Broad solutions for the Bay Area’s housing affordability challenges

Egon Terplan, SPUR
League of Women Voters, League Day 2017
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SPUR is an urban civic group in the Bay Area’s central cities of San Jose, San Francisco and Oakland.
Our agenda for change identifies housing solutions among other key actions for the region.
SPUR'S AGENDA FOR HOUSING:

MAKE IT AFFORDABLE TO LIVE HERE
SPUR’s Housing Agenda

- Zone for more housing in the right locations – walkable, near transit.
- Invest in permanently affordable housing.
- Enable more housing to be affordable by design.
- Rethink parking requirements.
- Encourage secondary units.
- Get housing development fees right.
But we cannot fix housing affordability on its own – as housing is so intertwined with other regional issues
There’s a mismatch between where jobs and housing are growing (plus where housing is more affordable).

From 2010 to 2015, San Mateo County added 17 jobs for every new home.

Source: SPUR’s analysis
Congestion is growing as many commute from far away to jobs.

But congestion means those who ride transit often get stuck in traffic (so the bus is slow and not reliable).
And most people drive because only a quarter of jobs are regional transit.

Maps produced by Mark Shorett, Arup for SPUR
Those who take rail transit overcome a system not designed for users: no common maps, fares or schedules.
Wage growth allows (some) workers to afford higher rents – yet higher wages drives up housing prices for all.
And local budget woes lead some cities to view housing as perpetuating fiscal challenges.
So what are some next step solutions to these issues – that (if implemented right) will also help on housing.
Support efforts to increase revenue for local governments – a need that may grow in the coming years.
Find ways for cities to keep a larger share of the property tax. (they keep ~14-25% of each $1.00 of property taxes today).

![Property tax revenue per capita chart]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Average USD per capita</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cupertino</td>
<td>$200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gilroy</td>
<td>$250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campbell</td>
<td>$300</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Jose</td>
<td>$350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santa Clara</td>
<td>$400</td>
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<td>Milpitas</td>
<td>$450</td>
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<td>Sunnyvale</td>
<td>$500</td>
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<td>Mountain View</td>
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<td>Palo Alto</td>
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But also provide some oversight when local land use decisions go against state and regional needs. There are 109 local governments making mostly independent land use decisions.
Give our regional plan some teeth to make sure it gets implemented.

Ensure local zoning is consistent with the vision of the regional plan.
Allow for more job growth (e.g. zone for taller buildings) next to transit.

Former Survey Monkey headquarters in Palo Alto across the street from Caltrain
Make investments to truly create a seamless transportation system across the Bay Area

The 2018 Ballot is a big opportunity.
Get the bus out of traffic
Make transit go faster with dedicated lanes
Establish higher regional or subregional minimum wage levels since wages are growing slower than inflation.

Median Wage growth in Bay Area 2001-2014

Source: Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, Steve Levy
Expand access to post-secondary education and training as a way to boost wages for lower-wage workers.
Summary

• Expand **housing supply** + identify a **permanent source** for affordable housing funding.
  
  But also:

• Give local governments access to **more of the property tax** or other revenue *in exchange for* agreeing to some kind of **oversight of local land-use decisions** so they meet regional or state goals.

• Make big investment in **seamless transit** to better connect the region.

• Expand **raise the floor** strategies and expand post-secondary training opportunities.
Thank you!