

CASA Community Engagement Round 2:

Reactions to the Compact

Goals for the Second Round of Community Engagement

- **Evaluate Proposed Solutions:** Impacted residents know best how proposed solutions can be improved to most effectively address the challenges they face and to avoid unintended consequences.
- **Incorporate Community Feedback:** This is the only opportunity in the formal CASA process for directly-affected community members to provide their feedback.
- **Provide Transparency:** Residents should be privy to discussions about current issues and proposed policy solutions that directly affect them.
- **Enable Smooth Implementation:** When residents are involved in the process, they will have more buy-in to implement the solutions that come out of CASA.
- **Build Power:** Residents can bring tools, knowledge and relationships to their communities to achieve local change.

Meeting Overview

- **Hosts:** Host organizations were well-organized, community-based, grassroots groups, who are crafting place-based solutions to the displacement and housing affordability crisis.
- **Accommodations and Inclusivity:** Meetings were held in community spaces during the evening. Dinner and childcare were provided. Materials were multilingual, and interpreters provided live translation.
- **Format:** Intro presentation on CASA, followed by group breakouts (both English and Spanish-speaking) to provide feedback on policies proposed in the CASA Compact.
- **Attendance:** Turnout met and exceeded expectations with 30-50 community members showing up to each meeting. Meetings engaged over 110 participants total.
- **Cross Section of the Community:** A mix of renters, homeowners, landlords, and people who are currently unhoused attended the meetings. Children, seniors on fixed incomes, workers, city leaders, and students joined the conversation. The majority of attendees were renters. Many people commute to work in a different city.

Shared Regional Concerns

Feedback from all three meetings highlighted shared regional concerns. They each called for stronger protections, such as no waiting period for just cause, relocation assistance for all no-fault evictions, and a tighter rent cap all of which would apply to all rental units. They each supported production in wealthier areas that have resisted transit and housing, but they called for deeper affordability levels and fewer financial incentives for market-rate development. They each emphasized the need for more meaningful community engagement, especially in sensitive communities. Many participants called for an additional element to focus on eliminating houselessness.

Santa Rosa: **NBOP**

- January 14, 2019
- Approx. 27 attendees
- 4 break-out groups: 3 English, 1 Spanish

Concord: **Monument Impact**

- January 15, 2019
- Approx. 34 attendees
- 4 break-out groups: 2 English, 2 Spanish

San Jose: **Sacred Heart**

- January 24, 2019
- Approx. 55 attendees - *particularly emphasized the need to address houselessness*
- 4 break-out groups: 3 English, 1 Spanish

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Key Takeaways and Important Perspectives

- **Prevent Displacement:** *Every* community group highlighted the prevalence of displacement and the need to prevent it.
- **Strengthen Protections:** *Every* community group critiqued the limitations on the tenant protection policies (Elements 1-3).
- **Deepen Affordability Levels:** *Every* community group noted the importance of focusing on households with extremely low, very low, and low incomes in the production policies (Elements 5-8).
- **Progressive Taxes to Fund the Compact:** *Every* community group rejected regressive taxes, such as the proposed sales tax, and favored progressive taxes. Many participants asked for more detailed calculations on the funding proposals.

Shared Concerns

Common reactions included:

Strengthen Tenant Protections

- **Element 1:** Just Cause should apply immediately to all types of housing: eliminate the 12-month waiting period and exceptions. Relocation assistance should apply to all no-fault evictions: eliminate the owner-move in exemption.
- **Element 2:** The Rent Cap must be stronger: CPI + 5% is too high. It should either be CPI or a fixed percentage ranging from 3-5%. No household should pay more than 30% of its income on housing. The rent cap should apply to all types of housing. Landlords should be prohibited from banking rent increases and passing on improvement costs to their tenants.
- **Element 3:** Access to Legal Counsel should apply to all tenants, including those living in the same unit/property as the landlord.

All the above: stronger local policies should not be preempted by weaker state and regional policies.

Deepen Affordability Levels

- **Element 5:** Density is helpful in wealthier communities that resist housing and public transit.
- **Element 6:** The 3-hearing limit will be harmful without measures to ensure transparency. There should either be no limit or a range. This policy lacks details on inclusion and stabilization.
- **Element 7:** To streamline, developments should have more than 20% of affordable units and those unit should be affordable to ELI, VLI, and LI households. Capping impact fees and 15-year tax abatement are harmful.
- **Elements 5 & 7:** Councils/boards of sensitive communities need more than just one public hearing to opt-in.

All the above: stronger local policies should not be preempted by weaker regional and state policies.

Progressive Taxes to Fund the Compact

- No regressive taxes like the proposed sales tax.
- Yes to employer head taxes (especially on large tech companies), vacancy tax, and commercial linkage fees.