six months?' I can't put that I lived in my truck, so trying to come up with something other than telling a lie is really hard." - *Yavante Nazareth Rose*

- [What is the greatest housing challenge you've faced?] "Finding someone to accept my HUD-VASH voucher, because when you say 'voucher,' people immediately think Section 8, and even though it's along the same lines, it's a little different. The only people who can get this voucher is veterans... you forget that I volunteered six years of my life to protect you." - *Yavante Nazareth Rose*
- "I think that one of the biggest challenges for me was not only finding the housing, because I'm a good researcher, but also the application process was very, very difficult. Often, tons of pages of materials, some of which you had things for, some of which you didn't, different rules for every place you go, nothing is replicated, so in other words, if you apply to one place, you have to go to the one place and you have to go to the next place and you have to do it all over with that 20 pages of documentation. And just getting to those places physically, mentally, and emotionally was very difficult." - *Mair Dundon*

Two questions prompted particularly powerful and poignant responses from the panelists. The questions and their answers are below.

Do you have any specific examples of policies or actions that you'd like to see the City of Cupertino implement that would Affirmatively Further Fair Housing?

- Yavante would like to see application fees disappear, especially if he's willing and able to bring his credit reports with him and give them to a potential landlord. They're charging \$100 per adult for an application fee, and if you're in a bad situation financially, this is almost impossible.
- Joshua said something needs to change about the waiting process, because when you're on a waitlist, you don't know how long it's going to be. His process only got sped up because his roommate worked in the City of Cupertino. You shouldn't need to work in the city to have higher priority
- Mair said centralization of the listings is her key thing she'd like to see us doing a better job of. There's no visibility to waitlists, but there's different rules in each place. Let's provide some transparency and provide information in a central spot, so whatever resources we do have, we actually can distribute, rather than making it a hunt.
- Kim found that there are only three affordable apartment complexes in Cupertino and 9 BMR complexes, then she hears about construction of a luxury hotel and fair market condos with a couple of affordable housing units. She thinks there should be a policy stopping all of this fair housing stuff and luxury hotels. We need to put in affordable housing. They are needed in this community to work lower wage jobs, and they need housing. Two affordable units in a fair market complex is not enough, and developers can pay to not build them. We need to make sure that these low and extremely low income units get built.

What is one thing you would like all attendees to take away from tonight's panel?

- "I would like everybody to get involved in a positive way. Be advocates for people who don't have the courage to be advocates for themselves, because a lot of times you hear people when they're complaining, but it would be really nice to hear people be loud when they're speaking up for the homeless and people who are at risk of becoming homeless. Get involved." - *Yavante 'Nazareth Rose*
- "Support people instead of just saying 'these people need to go someplace else.' People may not realize that if you want a store, to have someone working the register and stocking the shelves, if you want someone to take your order, bus your table, wash your dishes at a restaurant, if you want someone to teach and take care of your children, like I do, then you need people like me. We deserve to live in the communities that we work in, we deserve to be able to live in the places we grew up in. This is my home. I lived here for over 50 years - why should I have to leave my home because it's too expensive to live in now? That's just not right." - *Kim Hing*
- "For me, we're all human. Just because we're in different income brackets, doesn't make us any less of a human being compared to everybody else. We may not have the same income as you, but we all have aspirations and hopes to get to where we need to be in life, and it's just a level of respect. We all want the same level of respect as everybody else." - *Joshua Pringle*
- "What we're doing right now. I want us to do more of this, I want us to be able to actually have the conversations, so that you can speak with people who have differences from you, so you can start to understand that maybe the differences aren't exactly what you thought that they were, and also that we can be interconnected. I just want to emphasize, communities that are integrated... are really amazingly creative, fun, and full of life. Yes, they have problems, but so do the communities that are isolated. So we need to be able to be interconnected here, and this is a beautiful way to get started, so come on! Let's keep going." - *Mair Dundon*

Breakout Session 2

When the panel concluded, attendees were sent into a second breakout session, responding to a new set of questions prompting them to reflect on the panel and what they learned. Before entering the breakout room, attendees were led in a brief exercise to reflect on the panel and ponder the questions. Moderators took notes in the breakout sessions to capture community feedback while maintaining privacy and anonymity. The questions for the second breakout session were as follows:

1. What impact did hearing from the panelists have on your thoughts around housing, the Housing Element, and representation?
2. What barriers and unmet needs did you hear from the panelists? How did this make you feel?

Some of the themes that emerged from the notes gathered by moderators *during both Breakout Sessions #1 and #2* are summarized below:

- Participants were unaware of and very concerned about challenges and barriers faced by the panelists. These barriers included credit scores, application fees, property owners raising rent, and waitlists.
- Participants felt they better understood the challenges that the panelists faced and had not previously considered the impact that the barriers they learned about have on people.
- It is very important to give everyone a chance.

- There are many additional barriers that people face which participants had never thought of, such as having to go to the library to access a computer and electricity, and having to take a bus to even get there.
- Some participants said their experiences strongly paralleled those of the panelists, as they had lived experience with housing insecurity, homelessness, disabilities, and discrimination.
- Many participants brought up the courage it took the panelists to share their stories, and greatly appreciated their vulnerability, openness, and insight.
- A developer who attended said they would like to do more, but the city does not have the resources or the will. The developer doesn't know how to help.
- The panelists' stories demonstrated that this could happen to any of us. Circumstances can change in an instant, and it's hard to get out of a spiral.
- We need more Below Market Rate and affordable housing.
- Participants wanted some sort of city program, and suggested versions such as city funding to buy land and build housing, voucher programs in which the city engages with property owners to help them support low-income tenants, and application fee waiving.
- Multiple participants would like to see the city play a part in reducing barriers to finding housing by vetting tenants so they only need to apply once and do not have to pay \$100+ fees for each application.
- We need housing for people who work in Cupertino but cannot afford to live here.
- Participants were unaware of the barriers faced by individuals with disabilities and who are neurodivergent. They wanted to see accessible housing for this demographic. One particular insight participants gained was the difficulty neurodivergent individuals faced when trying to complete the applications and paperwork. They wondered how we could simplify the process.
- Participants were proud to live in a city that is hosting community meetings like this, where people with lived experience share their stories and community members speak with one another.
- Participants wanted more housing for students at De Anza College. One person said living near school would motivate students to attend class.
- People with lived experience who related to the panelists said they felt heard, seen, and not alone. They felt energized and motivated after the event.
- Participants were frustrated at the number of people who are not being heard.
- Participants stressed the importance of listening to what people are saying and what they need before making decisions.
- We need a home for all of our community members, not just the tech employees who are able to afford it.
- A community member was very upset that we expect companies to provide housing when it should in fact be the responsibility of the community, with potential partnership with companies.
- A community should factor in and include people with many financial backgrounds and incomes so that we can build a diverse society.

Additionally, participants were asked to complete an exit survey during their breakout session. This is further discussed below.

Closing Poll

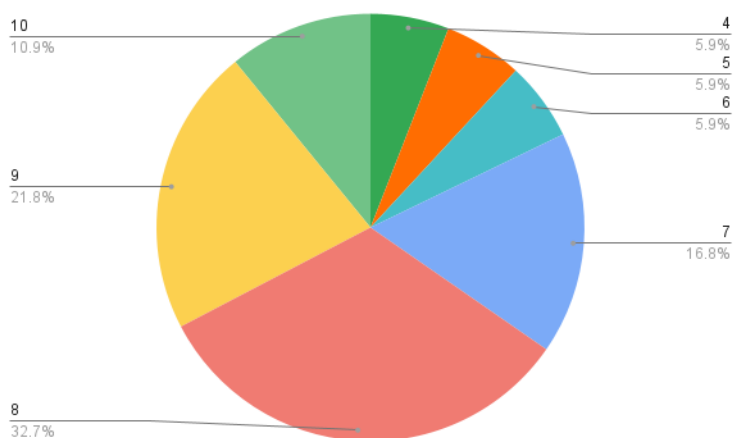
Before leaving the meeting, attendees were issued an closing poll⁵. During this poll, they responded to three questions:

1. On a scale from 1 to 10, how strong of a sense do you think you have of other people's experiences related to housing?
2. How much do you know about Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)?
3. What is one thing you will do to get involved with the Cupertino Housing Element?

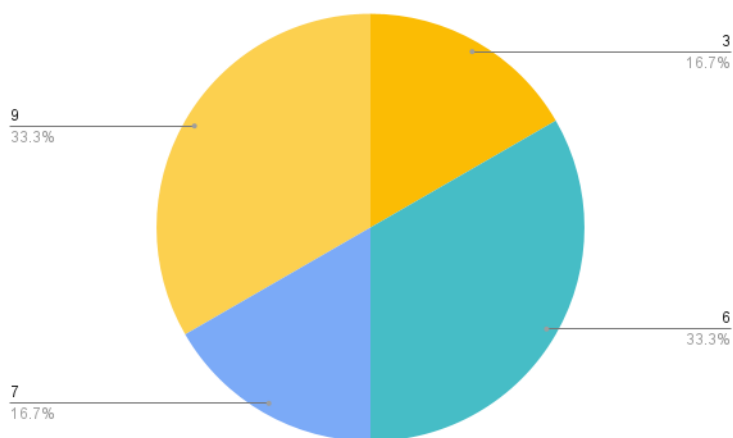
The responses were as follows:

1. On a scale from 1 to 10, how strong of a sense do you think you have of other people's experiences related to housing?

Zoom



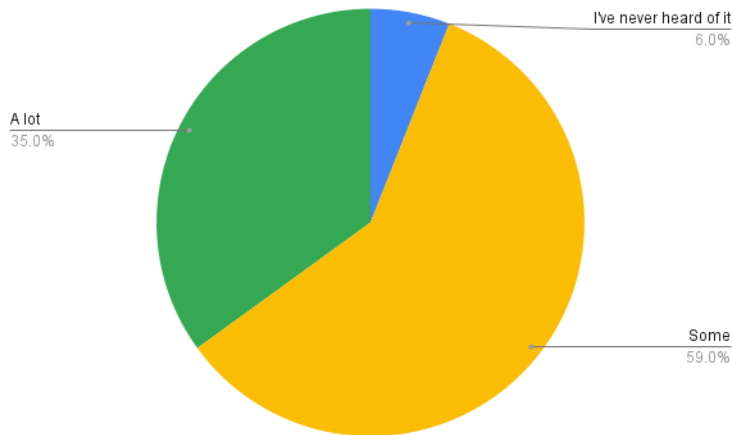
In Person



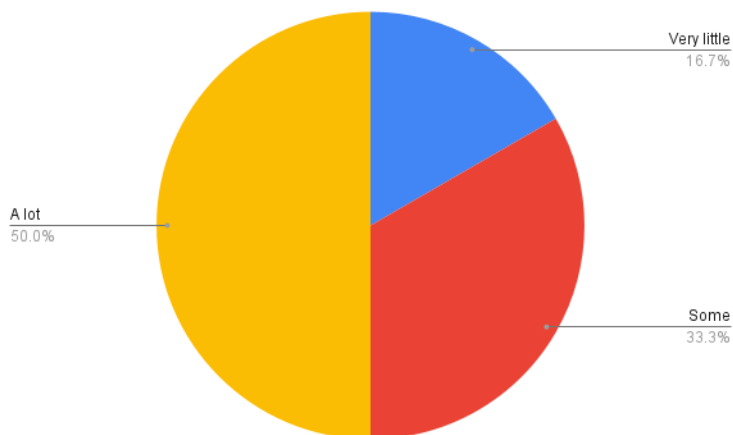
⁵ Appendix E: List of closing poll questions including multiple choice options

2. How much do you know about Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)?

Zoom

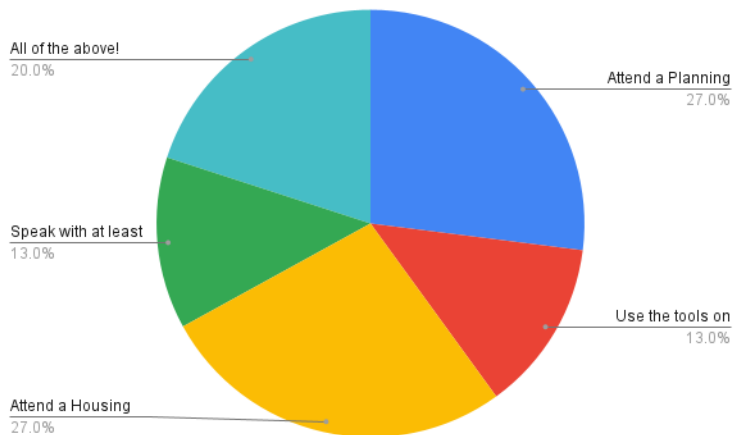


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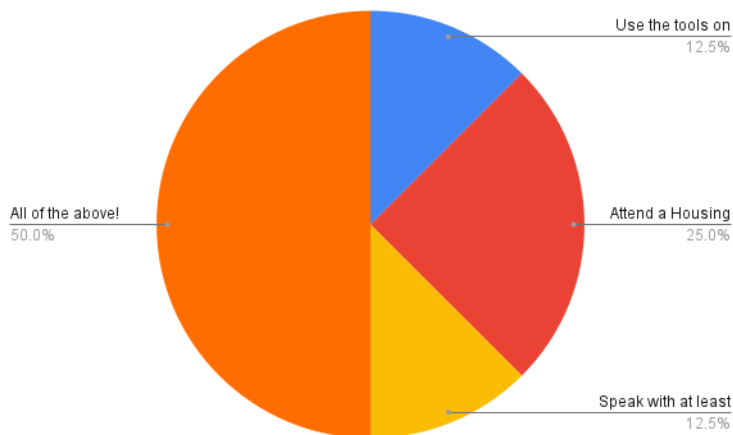


3. What is one thing you will do to get involved with the Cupertino Housing Element? (*Attend a Planning Commission or City Council meeting; Use the tools on the Housing Element website; Attend a Housing Element community meeting; Speak with at least three friends/neighbors about the Housing Element; Speak about the Housing Element at a public meeting; All of the above!*)

Zoom



In Person



Conclusion

Following the ending poll, attendees were encouraged to stay involved and were informed about upcoming Planning Commission meetings and tools on the Housing Element website. They were wished a good night, and the event came to an end.

Feedback

Exit Survey Results

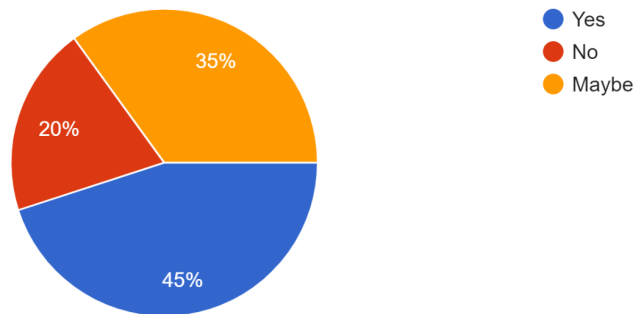
During their second breakout session, attendees were allotted time to complete an exit survey⁶. The goal of this survey was to better understand and capture what they learned from the event, how they felt following the panel and community dialogue, and what has shifted in their views toward housing and our

⁶ Appendix F: Full exit survey responses

less privileged community members. Additionally, participants were asked for ideas and strategies that they believe could be deployed to make Cupertino more inclusive, providing insight that can be turned into policies. Some of the results from this survey are summarized below:

Did this experience bring about surprising feelings for you?

20 responses

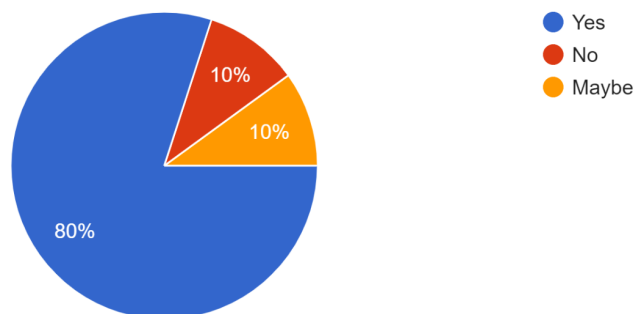


Can you share what feelings you've had during this meeting (optional)? (*Some responses below*)

- Empathy for the homeless people who shared their stories.
- I've been very quiet about local civics in the last two years, and this is definitely activating me again - I want to build an equitable and accessible community.
- I was not familiar with the experiences of the unhoused and low income seeking housing in Cupertino. While I felt that my housing situation was unideal growing up, I didn't think about the more dire situations others can face.
- I was surprised how the panelists' stories haven't really been part of the housing conversations I'm part of. We definitely need to make it easier for people of all backgrounds to share their stories, particularly BMR residents, low income residents, renters, disabled people.

Did you learn new information or learn about housing from a new perspective?

20 responses



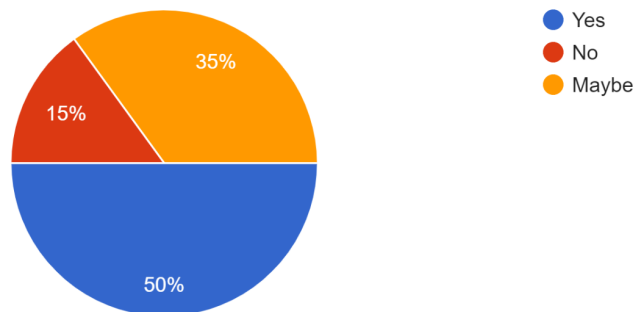
Can you share what new information or perspective you've gained during this meeting (optional)? (*Some responses below*)

- Learning about AFFH, and some of the work that WVCS does.
- the impact of a low credit score on the ability to secure housing despite having the income to pay the rent; also I hadn't considered that being neuro-divergent could impact the ability to secure housing

- Great perspectives about different aspects that I hadn't considered - credit rating, assumptions and ways to be involved
- The difficulty for unsheltered people to do basic tasks: use computer, transportation, find a safe place. From panelist and long-time West SC Valley resident Kim: Anger that development projects provide so few BMR units, or pay in-lieu fees and develop no BMR units, or provide smaller units with sub-standard materials for BMR units.
- I was interested that the panelists focused on the processes that surround affordable housing almost as much as the basic lack of affordable housing. That seems like something that could be improved.

Has something shifted or changed for you in your understanding of local impacts of the housing crisis?

20 responses



Can you share details about how this experience has changed your understanding of local impacts of the current housing crisis (optional)?

- The shortage trickles down into a thousand tiny miseries.
- I was surprised at how many folks are here and fired up about accessible housing in a city like Cupertino. I had honestly felt like Cupertino is a lost cause in ever becoming an accessible city, and it's good to see there's a spirit to change things.
- a reminder that we rely on people in our community to do low income jobs, they have just as much right to live here as those who have sufficient income
- Yes, just in the sense that the needs were dire, but the panelists drove home the point that the pains of the housing crisis are not shared equitably, and the difficulties of finding housing are regressive, in that they disproportionately impact those in lower incomes, or disadvantaged backgrounds
- We need to center the experiences and needs of those most impacted by the housing crisis.

What is one way you think you could contribute to meeting AFFH requirements, and/or to the Housing Element process in general (optional)?

- Participate in more meetings like this to ensure that the voices of all people in our community are heard and considered
- Conversations and helping people get to services
- Continue to be involved in the Housing Element process
- Getting more people who work here but can't afford to live here to participate
- Talk to my friends/neighbors about it. Meet people who have different housing situations from me.

Do you have ideas or strategies about addressing the conditions some of the panelists face or have faced (optional)?

- We need to work together on this issue
- Build more housing, especially middle housing that isn't just single-family homes! Rent ceilings, financial support for new homeowners, ending application fees and credit checks.
- Waiver of application fees by the City in BMR units; removal of parking requirements, height restrictions, and any other municipal policies affecting the unit economics that make more affordable housing projects feasible, advocacy for a rental registry and work regionally by the City in streamlining the application processes and varied assistance programs offered to lower-income individuals.
- I'd be curious if we could have more communal conversations with people with lived experience as most folks really don't have access (that they know of) to have these discussions. Central database of opportunities. Trauma-informed practices throughout the process.
- I wish we had a program to screen applicants for housing and match them with older folks who are sitting on too big of a home. Maybe renters could offer assistance to defray their rent
- Create a common housing application with fee waivers. Policy that prioritizes affordable housing over luxury housing
- Housing Commission should have a required tenant representative
- We need to make affordable housing actually scalable, which means upzoning and rezoning!

Summary

This hour-and-a-half hybrid community meeting was successful for multiple reasons. First, it brought up participation in the Housing Element process in Cupertino to a significantly higher number. This meeting drew community members in and allowed them to engage in meaningful dialogue with their neighbors and other members of the community.

Second, the survey results demonstrated that this meeting will keep people engaged. 50% of Zoom and 20% of in person attendees responded that they would do “all of the above” options to get involved with Cupertino’s Housing Element. All participants committed to do at least one thing to engage with the Housing Element. This meeting generated engagement beyond the hour and a half that evening; many attendees will stay involved, and this meeting helped build momentum as the City moves through the Housing Element process. In the exit survey, participants wrote about their new desire to participate in the process and to be a part of the change happening in Cupertino.

Third, the meeting centered the voices of those with lived experience, and many attendees also had lived experience related to housing. This dialogue and listening was important because more privileged community members rarely get to hear from WVCS clients and others who have faced significant barriers to housing. Amplifying the experiences, opinions, and passions of WVCS clients changed the perspectives of the participants, shifting the way they understand affordable housing and areas such as homelessness, neurodivergence, and discrimination.

This was the first of three community meetings. The two to follow will have a similar format, with a stronger focus on breakout sessions, as participants and moderators found these to be particularly valuable. We will continue to center the voices of individuals with lived experience and to bring the community together to discuss and learn about housing in Cupertino.

Appendix

Appendix A: Event flyer

Appendix B: List of groups outreached to

Appendix C: List of opening poll questions including multiple choice options

Appendix D: Presentation slide deck

Appendix E: List of closing poll questions including multiple choice options

Appendix F: Full exit survey responses