

The problem as I understand it is not enough housing and not enough affordable housing.

The proposed solution would be applauded by Robin Hood. Steal from the rich to give to the poor.

Except for a few downsides.

1) it could easily steal from the barely middle class and give to developers. Many of us in R1 neighborhoods cannot afford to be stolen from. We have just purchased and will either sell at a handsome profit as developers look to make money on price per SF multiple units and still need a place to live or hang on and have values go down as the neighborhood declines due to overcrowding and absentee landlords. In CA for example planning /zoning meetings are sparsely attended as most homeowners in certain neighborhoods live in China or Brazil. Those neighborhoods suffer from costly code and safety issues. The smart money will sell quick and get out if they can. The less affluent will be stuck.

I suggest a combination of the following:

High rises in the downtowns as is typical in cities due to work/shopping proximity. Yes, this is not as attractive for ROI to developers but saves on transportation environmental costs and could be facilitated with tax breaks or rent control exemptions. Many seniors and students are happy with this convenient low maintenance option.

2) Stretch urban growth boundaries to add more neighborhoods where the land is least expensive or desirable as nature preserve or farmland. Yes we all love our farms and nature but not if we have to drive to visit it. Much nicer to grow produce in our neighborhoods. Putting housing where there used to be a back yard only forces us to leave home to visit nature.

3) Legalize existing structures for granny units - a smaller increase in neighborhood populations that may not require increased infrastructure and would be a more gradual increase.

As for affordability, paying labor a living wage makes better sense if you must tamper with markets.

Rent control is like musical chairs. If it went in when you were happily renting, you are lucky. It still leaves a lot of people standing out in the cold with developers uninterested in building units due to little or no ROI. Beata Bartholomay