



**Presentation to: Commission on the Status of Women**

**Date: August 8, 2012**

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

**Affordable Housing**

- When the commission conducted outreach, they found that affordable housing was a big issue among women because of the recent economic downturn.
- A supply of affordable housing is needed in the community to accommodate the workforce; many in the hospitality industry in Santa Monica cannot afford the high rents of Santa Monica.
- Interested in affordable ownership housing, which is very difficult to build in SM due to high land and development costs as well as administrative and monitoring challenges.
- Concerned about loss of rent-controlled units.

**Traffic/Parking**

- Concern about requiring less parking in residential projects and “unbundling.” When more apartment-sharing brings more cars into the neighborhood and they park on the streets, it puts pressure on residents in older neighborhoods in which the parking is not sufficient, sometimes resulting in the need for tenants to park further and further away from their buildings. At night, especially on streets that are not so well-lit, this becomes a safety issue for women.
  - It was clarified that residents of mixed-use projects in non-residential zones may not receive permits to park in the surrounding residential areas, in order to address this issue.
- Increase in vehicle traffic leads to more “pulling in and out,” causing accidents. Housing needs to consider transportation.
- Consider charging more for parking permits (like San Francisco)
- When Expo is operational, there should be shuttles and other options to get from stations out to residential areas.

**Unit Size**

- The pending projects’ emphasis on building smaller studio units is not helpful to women when considering that women looking for rental housing are single-family households and women who tend to live longer and move in with their daughter or other family.
- It was expressed that women generally need units bigger than those proposed.

**Data Collection**

- Commissioners would like to see data in the Housing Element collected by gender to inform the issues most important to women. For instance, female single-headed households by area would be useful. 90404-90405 has the largest concentrations of single parents, and understanding how household heads divide by gender would be useful.
- Would like to see correlation between unit size and gender if it is available.



### **Safety**

Issues of street lighting were brought up, and staff noted that a Pedestrian Action Plan is being developed and commissioners should get involved in that effort.

### **Services/Amenities:**

- Little parks/playgrounds, grocery stores, and bus lines within walking distance
- Washer/dryer in unit

### **Other**

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