

Loomis Housing Choice Workshops Consolidated Notes from February 2021 Interviews

Prepared by Robert Liberty March 23, 2021

Colors are used to group each interviewee's responses under each question and topic heading. From question to question, the same colors do not necessarily refer to the same interviewee. Some details were removed to protect identities.

Some information about the backgrounds of the interviewees.

- One currently lives in rental housing in Loomis and many had experience as renters.
- Two currently live in multifamily buildings in Loomis.
- Many of them lived in rental housing in the past.
- Several live on multi-acre properties.
- Three of them do not live in Loomis currently, would like to, but can't afford it.
- Three came from families who have lived in Loomis for three generations or more.
- Only a small minority are retired.
- In retrospect, it was clear that it would be difficult to correctly predict many of their answers based on their incomes and current housing situation.

What kinds of people and families do you want to live in Loomis in the future?

I tend to come more from a cultural perspective. There was a time when Loomis was very multicultural and then the diversity left so that it is a very homogenous.

The Japanese Community was very prominent in Loomis until internment. Then the kids didn't come back.

The former Mayor described a vibrant Portuguese community. A lot of this diversity has been lost – people who worked in ag, railroads.

Strong resilient communities are very diverse. Many different strengths are brought in from different cultures and backgrounds. We don't have a variety of housing to accommodate a diversity of people. I had experience as a military brat. I have a hard time understanding people who haven't had that kind of experience.

After moving to Loomis the interviewee was “exposed to the views of the Old Guard.”

I know South Placer County is one of the fastest growing regions in the state and the nation.

Kind, civic minded, community oriented. I would love to see a better mix of incomes in Loomis. Because of how Loomis has grown and the influx of people from outside we have gotten lopsided with a certain echelon instead of a good mix of low, middle and upper class.

I am hoping that eventually there will be an influx of younger generation in their 20s and 30s. Just starting out. Right now you have to be lucky to be able to purchase a home or have grown up here because housing is so expensive.

A lot of people want to move to back into town but can't because there is nothing they can afford if they are at the beginning of their career unless they have a solid job. Or unless you bought it several years ago. There are a lot of people who want to move back because they like the area and the school. The feeling for Del Oro High School and its football team is almost like what you would find in a college town. (Strong identity.)

I am not very picky about that. Whoever wants to be here. Not agriculture kind of families but people who would want to buy into the small town and rural atmosphere of the town. I don't care [about their ethnicity] – it would be good to have accommodate a range of ages and economic backgrounds and fit in with what we have.

Any upstanding citizen should be able to live in Loomis, of any income, people who are involved in their community.

The current prices of homes dictate that it is upper middle class people who live in Loomis, which is why he lives outside of Loomis.

Those folks who spend a lot of money on their home – will want to make sure their property value won't go down.

I have absolutely no guidelines for that. I want people who have a heart for their families and their neighbors not people who don't have time for neighbors, for pets for the community. We moved here because people have tractors, drive pick-up trucks, and the High School.

We didn't move here because we wanted bars and housing for all income groups. We don't want you people importing 1200 new people – with people who are busting in here from out of the neighborhood. The traffic analysis provided by the developer showed an additional 5,000 new trips a day from the Village at the Loomis.

If these developers were going more slowly and they will generate income to pay for improvements that would be better.

I don't know. I want a variety. I want all kinds. We are better when there is a variety of types of people we are surrounded with and we would be better if that was reflected in our town, our schools and community.

Loomis is currently attracting families desperate to get into the school district so it is attracting people who really want their kids to go to our school. I get email and calls about people who want their kids who want to go to their schools. Loomis is also attracting people who want that small town feel but the advantages of living near bigger places.

As for housing, I would like a variety of people. One of my core values is that we are really better if we are diverse. If we set up Loomis so it's only acceptable to only a certain life stage or a certain income [that would be undesirable.] We need opportunities for people of different ages and different incomes, including low incomes. This will create struggles but struggles that are good as we ultimately figure out how to work together with people who are different from us.

We don't have a lot of housing for starting families. They move to Loomis before their first home. We don't have many senior living opportunities. We need more diversity.

Don't have a whole lot of preference. Younger families, who would want more parks. But I don't really care who lives in town.

Young families – because Loomis already has an older population.

The type of people who want to work and live in Loomis and to have parks available for their kids. People who are interested in helping out and participating in the community. Or people that are struggling that need a little bit of time and be around people who can be successful. Being around those people can build confidence.

The interviewee is raising money for scholarships for single mothers to get education to improve their situation.

And \people who want their children to go to good schools.

It is very difficult to afford housing on my income. I couldn't afford the house I live in now outside of Loomis if I didn't have rental property.

I grew up in Loomis before it was fancy – her grandparents place had animals. It was semi-rural then.

Koinonia youth housing placement – 25 years ago – they were group home kids would attend the elementary school with middle class kids. There were a lot of kids in that program but I thought that it gave a really good chance for those kids a good change to go to better schools. And to be part of a community that would help them. Maybe I am hoping for something more than what is realistic.

The affordable housing piece never bothered me much. But I don't want be part of Section 8 affordable housing even though the interviewees offers reduced rents to some of her own tenants. Interviewee struggles a bit to rent to people who are challenging or have drug problem. Interviewee has tenants who would be considered low income – and decried their economic situation including tenants with \$60,00 combined income and another tenant with an income of about \$40,000 a year. These tenants are not using Section 8 vouchers.

It is prohibitively expensive right now, you have to have a really good job to afford housing. Kids who grew up there can't move back. Interviewee is in favor of space near Raley's to put in more starter home or a townhouse and then accumulate wealth and saving in the community before moving to a bigger home.

Any other groups – that would be the primary focus. I would like to see entry level housing is primarily for the community building aspect, whether they grew up there or not. So the family could stay in Loomis and not bounce around.

What kinds of housing do you think those people would want or could afford?

I don't know how to answer that question. There are good upstanding folks who come from lower financial situations and then there are horrible people who come from wealth situations.

We don't have a whole lot of apartment housing in Loomis – just one off Briggs Road. Perhaps more of multi-housing family housing or a duplex type situation.

Question: What did you think about the half-plexes?

I classify those as duplexes – very nice has a friend who lives in one of those. So yes, that would be a way of providing additional housing.

Question: Any other types of housing you think is needed? Even a normal single-family home is pretty expensive. I shy away from a fourplex type of structure. The fourplex community in [another city in Placer County] has been a notorious high-crime neighborhood.

Whatever could be affordable in the future – half-plexes, condo, or zero lot line homes. The house doesn't have to be huge until they have kids. But even with kids two beds and one or two baths would work for a family of three. In the past people opposed zero lot line housing but they are only thinking about their own experience.

We need a diverse housing stock to allow different kind of people to be a part of this community.

The housing we have now is either traditional late 80s 90s tract homes on the north side and on the south side McMansions and not much in the middle. There is some really interesting missing middle housing that could be built.

So there is a lot that is missing. Cottage courtyard housing would be well received. Stacked multiplexes, even four-plexes so long as it is consistent with the neighborhoods. In the downtown have seen a beautiful Craftsmen [style homes] in downtown Roseville and it is not obvious that it is a duplex from the front. And even in the areas near the McMansions – there could be multiplex McMansions. Courtyard building could be interesting. Also, ADUs are good example of invisible density. Loomis' population is aging and there are too many senior empty nesters with big homes. The seniors that are here own their homes, but the costs are too much for them, so ADUs would help seniors stay in their homes.

In Sacramento across from McKinley Park are the Rose Garden Court apts – courtyard apartments – those could be a type of housing in Loomis.

I am just guessing that those people want homes with lots of bedrooms three or four bedrooms. What they can afford is that there is not a lot that they can afford. So I would look [inside the boundaries] the Del Oro school district but outside of Loomis in Rocklin, Penryn.

In Loomis it would be a duplex, or a triplex. I can see a duplex more than anything else. I struggle trying to understand how it can be affordable to people without government assistance – given the cost of mortgage payments.

We had talked about some apartment housing in Loomis – and it made sense for seniors who don't want to leave Loomis. They don't have another place to go that they can afford – even the property taxes are too much.

I would have some plexes spread through out the community so that the kids of different incomes can play together.

We have a need for more senior housing – for people who want to live near their kids. People who live in Loomis who are aging out of the house they are in what someplace smaller and more centrally located. Seniors' [housing needs] may be underrepresented. Younger families are going to have a hard time affording housing here. That is the more difficult demographic to meet their needs. Ideally, most of the people would want a single family homes but the seniors might want apartments because they don't want maintenance responsibilities or a very small [home].

For the Village, the Millenials might like the alley-loaded housing. But once they have families, they will want bigger houses and yards. Most of them looking for some single-family housing.

We will need a range of options for people who can't afford a home and they would prefer to have some other options.

Some people do believe higher density housing will destroy small town character if the outer edges of the subdivisions and those had higher density and that would work against the principle of having more density near the center. Some people are even afraid of density even at the center because it will work against the rural character of the community.

Mentioned experience as a grandparent and her daughter being able to let kids play safely in backyard – not take them to the park – which is challenging and harder to supervise the kids. For people not in that situation perhaps some of the other options would be a good substitute.

[Interviewee works in residential construction and has an understanding about construction costs and sale prices.] There is not a whole lot of housing that is available. Currently if you want to buy a house in Loomis under \$400,000 it is a duplex in a cramped neighborhood, or a condo with high HOAs or a teardown. Loomis has very small and very large homes and not a whole lot in the middle. We lack apartments completely – which is a very important stepping stone for young families. And the only apartments nearby are in Rocklin ; for a two bedroom apartment the monthly rent is \$2,000 - \$2 to \$3 dollars per square foot per month.

Regarding the fear of apartments: “People who want to believe it will believe it no matter what they hear. One woman who felt that way had a bad experience elsewhere – where there was a shooter. There are some of the people objected to even having rental housing.”

I want to keep it so that people with some space around them – yes it might be more expensive housing. Interviewee mentioned townhouse development called the The Orchard Townhomes off Penryn which would be ok because they are family friendly – they have a little driveway and they have a little backyard. They are an option. Don't know their cost. Their road is somewhat protected – not like the ridiculous alleys in the Village.

Interviewee doesn't like two storey homes – not three stories.

She moved here because of the rural quality and their interest in the community.

How do you attract people with a heart? It probably isn't by development built by profit oriented developers.

Ideally would like to see some single storey townhomes for seniors and special needs. Would like to have housing that is cozier.

We moved here because they liked one home per five acres, the rural quality. There is the in-town housing of ¼ acre. Most of us hoped to maintain the 5-acre homes and the ¼ acre homes that allow for kids and animals. That is what the most of us were hoping for.

The townhomes aren't what I prefer but that might be what is needed.

Starter homes and town homes. Smaller lot, smaller home, maybe one-child family.

Apartments are hated by many in Loomis, because they get worried about the quality of people who live in them.

I don't really see a need for apartments in Loomis. There are adequate apartments near Sierra College. We want the minimum price for housing that assures a higher quality of people moving into Loomis.

Is that the same kind of housing you think is needed in Loomis for your growing population?

So one of the questions is who wants to come to Loomis. Families want to come because of the schools. We have increasing number of old families and the kids want to move back and the parents are living in the big house. We have older people that are in big houses. Young people can't buy here because the housing is so expensive. A huge proportion of Del Oro High School teachers are graduates of Del Oro High School. Perhaps Loomis is likely to become a town that home is home to affluent people and households without children. Mentioned "the one apartment building." The apt is the one next to the Costco – on Brace. "Everyone has lived there" at one time or another.

Mid-sized single-family homes, some apartments. Interviewee would love to stay away from cluster homes. [Based on comments it is not clear if she is referring to a cluster cottages or some other form.] Builders are putting three to four homes onto a 7,500 square foot lots, but there is no yard. Would like to do more housing like those in the sunrise neighborhood. Single family homes no HOAs and a decent driveway with two car garages and wide streets. The entry level housing will have multiple families in it so you have extra cars and everyone has to drive.

Interviewee doesn't like cramped style of housing – and lack of open space.

We need more rental housing. We only have one apartment rental unit – right by Costco. Interviewee believe the owners of that apartment may be trying to sell it and get out. That is the only place we have right now. It would be possible to convert office buildings – along Taylor Road. Maybe they were originally motel units – maybe they can rehab and rehabilitate.

The big objections will come from the neighbors.

Mercy Housing proposed affordable housing near a mobile home park. They brought in these families with amazing stories. The Interviewee couldn't believe the hate a vitriol expressed toward those people. That experience changed a neighbor's view of the town [for the worse] – this happened during the mid 90s to early 2000s.

You can have this kind of reaction everywhere. But there are a lot of people who have moved in more recently who may feel differently. People see that racism is acceptable here and this draws them to this community. Interviewee spoke to someone who deals with a lot of families who felt this way.

California is very blue – the red pockets are getting smaller and fewer. Placer County is seen as the last stand of the red staters – hyper charged the past few years. Interviewee can imagine conservative people leaving diverse liberal places and move to a redder community. It is not just about race it is about any difference, like poverty. Lack of diversity hurts the community. Interviewee had previously lived in Arden Park – where there was an interesting mix of people. Interviewee’s neighborhood is unaware of this animosity.

Interviewee would be interested in being able to buy or living in a smaller home when the interviewee is older and doesn’t want to take care of the yard.

I know of a handful of different apartments *e.g.* on Brace Road – but maybe more apartments more mixed use housing. I can’t think of what else we would need.

Where in Loomis would you put those additional homes?

Sierra College Lane – is going to be widened outside of town, I think that, that corridor is pretty rural. It would be very weird to be rural in town but commercial outside of town boundaries. So that would be a place that makes sense.

Downtown is a good place for mixed use. It is not empty land. There is a lot of empty land on the other side of the Interstate. But the Interstate is a very good divider between what is rural and what is developed and the other side of the interstate is currently rural [and should stay that way.]

Interviewee would put it where the Village should have gone.

For condos and zero lots, housing at somewhat higher density – he would put those in the field behind Raley’s where they won’t interfere with views and because they would be walking distance to Raley’s and to center of town. That proximity, walking distance to the town center, “is what I love about where I live.” It is close to freeway – so traffic shouldn’t be too bad. And the students can walk to Lewis elementary and Del Oro high School.

I would like the apartment area to become a mixed income housing for seniors – 99% of the objection would go away. That might get us our RHNA numbers and calm the fear of neighbors.

Where the Village was going to be. Already building along Taylor Road near the KOA and Bank of America and that is a great infill space. It was a field not used for anything, where there is building going on now. Raley property.

Maybe along the frontage road going toward Penryn wouldn't be a loss to the environment of other opportunities.

Across from Horseshoe Bar Road and across Hwy 80. Both sides of Horseshoe Bar road, Hwy 80. Property across from Raley's shopping center. Some property off Taylor Road near Del Oro High School.

The thing that comes to mind – because it was on the radar, was where the Village was planned and the area behind Raleys. There might also be an opportunity to say that some of the larger properties could be developed – if zoning was change. For example – my family wouldn't be that excited about this – for example rezoning to allow 1 acre lots.

Any low-income housing should be dispersed among housing in the Raley's area.

The ADUs – would be fabulous if they tap into Placer County's free ADU designs and promote this for people who live on the edge of town and now HOAs can't deny them.

The highest density should happen near the center – behind the library. Great location for real affordable housing – near Raleys, near library near the freeway.

There are different lots in the downtown. I am not sure how much the community that lives near the downtown have been engaged – and they were the opponents to the Village at Loomis. They have the power in numbers [as voters.]

Housing decisions tended to be made by key influential figures and that was how it is done in many places. Not a whole lot of community engagement.

Are there types of housing you don't want in Loomis at all? If YES, why?

Don't like apartments for affordable housing and doesn't like Section 8 housing because interviewee lived in that kind of apartment in college – it was rowdy, there was some drug use.

I am never going to like alley loaded development because there is not enough room for children and bikes.

I would not like to see large houses, single families taking up huge amount of land just for them, and they would be commuting well outside of town. They take up too much land for too little housing.

We could use more apartments. But the one thing I don't like to see are the types of apartments in Rocklin, with no open space. They force the tenants to go somewhere else to be outside. I don't want to see that. I am totally fine with apartments, but I don't want to see

blocks of apartments where they have to leave their area to do anything outdoors. You drive in and go to your apartment – so there is no place for you to hang out outside.

Open space can be public or private – just as long as it is done well. There are other places where there are houses and condos and they are jammed in and there are alleys but there is no open space. I get it, they make more money for the developers.

Personally, I like having a lot of space around me. Outdoor recreation is beneficial for all kinds of humans and they need access to it without having to drive.

Probably – wouldn't want high rise buildings so probably things that fit in their category – those wouldn't be a natural fit. I can't think of anything in Loomis right now that is even three stories. Anything more than 5 stories – and that might be off-putting to people attracted to Loomis, who like the small-town feel. I would be comfortable with three to four stories in the downtown that fit in with the look of downtown.

Depends on where it is. But housing must have good design.

Four-plexes. Another type of housing with a high crime rate is a mobile home park. The existing mobile home parks have a higher crime rate than surrounding area although not a high crime rate.

Low-cost for rent apartments.

“Not really. As long as everything is done tastefully. And I know what low income means – and in this area that is what I am. I don't really have any issues as long as it is a nice plan and not a hodge-podge development.” Have you thought about this topic a lot? “Definitely thought about this a lot. It is one of the topics you can't talk about with the general populace because people get too angry. People don't want to hear facts.” Interviewee mentioned the argument for more housing especially young people as a way to keep school enrollment up and not have commuting students, which is one source of the traffic problem.

The opposition to more and denser housing isn't changing. But if it is the General Plan and it is developed according to the plan there shouldn't be any issues with any development.

Probably cluster housing – multiple housing units on what should be a single family lot. And she doesn't like HOAs.

HOAs exclude certain people from purchasing the homes. When you add an HOA like in condo in Stonegate or Stoneridge off Taylor Road – the HOA is already \$300/month.

Interviewee looked at the alley loaded homes in Rocklin across from Target – Pressley Homes - that went in three years ago, and they have deteriorated. The models on the inside looked good. What will they look in five years if they don't look good after just three years. But will

young people want to stay there after a few years. Interviewee asked a resident of one of the alley loaded homes whether he liked it: He did but then he paused – “but we’re not going to stay here. We’re building a new house in rural Loomis”.

“I am familiar with old fashioned alleys – but they were behind backyards. The original Village plan was for townhomes – but they have backyards they are not just backing up to alleys with nothing. She was familiar with this design from Maryland when her husband was in the Army. I would rather see the townhomes that are connected.

Interviewee believes the community would tolerate duplexes, halfplexes. The ones behind Olive Garden – they are more affordable and probably a big portion of them are renters. Some are well taken care of and some are not.

The difference between a duplex and half-plex is separate ownership or common ownership. Some are painted differently. In general the community looks down on that area. Not everybody, and the streets are narrower so there are traffic issues there with the narrower streets which is difficult for the many people who have big trucks and SUVs. That was a complaint about the Village streets too narrow for their vehicle.

The one location that would be most acceptable would be on corner lots – one unit facing one direction and one facing the other way.

I would like to see a mix of a kind of housing in a neighborhood like in older neighborhoods.

Is there anything you would like to add?

We have to have robust community engagement to shape the housing element the General Plan. There is a lot of education that needs to be done. If we don’t do that, we will keep hitting these roadblocks because people who weren’t involved will be upset because they didn’t have a say.

I would love to see, when possible, some higher density. “I do like a smattering of downtown housing including mixed use/live work housing.” In fact the building she is in, is undergoing remodeling to add loft style apartments. Interviewee’s spouse is an architect whose work includes designing live-work spaces. Interviewee mentioned the redevelopment of the original Tower Records site into a mixture of retail and apartments.

Loomis is a town that rolls up the carpet at 4:30 so the interviewee would like to see more housing that creates opportunities for entry level and middle class.

Something that we don’t have and people would object to it strenuously – is a 1930s style four plex. Interviewee lived in one which looked just like a regular house when she lived in Southern California. They parked in back and they had a little backyard. It was fine. We enjoyed our time there. In Pasadena.

Also likes the courtyard sort of [apartments} bungalows and cottages under 1,000 square feet. Could work well for senior and for people who wanted a smaller place. They saw that in the San Fernando valley and it was mixed in with the older houses. They had a single driveway to their garages.

I think that the housing choices are very limited and it is a little bit depressing that even I, as a high income individual there is no way I can afford to live in Loomis. Then if we had children then it would be even less possible. Going to Council meetings it just seems like a lot of people who want to live in their bubble and not welcome anyone else. I hate knowing that my brother can't afford to live in Loomis and he is a civil engineer who makes great money and has children [who would benefit from growing up in Loomis.]

A lot of nice housing and buildings have been torn down. We haven't preserved any of those old buildings – like the Loomis grammar school – despite what we say about saving our heritage. The homes that were built are cookie cutter homes – which does not align with what the town says is its values. The Fire Department bought a craftsman style home to burn down as fire-fighting practice. Not much of the downtown has been saved. If we say we value our roots and traditions and if we don't protect them then we are left with generic stuff. Not much [housing types] in the middle [density range.]

I really think the town needs an inclusionary zoning ordinance. They haven't brought up in the five or so years he has been mentioning it. The council itself has never brought it up.

The problem [with the housing element analysis] is that you are looking for things that can be put on paper [versus things that relate more to community character.]

I am concerned about parking. I want them to make sure there is enough parking that is big enough for the cars residents use. You have to be realistic about [people's need to make] car trips – and deal with congestion around lunch time or when there is congestion on the highway. Don't manipulate the numbers to benefit developers.

"I don't want people to look out their front window and see another house" [close by.]

I feel so thankful that my in-laws allowed us to build on their property because otherwise we couldn't afford to live in Loomis. I am very grateful to be a part of this community. The benefits of this place are not lost on me.

The cost of homes tends to filter out people who might come here with ill intentions. So just the ability to have a lower cost homes would be beneficial to a lot of folks including myself.

Volunteered comments about the Village at Loomis and related controversy:

The Village didn't have front access to homes through an alley or a garage.

“I would throw in a comment about what happened with the Village at Loomis. From observing that whole process it was very unfair to the people who were in favor of the project that a few loud voices were able to turn the tide on that. Why have a plan for that area in the General Plan if we aren’t going to execute it? I want to avoid a process that highlights a few cranky voices who don’t want any new houses in Loomis – we need a process that avoids that outcome. That happens a lot in Loomis.”

I think people objected to the Village to the alley loaded that it didn’t fit Loomis that it didn’t give anyone a backyard, with only 4-5 feet of separation between. Only after complaints did they add a little patio area. If there is going to be limited space interviewee would really rather have that as a backyard then as an alley. And it didn’t allow trees to be planted and this contributes to heat island effect. It didn’t feel like Loomis. If they had restricted that type of housing to one small area it would be OK.

Interviewee thought the Village was a wonderful project – good mix of housing. Didn’t like the housing personally no but believed it would be a good option. Interviewee liked the consistency of design and flow and it had some really good open space – better than a ½ acre park in a dense area. The Village had apartments, cluster homes and single-family homes with yards.

With the developer of the Village the key influencers shaped the project somewhat – a change from what was originally proposed with a civic center – town hall, fire stations, etc. Then the market changed – the developer sold a pretty good proportion to an investor – and then they were presenting the influencers idea – and then they were resistant to community input. Developers did a bad job trying to engage – it was a sales spin. Developers would have benefitted from using a focus group to understand local opinions.

“I thought the people who were against were short-sighted. The developers were working with the town for 20 years. They could have just built whatever the plan allowed. Instead, they made a special effort to have that design tasteful and integrated” with the rest of the town.

I “made a stink about not having yards - they created concrete yards – that were only 3 feet wide. These are the kind of developers that we have.” Interviewee was so surprised that the town councilors supported the Village. Interviewee thought the Councilors were confused, were remembering an earlier design and an earlier form of development.

Interviewee “was pretty aware of” the controversy over Village at Loomis. One thing the interviewee appreciated about it was the opportunity for people who grew up in Loomis to come back, to purchase some affordable homes.

People objected to the apartments in the Village at Loomis and blamed that on the developer instead of on state law; they didn’t understand they didn’t have a choice on that. If they

understood that was required by state law. They were worried that lower income will bring in a bad element and be druggies – and come over the fence at night.

Interviewee was for the Village project after she got to see the Village in its final plan. “I thought it was a good plan, that it meant that teachers and firefighters could live here.”

People mistakenly believed that type or density of housing “wasn’t in the plan,” but it was.