



Presentation to: Commission on the Senior Community

Date: July 18, 2012

Following the presentation on the housing element process, challenges and emerging issues, commissioners provided the following feedback:

Aging in Place: Seniors mostly want to age in place. If they move, the following are important for a new location:

- Elevators or ground floor level for accessibility and visitability (minimize interior/exterior stairs)
- Supportive services, case management in the building and facilities for transitions in care level (for specifically senior projects)
- Seniors need space! Don't want a little 800 sf apartment
- Washer and dryer in the unit is important
- Shorter walking distance to transportation than normally thought of as walkable.
- Seniors often need a caretaker, or may at some time, whether it be a family member or hired. A unit for a senior living independently should have at a minimum 2 bedrooms and 1.5 bathrooms.

Defining and Understanding the seniors in our population

- When speaking of older Americans/seniors, it should be noted that there are cohorts of seniors – multiple generations within the senior community. Think of solutions in different ways for 60-70, 70-80, or older than 80 because they do not all want and need the same types of housing and services.

Universal design and visitability:

- Housing should be designed so that the important structural components are in place to easily accommodate adjustments for persons with disabilities. (It was noted that the City complies with State building code regulations on the subject, but these do not require all the features the Commissioners would like to see. The City's Building Official and his staff are working on ways that they might be able to encourage or require such features.)
- Housing should be designed so that units are accessible for neighbors to visit each other.

Traffic/Parking

- Concern about the effect on traffic that may result from the addition of so many housing units in the mixed-use districts. How will all this housing exacerbate existing traffic problems?
- It is important to think about having transportation alternatives that work for people who do not live within short walking distance of a bus line. There should be shuttles, local-serving transit that takes into account that for seniors the reasonable walking distance is often shorter.

Infrastructure

- With all the housing being proposed, the City should assess the infrastructure and update it. It was expressed that this has not been done for a very long time.

Other

Commissioners expressed interest in reviewing the draft document, particularly to see details on the data regarding seniors in need.