

# **City of San Leandro**

## **Housing Protections in San Leandro**

### **Mobile Home Park Residents Focus Group**

#### **(November 8, 2023)**

## **Workshop Topline Summary**

The impending expiration of the pandemic-related eviction moratorium, which ended in July 2023, enlivened concerns around the rights of both tenants and housing providers. As a result, the San Leandro City Council requested in July 2023 that the City of San Leandro (City) explore additional housing protections. The City is taking a broad view and considering a new rent control ordinance, tenant anti-harassment, rent registry, and just cause. They are also evaluating existing protections such as the Rent Review Board, Tenant Relocation Ordinance, and State AB 1482.

The community has been invited to participate in constructive dialogue on how to tailor protections to be both feasible and effective. Public input will help the City understand the community's priorities and potential areas of common ground. The City will use public engagement findings to guide the development of a new ordinance(s) and/or enhance existing City and State housing protections.

The City hosted a series of focus groups with tenants, housing providers, mobile home park owners, mobile home park residents and their advocates. The focus groups were designed to gather input from diverse groups with a strong interest in housing protections. The mobile home park residents focus group was held on November 8, 2023. Two people participated and represented mobile home park residents. Others who were not able to attend submitted feedback via email, which is included in the summary of emailed comments. Key themes and sentiments are summarized below. This workshop summary is not intended to be a transcription.

### **Affordability**

Participants noted that mobile home parks are generally a more affordable housing option when compared with apartments or single-family homes. However, space rents, especially on top of mortgage payments, can become unaffordable for some residents.

Participants questioned why mobile home park owners need to raise rents to the maximum allowable, noting that space rent collected for hundreds of spaces each month adds up to a significant sum of money.

### **Communication**

When asked about compromise with park owners on potential new ordinances, participants said that they thought it would be difficult to reach a compromise. However, they noted that compromise would need to come through back-and-forth discussions with park owners.

## Existing Protections

Participants said that they needed more information on existing protections.

One participant shared that things that are working well about the current protections include that the community has the option to purchase homes being sold by the park owners; and that in the event that the park owner sells the park, they would need to assist residents in finding a new place to live.

One participant shared that it was valuable to be able to access the rent rolls and see how much rents had been increased for new renters.

Participants shared that residents and park owners would need to work together to close loopholes in existing ordinances. They noted that both sides would need legal representation and that residents were often not able to afford to hire lawyers.

## Homelessness

Participants expressed concern for the unhoused population in San Leandro and expressed wanting to see more done to end and prevent homelessness.

## Maintenance

Participants said that the mobile home parks where they lived were generally well-maintained. One participant expressed concern about residents being charged capital improvement fees for minor repairs.

## New Protections

Participants expressed that rent stabilization should be a high priority for the City. They expressed interest in lowering the cap on rent increases. They noted that the maximum allowable rent increases are too high for most residents, especially for those on fixed income such as Social Security, or when rents are raised to the maximum allowable multiple years in a row.

Participants wanted to see additional protections for seniors, who, they noted, are often living on fixed incomes and unable to work. One participant also raised the possibility of setting limits to rent increases based on different income levels.

Participants were interested in tenant anti-harassment, sharing that they had heard from other residents that community standards were applied inconsistently and that some residents were the focus of more enforcement action by park owners than others.

Participants expressed that most residents would not be in favor of an additional fee, although one participant noted that it might be acceptable if necessary to make a new rent stabilization ordinance possible. They wondered whether additional affordable housing could better be supported by taxes.

## Process

Participants expressed interest in staying involved and learning about additional ways to help make needed changes.