



## Community-Driven Housing Priorities in the San Francisco Bay Area

The greater Bay Area is in an era marked by housing challenges, and conversations about how to address the problems often exclude the perspectives of those most directly affected: seniors, youth, low-income residents, immigrants, artists and other vulnerable residents. Regional **On the Table** conversations aimed to elevate the experiences and voices of people who reflect our diverse communities. Community members who participated in OTT conversations identified the following five key housing priority areas, and organizing partners contributed ideas and solutions.



### Priority 1: Produce more housing

Community members indicated that there is a need for more housing supply and encourage elected officials to change zoning laws to allow for more housing development and for more in-law units, subletting of rooms and tiny homes.

✓ **IDEA:** Improve mechanisms for gathering community input in development processes. Allow all residents to provide feedback around developments in their neighborhood.



### Priority 2: Protect individuals and families

Community members highlighted the need for greater protection of tenants and renters from eviction, and for enforcement of minimum quality-of-life regulations for buildings.

✓ **IDEA:** Invest in emergency rental assistance and support services for families facing an immediate risk of homelessness. By intervening early we can assist these families at a lower cost than once they have already been pushed out onto the streets.



### Priority 3: Preserve existing housing

Community members said that policy plans to address the housing crisis often do not adequately address the importance of preserving existing housing.

- ✓ **IDEA:** Support efforts to preserve existing affordable and rent-stabilized housing through comprehensive city plans that include mechanisms like one-for-one replacement policies, elimination of restrictive zoning policies and provisions for nonprofit developers to purchase and rehabilitate at-risk affordable properties.



### Priority 4: Change the conversation

Community members said that beyond policy solutions and community action, we need to change the conversation about housing. They identified structural racism and neighborhood-level opposition to new housing development as unstated but important barriers to production, protection, and preservation, especially with respect to communities of color, low-income community members, and neighbors experiencing homelessness.

While the dominant culture values single-family homes, open spaces, and yards, they suggested nuanced narratives showing multigenerational families living together, co-housing, and other non-single-family living situations.

- ✓ **IDEA:** Educate media to improve and increase coverage of issues associated with housing and homelessness. Education efforts could include: 1) philanthropically supported convenings of nonprofit and academic experts together with media owners, editors and writers; 2) guidebooks and workshops on equity, housing and homelessness for local journalists, and 3) investing in unique stories.



### Priority 5: Engage community

Community members said they want to be involved in addressing challenges facing their families and communities with respect to housing. Through the On the Table process, there are examples of community members coming together to initiate change. For example, a group of tenants living in one apartment building recognized that they could not only support each other through their community, but they could actually organize politically to demand preservation and protection of their home.

Community members want more opportunities to create community networks to foster local solutions and engage in political processes.

- ✓ **IDEA:** Build a network of housing advocates by strengthening connections with community groups, such as neighborhood associations, housing-adjacent advocates, such as healthcare professionals and teachers, and historically under-represented groups like low-income people and people of color.

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**See the full report highlighting additional community-driven ideas, recommendations and efforts by community partners at [siliconvalleycf.org/onthetable](https://siliconvalleycf.org/onthetable)**

