

## Introduction

The City of Sacramento is embarking on a process to develop an **Inclusive Economic Development Plan** that will prioritize policies, activities, projects and funding throughout the city over the coming years. This project builds on previous City efforts and is focused on identifying economic development actions that are integrated and inclusive. The **Place Capacity Focus Group** was held on December 5, 2018, at the Del Paso Boulevard Partnership Office. The purpose of this meeting was to:

- **Review** the City's Inclusive Economic Development Plan process
- **Discuss** and expand upon the initial list of City priorities
- **Identify** the best ways for the City to fully engage the community

The following individuals participated in the Place Capacity Focus Group:

William Burg  
*Preservation Sacramento*

Michael Blair  
*South Oak Park Community Association*

Julian Dixon  
*Sacramento Philharmonic*

Tracy Stigler  
*Sierra Health Foundation*

Rachel Iskow  
*Sacramento Housing Alliance*

Erica Kashiri  
*Thousand Strong*

Ramona Landeros  
*Benito Juarez Neighborhood Association*

Jackie Cole  
*Venerable Good Consulting*

Edward Lewis  
*Urban Strategies*

Monica Hernandez  
*SACOG*

Lindsey Nitta  
*Oak Park Promise Neighborhood*

Lovelle Harris  
*Sacramento Region Community Foundation*

Bruce Pierini  
*Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association*

Katy Robb  
*Mutual Assistance Network*

Derrell Roberts  
*Roberts Family Development Center*

Jeff Slodowitz  
*Newtown Booth Neighborhoods Association*

Verna Sulpizio  
*Visit Sacramento*

Marq Truscott  
*ULI*

Maya Wallace  
*Creative Economy*

Camille Wise  
*City of Sacramento*

Sean Wright  
*Alkali Flat and Mansion Flats Historic  
Neighborhood Association*

Kim Williams  
*Sacramento Children's Home, Family Resource  
Center*

## Meeting Format

The meeting began with a welcome from **Melissa Anguiano, Economic Development Manager**, who led group introductions and gave a presentation on the background and future of the City's Inclusive Economic Development Plan. She presented a summary of the key findings from Project Prosper and the Brookings Institute study, including a review of existing Sacramento assets and existing/future challenges and opportunities. This was followed by a summary of the key goals for the project, overview of Measure U, and a summary of the timeline for developing the Inclusive Economic Development Plan over the next six months.

Following her presentation, **Dan Amsden with MIG** facilitated a group discussion focused on confirming or refining the various priorities identified during the Project Prosper effort. MIG staff graphically recorded focus group comments on a large piece of butcher paper (a photo-reduction of the wallgraphic is included at the end of this document).

## Discussion Topics

The following is a summary of focus group comments related to each priority, followed by additional thoughts for how the City can better engage the community (*note: it is not intended to serve as a complete transcription of the meeting*).

### **PRIORITY A: INCREASE MIDDLE INCOME, LOW INCOME, AND HOMELESS HOUSING OPTIONS**

- Identify ways to lower rents! Will reducing barriers and reducing construction costs actually result in lower rents?
- Question: Is there a percentage of affordable housing that needs to be built according to City Code?
- Create a citywide inclusionary housing requirement for new projects.
- Create more supportive services. It's one thing to get into housing, but another to keep it and to be in a safe neighborhood.
- Increase the range of community services available in all neighborhoods – mental health, schools, after school programs, etc.
- Focus on keeping people in place and have policies that avoid displacement
- Separate buyers and renters in the City's approach – they represent two different markets.
- Question: How many units are coming online in Sacramento each year?
- Reduce regulatory barriers to multifamily housing construction – it is difficult/illegal in many locations of the city to build multifamily housing due to zoning requirements. For example, there was a cited statistic that 85% of residential zoning is single family which makes it difficult to produce the number of housing units the city actually needs.
- Focus on ways to help people no longer be "low income." More emphasis on upward mobility and building wealth is needed.

- Evaluate/assess the public benefit of publicly-supported development projects.
- Consider placing restrictions on rents or housing costs in exchange for public money.
- Help people with the fewest resources.
- Target public subsidies to very low-income housing.
- Evaluate whether or not incentives result in positive outcomes.
- Raise more money for more local subsidies to leverage State, Federal and other funds.
- Ensure we are not displacing families as new projects are created.
- Provide legal help for those being evicted and disallow income as a qualifier for obtaining a rental unit.
- Figure out how to use vouchers for homes in market rate areas – look at the amount of income versus sources of income.
- Create/allow more accessory dwelling units – promote more building of units through grants and subsidies to owners.
- Improve transportation options from all neighborhoods to employment and commercial centers.
- Question: Would like to know/understand the impact of the Paradise fire on housing in Sacramento. What will it mean to our market (specifically cost of supplies)?
- Encourage more women and people of color to work in the construction industry.
- Build relationships with banks so that they work with the community and help people realize home ownership. Many underserved neighborhood residents don't even think about buying a house.
- Expand opportunities for adaptive reuse – generally it is only happening in the Central City. Seek opportunities in other areas (may require a survey of available, historic buildings).
- Establish a loan/grant program to improve the aesthetics of homes (painting, roofs, etc.), similar to the former façade grant program for businesses.
- Create better partnerships with community-based organizations and improve their access/exposure to school programs.

**PRIORITY B: PROVIDE MORE SERVICES TO INCREASE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CLEANLINESS SERVICES**

- Identify a better way to engage the community - “Public Safety” is a phrase loaded with baggage.
- Address cultural issues around law enforcement in communities of color, and make sure these communities are not overpoliced.
- Increase the amount of lighting in public parks.
- Remove fences where able – they create a prison-like feel around parks.
- Encourage the access to and ownership of parks to be more in the public's hands, especially for people of color. Look into the work of Mitch Silver in NYC.
- Re-envision what public safety looks like. Rethink how the city does law enforcement. The status quo way of doing things has to change. City needs to

have this conversation with the community to determine what public safety should look like going forward.

- After school programs are lacking and there are not enough of them.
- Improve how law enforcement interacts with citizens in order to improve trust.
- Better training for police to respond to mental illness. Consider a separate line (other than 911) for non-emergency mental health issues, specifically to reach those trained to respond to mental illness.
- Evaluate existing services and programs – it is important and there needs to be feedback into the City's investments.
- Increase nighttime activities for youth. Most youth activities end by 6:00 p.m.
- Increase access to education and libraries in all neighborhoods.
- Create “hyper-local” community assistance.
- Make art a part of the economy in all neighborhoods.

#### **PRIORITY C: INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES**

- Spend money on rehabilitation of buildings and residences – this is a better investment than new construction and results in greater economic impact.
- Improve access to education and libraries which is key for people to help themselves.
- Consider building new libraries or partnering with schools to strengthen existing assets (and make school campuses/recreation areas open to the community).
- Ensure that local amenities reflect existing neighborhood residents. Amenities should not be added to recruit people to move into a community.
- Expand electric vehicle charging stations throughout the city.
- Invest in small businesses and provide access to capital for those businesses in low income neighborhoods.
- Avoid displacement of existing businesses.
- Educate the community on the financial costs of pay day loans. Remove (or limit) predatory lending companies.
- Get property owners engaged – retail is changing. Amenities are also changing and encourage property owners to seek higher quality tenants for our neighborhoods.
- Allow flexible zoning.
- Improve the way the City (and other local agencies) communicate with minority communities.
- Create year-round farmers markets.
- Need more health clinics and grocery stores. Many neighborhoods have plenty of liquor stores but lack access to fresh foods.

#### **PRIORITY D: INCREASE PUBLIC PLACES TO LEARN AND PLAY**

- Increase access to schools as places for community gathering – even though it is tough to get approval to use these facilities (especially nights and weekends). The City and school districts really need to work on joint use approaches.
- Repurpose vacant elementary schools into new community amenities.

- Inventory and understand what exists in each neighborhood and learn how to amplify what is already happening. The example was given of the building the meeting was in and all of the services based there.
- Improve the relationship between the City and County.
- Restore community services, especially youth programs.

**PRIORITY E: IMPROVE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Improve sustainability and resiliency in low income neighborhoods. Many homes do not have air conditioning and there is a lack of cooling stations.
- Question: Does the City have identified communities of concern? Identify the census tracts most in need of assistance and prioritize them for funding.
- Capitalize on underutilized parking lots in light industrial areas – convert them to safe spaces for the homeless where people can live in their cars or RVs.
- Increase the amount of protected bicycle lanes in all neighborhoods.
- Focus transportation programs and funding on the first/last mile.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON WAYS THE CITY CAN BEST ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY DURING THE STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS**

The City of Sacramento should:

- Do door-to-door engagement like the Census.
- Hire local people (homeless, lowest income) to help clean the city.
- Continue to hold neighborhood meetings, and focus on piggy-backing on community meetings/events that are already planned.
- Engage the community so they feel included and have ownership of the plan.
- Set up informational displays or hold events in affordable housing community rooms.
- Talk to people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Ask for feedback in a way that will yield results that are meaningful and can inform policy.
- Ask questions that do not require a lot of background information to understand the question.
- Continue ongoing dialogue – not just a “one-time” thing.

# City of SACRAMENTO

## INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DEC 5 2018

