



Community Advisory Committee: Meeting 2 Meeting Summary

Monday, December 2, 2024, 5:00-7:00 pm

South San Francisco City Hall

In Attendance

CAC Members Present	
Vice Mayor Eddie Flores (Chair)	
Nora Alvarado	
Michelle Alvarez	
Bertha Benton	
Majorie Blen	
Lee Ginsburg	
Joe Napoliello	
Jennifer Siegel	
Karla Vides	
Jahan Zandi	

CAC Members Absent: Leslie Fong, Greg Turner

City of South San Francisco Staff Present	
Geneva Mendoza	
Elia Moreno	
Sharon Ranals	
Tony Rozzi	
Nell Selander	
Alvina Condon	

Consulting Staff Present	
Anna Gallicchio	HR&A
Rachel Waldman (by video)	HR&A
Joey Goldman	Kearns & West
Marlys Jeane	Kearns & West

Interpretation Staff Present	
Annabelle Garay	
Noemi Gonzalez	

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Welcome & Introductions

Joey Goldman from Kearns & West welcomed the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members and introduced the interpretation services. Noemi Gonzalez demonstrated the equipment and emphasized the importance of interpretation services for language justice. She instructed the group to speak clearly, only have one person speak at a time, take pauses between sentences, and follow the guidance and gestures of interpreters to control the speed and volume of speech.

Vice Mayor Eddie Flores called the meeting to order, and Joey led roll call. Vice Mayor Flores requested a motion to approve the November meeting minutes. Committee member Michelle Alvarez motioned to approve the minutes; committee member Jennifer Siegel seconded this motion. The committee approved the minutes.

Joey asked committee members to use the name card method to indicate when they would like to speak during the meeting.

The committee members then introduced themselves.

Joey reminded the committee of the group agreement developed during the November meeting. See below:

- Respect All Opinions
- Empathy and Respect
- Focus on Ideas, Not Individuals
- Don't yuck my yums!
- Openness to Diverse Perspectives
- Use "I" Statements
- Balance Honesty and Sensitivity
- No Interrupting
- Step Up, Step Back

Public Comment

The floor was opened to public comment. There were no public comments.

Residential Analysis Presentation

Anna Gallicchio from HR&A presented an overview of HR&A's Residential Analysis. She reminded committee members about key concepts related to both residential and commercial displacement, including the factors that contribute to forced, pressured, and

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feared displacement. Anna provided some statistics from the data analysis, which identified a few key findings:

- **Housing affordability crisis:** There is an insufficient number of affordable units for households making less than \$150K.
- **Vulnerable populations:** Renters, seniors, single parent households, and Hispanic/Latino families are the highest cost burdened populations in South San Francisco (SSF).
- **Shifting demographics:** From 2012-2022, there has been a decrease in Hispanic/Latino and Black populations and in households earning below \$150k.
- **Rising costs:** While the median household income in SSF has increased since 2012, it is still relatively low compared to the rest of San Mateo County. Home values and rents have skyrocketed more than 80% in the past 10 years.

Anna also discussed factors that lead to residential displacement and populations most at risk for further displacement. Key discussion topics include:

- **Lack of affordable housing for the existing workforce:** There are not enough homes for renters earning less than \$75K. Most families do not earn enough to be able to pay for the average home cost in SSF, and high paying jobs (above \$150K) are held mostly by commuters coming from elsewhere.
- **Cost burdened populations face higher displacement pressures:** HR&A analyzed cost-burden as an indication of populations at risk of displacement, meaning households that spend more than 30% of gross income on housing costs. For example, of renters in the following categories, the following percentages are those considered cost-burdened in SSF:
 - 72% of senior households
 - 69% of single-parent households
 - 56% of Black households
 - 56% of Hispanic/Latino households

Anna provided geographic information demonstrating demographic changes in SSF over the past decade. There has been a 36% decrease in Hispanic/Latino populations across SSF and by 38% in the Old Town area between 2012 and 2022. Anna noted that displacement pressure is most evident in older multi-family buildings, particularly those along El Camino Real and smaller 2-5-unit buildings downtown. These older rental units (circa 1960s), often the most affordable and protected by rent control, are concentrated in areas experiencing the most significant population shifts.

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Discussion

Committee members engaged in a discussion, asking questions, and expressing some concerns. Key points from the conversation include:

- Some committee members raised concerns about the safety and health conditions of older, multi-family buildings, particularly regarding issues like mold and potential health hazards.
- HR&A noted that while rent control offers some protection, it doesn't address underlying issues of safety and habitability within older buildings. Regarding unit health and safety, multiple-generation occupancy in single family homes, etc. there are implications of how building typologies can impact affordability and displacement strategies.
- Committee members discussed tenant rights and education. A few members expressed the need for increased support services from the City, including information about rights, assistance with resolving disputes with landlords, and support with navigating complex legal procedures. It was suggested there could be a dedicated City office to provide information, support, and resources, as well as an online resource hub or clearinghouse with links and resources.
- Committee members noted the need for landlords to be educated about their legal obligations.
- Committee member Marjorie Blen informed the other members that there are housing rights legal services that support tenants with issues like mold, harassment from landlords, and others as well as nonprofits in San Mateo County with dedicated staff and resources to support citizens as they navigate housing issues.
- Committee member Bertha Benton offered similar accounts of supporting tenants when they needed assistance and didn't understand their rights. Bertha offered other committee members mediation or advocacy services with their landlords if they needed it.
- Vice Mayor Flores reminded all committee members that the discussion happening is ultimately the goal of the committee, to discuss the issues and identify possible solutions and mitigate the departure of their SSF neighbors.
- Committee member Jennifer Siegel asked about property restrictions that might be expiring within SSF that the City is tracking. City staff responded that there are no large, affordable housing buildings where the City is party to an expiring deed agreement on a close timeline: one is expiring in approximately seven years.

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After a short break, Joey welcomed committee members back and opened the floor for a group discussion based on HR&A's presentation. Discussion questions and responses are noted below:

- 1) What stood out to you? Was there anything that surprised you?
 - Lee noted the percentage of people who are cost-burdened is alarmingly high. The quantity (hard number) of those people is currently unknown to the committee members, but should be shared by HR&A.
 - Michelle found it interesting that there are only 900 resident positions in biotech despite the South City industry moving heavily to biotech. She also inquired about why older rental housing is more affordable, to which committee members and HR&A staff replied that, in addition to older homes often having lower property taxes, they are often less desirable than newer rental units. Therefore, there's less demand and lower rental prices.
 - Committee members also discussed how new SSF residents, who are moving due to the emerging biotech industry, are relocating to communities with good school districts; these individuals or families have high incomes and choose to live in more expensive places, often on the outskirts of SSF, away from the historic areas with older buildings.
 - Committee members also pointed out that while the presentation showed data that housing and rental costs have increased over the past 10 years, incomes have not matched that.

- 2) From your experience, what "displacement pressures" may cause South San Franciscans to feel they must move homes?
 - a. Rising housing costs?
 - b. Job opportunities elsewhere?
 - c. Loss of community?
 - Michelle made comments about how people move to the East Bay because they can get larger houses/more square footage for their dollar and are more willing to commute for that reason.
 - Vice Mayor Flores discussed several displacement pressures, explaining why a high desire for green space, increased traffic and parking congestion, and the changing character of the community are all reasons SSF residents might leave. He also emphasized the importance of quality education, transportation, and walkability in preventing displacement.

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- Bertha added that there is parking competition between tenants and patrons, making parking a displacement pressure in SSF.
 - Karla highlighted that displacement in her community is primarily driven by rising housing costs and the fear of people losing their homes. Residents, despite advocating for their housing rights, often face resistance from landlords and lack access to adequate support and resources. This situation is leading to increased housing insecurity and families sharing homes to afford living costs.
- 3) Do you know anyone who has moved out of South San Francisco for any reasons? What led them to move? Where did they go?
- Karla shared that people are moving to San Pablo, since it is significantly cheaper (Karla noted a \$5,000 difference). She emphasized that Latinos are disproportionately affected, as they often face these challenges. Seeing children and people from other countries experience these struggles is particularly difficult.
 - Marjorie shared a personal experience where her family had to go to Redwood City to access resources for a recent housing issue. Marjorie mentioned that the City website is not very helpful and that there is a lack of centralized information to guide the community from renting toward homeownership.
 - Bertha described waiting in an extremely long line to apply for housing a few years ago, only for the process to be cut off due to too many applicants. Bertha noted that many people struggle to find housing within their affordable range, and seniors face additional challenges, such as accessibility issues with elevators and home entrances. She noted that older adults, in particular, face housing cost burdens. While she appreciates the City's efforts to provide some senior housing, she stressed the need for more options.
 - Nora noted that people are leaving because of unhealthy affordable housing conditions. She has direct experience with this issue as do others in the community. She explained that rental units are not always safe or healthy for children, pushing families to move away. While high rent is a major reason for leaving, poor living conditions also contribute. She added that when residents complain, landlords often promise repairs only after tenants move out, leaving SSF residents feeling like they have no choice but to leave.

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4) What are the barriers that make it difficult to remain in the city? What makes it hard to live in South San Francisco? *(Participants provided responses in writing and several shared one or two of the items they noted. These are summarized by theme below.)*

- **Employment and Wages**
 - Local jobs do not pay enough (x2)
 - Limited work opportunities for South SF communities
- **Housing Costs**
 - High rent prices/rising rents/High rent for small/older homes
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - Not enough senior housing
- **Childcare and Daycare**
 - Unaffordable daycare/childcare costs (x2)
- **Schools**
 - Schools lack funding
 - Lack of local teachers
 - Schools' student populations do not reflect the teaching staff
 - Schools and teachers are not locally based
 - School district and city systems are outdated (data, outreach, access)
 - Low school rankings
- **Community and Social Challenges**
 - Loved ones and community members moving away
 - Not being heard (community concerns ignored)
 - Lack of information and resources for community members
- **Traffic and Noise**
 - Excessive/fast traffic on residential streets (e.g., Commercial St., Chestnut St.)
 - Noise from SFO airport and freeways
- **General Cost of Living**
 - High overall costs/affordability issues
 - Cheaper living options elsewhere
- **Parking**
 - Limited parking availability
 - Parking difficulties
- **Other Factors**
 - Weather
 - Crime

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- Limited family-oriented activities
- Newer-style homes may not suit the community
- The city is too spread out

Meeting Schedule and What's Next

Anna Gallicchio reminded committee members that the next meeting will include an update on the commercial challenges related to displacement. She encouraged members to engage in conversations with local business owners, as their role on the advisory committee is integral to supporting the broader community. Anna also requested that committee members recommend any individuals they believe K&W and HR&A should involve in these discussions.

Joey reminded the group about upcoming outreach activities, including a potential popup event and a public open house, which will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Vice Mayor Flores shared a few announcements before adjourning the meeting.

- **Santa Comes to Town:** Next week, Grand Avenue, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM and several businesses along Grand Avenue will be participating.
- **Reorganization Meeting,** Tuesday, December 10 at South San Francisco Conference Center. A public meeting where the new mayor and vice mayor will be sworn in. All members of the public are encouraged to attend.

The next meeting will be held on January 13, 5 -7pm. While these meetings normally will be held on the first Monday of each month, the first meeting in 2025 will be held the second Monday of the month to allow more time between the holidays and the start of the working quarter.

The City of San Francisco anticipates eight sessions with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) over the next nine months. The CAC is currently in Phase 1 (November 2024 to January 2025). The next phases (2-4) will occur throughout the rest of 2025.