



## Housing Workshop Summary

### Overview

The community workshop on housing was held on Tuesday, May 7, 2026, at the African American Arts and Cultural Center. The workshop brought together residents, community leaders, service providers, and other stakeholders to discuss housing priorities in the Fillmore and Western Addition neighborhoods. The event began with a brief presentation, followed by small group discussions.

Participants received a handout outlining priority areas and strategies, developed from past community engagement, reports, and input from City agencies and community members. During group discussions, participants were asked to affirm these strategies, identify any gaps, and share which strategies would have the greatest impact for the neighborhood. Below is a summary of the comments, key themes, and top priorities that emerged from the group discussions.

### Themes

#### 1. Preventing Displacement and Preserving the Black Community

Workshop participants want to stop further displacement and ensure that Black residents can remain, return, and build wealth in the Fillmore. Many participants stated that displacement is happening in real time and that waiting another decade for change could permanently alter the community.

Participants expressed concerns about:

- Continued loss of Black families and intergenerational households
- Seniors facing eviction or housing insecurity
- Descendants of displaced families struggling to access housing opportunities
- Development leading to displacement of both residents and small businesses
- Fear that community members will be excluded from future development projects
- Loss of cultural identity and neighborhood history

#### 2. Accessing Housing Opportunities for COP Holders and Descendants

Certificate of Preference (COP) issues were raised at nearly every table. Many participants viewed COP as both a housing tool and a mechanism for addressing historic harms caused by urban renewal and displacement.

Participants emphasized:

- COP holders should remain the highest housing priority
- Descendants should have broader eligibility for affordable housing opportunities
- More outreach and education is needed about COP benefits
- Application processes are difficult to navigate

- Families need larger, family-sized units
- Promises made during Redevelopment should be honored

### **3. Improving Housing Conditions, Maintenance, and Accountability**

Residents repeatedly raised concerns about the quality and safety of existing housing. Participants called for stronger oversight of property management companies and faster investment in repairing and reoccupying vacant units.

Issues included:

- Aging housing that needs safety and livability upgrades
- Mold, asbestos, rodents, and deferred maintenance
- Vacant units sitting unused while housing needs remain high
- Property managers failing to respond to resident concerns
- Lack of enforcement and accountability
- Seniors accumulating debt due to management and recertification issues

### **4. Need for Trusted, Culturally Competent Housing Navigation and Services**

Many residents described difficulty accessing information, resources, and housing assistance. Several participants noted that information often spreads through word-of-mouth and personal relationships rather than formal systems.

Participants requested:

- Housing counselors who reflect the Black community
- Better-trained navigators and case managers
- One-stop resource centers
- Improved referrals and service coordination
- More direct support for seniors, families, and vulnerable residents
- Expanded resident services in housing developments

### **5. Community-Led Outreach and Resident Organizing**

Participants consistently stated that traditional outreach methods are not reaching residents. Residents stressed that outreach should be conducted by trusted community members rather than solely by outside agencies.

Recommendations included:

- Door-to-door outreach
- Community ambassadors and resident outreach teams
- Meetings in housing sites, parks, schools, and familiar community spaces
- Outreach at Safeway, Ella Hill Hutch, and other gathering places
- Resident-led engagement efforts
- Stronger tenant communication networks

## **6. Lack of Trust**

A recurring concern was skepticism regarding development and planning efforts. There was a strong request for transparency, accountability, and regular updates on how community input will shape outcomes.

Participants expressed concerns about:

- Decisions have already been made before community engagement occurs
- Community meetings feel performative or like a "check box"
- Immediate action is needed
- Previous promises from elected officials and City agencies were not fulfilled

## **7. Preserving Community Institutions and Small Businesses**

Participants emphasized that housing stability is tied to the strength and presence of community-serving institutions. Residents viewed these institutions as critical to community identity and neighborhood stability.

Participants expressed concerns about:

- Supporting long-standing Black-owned businesses
- Protecting cultural landmarks
- Preserving community spaces such as Ella Hill Hutch
- Reopening and revitalizing important neighborhood assets
- Preventing development from displacing small businesses that lack resources to relocate and return

## **8. Housing Affordability and Pathways to Ownership**

Participants expressed concern that homeownership remains out of reach for many residents. Residents stressed that preserving affordable rental housing and creating realistic homeownership opportunities must occur simultaneously.

Key issues included:

- High HOA fees
- Limited affordable homeownership opportunities
- Need for wealth-building opportunities through ownership and generational wealth growth
- Desire for pathways from rental housing to ownership
- Concerns about affordability definitions not matching community realities
- Calls to expand and enforce tenant protections

## **Community Priorities**

Based on the discussion, the following priorities were shared.

### ***Priority 1: Stop Displacement and Prioritize Existing Residents, COP Holders and their Descendants***

Participants overwhelmingly called for policies and investments that allow existing residents and displaced families to remain in or return to the neighborhood. Participants consistently linked housing policy to repairing historic displacement and preserving the future of the Black community in the Fillmore.

Key actions discussed:

- Prioritize COP holders and descendants in housing opportunities
- Protect seniors and long-term residents from displacement
- Ensure development includes pathways for community return
- Preserve and produce family-sized housing

### ***Priority 2: Invest in Community-Based Housing Navigation, Resident Services, and Outreach***

Residents emphasized the need for trusted support systems that help people access housing resources and understand available opportunities. Many participants stated that resources exist but residents often cannot access them because information is fragmented, difficult to navigate, or not reaching the community.

Key actions discussed:

- Create community-based outreach teams
- Expand culturally competent housing counseling
- Increase resident services and case management
- Develop one-stop housing resource centers
- Conduct door-to-door engagement and neighborhood outreach

### ***Priority 3: Improve Housing Conditions and Increase Accountability***

Participants called for immediate improvements to existing housing stock and stronger accountability from property owners and managers.

Key actions discussed:

- Repair aging housing developments
- Address mold, asbestos, rodents, and habitability issues
- Rehabilitate vacant units for occupancy
- Improve property management companies' responsiveness to resident concerns

## Top Priorities Shared at the Workshop

Based on the dot exercise, the **top three strategies** are:

1. **Strategy 3d.** Expand access to homeownership readiness, downpayment assistance, and financial empowerment programs.
2. **Strategy 1b.** Build resident organizing power to advocate for housing resources and services.
3. **Strategy 1a.** Support Black-led organizations providing tenants protections, housing stabilization, and homelessness prevention services.

## Conclusion

Participants consistently emphasized the urgency of preventing further displacement of Black residents, improving access to housing opportunities and services, and ensuring that community voices directly influence decisions affecting the Fillmore and Western Addition. Residents, service providers, community leaders, business owners, and Certificate of Preference (COP) holders shared concerns about housing instability, deteriorating housing conditions, and the loss of cultural and community assets. The workshop reiterated deep concerns that decades of displacement, redevelopment, and underinvestment have weakened the Fillmore's Black community and limited opportunities for current residents and descendants to remain in the neighborhood.

Across all discussion tables, participants called for immediate action rather than long-term promises, stronger accountability from property owners and managers, and targeted investments that prioritize existing residents, COP holders, descendants, seniors, families, and Black-led organizations.

A central message emerged across all tables: **the community wants immediate, visible action that protects existing residents, honors commitments made to displaced families, and ensures that the future of the Fillmore is shaped by the people who live there.** Participants stressed that housing solutions must be community-led, culturally responsive, and implemented with urgency to prevent further displacement and preserve the neighborhood's historic Black community.