

Gainesville.

Citizen centered

People empowered

Department of Doing

Memo

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

Via: Anthony Lyons, City Manager

From: Wendy Thomas, Director, Department of Doing



Date: 11/21/2018

Re: 180199, Amending Future Land Use Element to Incentivize Affordable Housing

On October 18, 2018, the City Commission directed staff to conduct a series of outreach events regarding the proposed comprehensive plan amendment and GNV RISE Development Code revisions district by district.

We hosted open house events on October 29, October 30, November 7 and November 10. During these events we provided the community with the opportunity to meet staff from the Department of Doing, the Department of Housing & Community Development, NHCD, the Gainesville Housing Authority, and Habitat for Humanity. Although we believe the number is under representative, 171 people signed into the four events. Eighteen people attended more than one event. We also developed a survey, largely based on the MacArthur Foundation, Housing Matters Survey, was taken by over 550 people. The results of the survey are summarized in the attached PowerPoint presentation. The primary take aways from the survey are: the community sees a need for more affordable housing; a multipronged approach to affordable housing is supported; and, new affordable housing should be built across the community.

We've learned several things during our GNVRise engagement process and we plan to use what we've learned in order to engage more effectively in the future. It has become apparent to us that we need to engage earlier and more often, in more collaborative ways, and with the people who are likely to experience the greatest impact from the policies we propose. Our goal for future engagement is to open pathways to collaboration between City staff and community stakeholders throughout the design of policies and proposed solutions. In the future, we will ensure that the communities most affected by the challenges we seek to solve are collaborating with us in defining those challenges and identifying their solutions. We'll work to build shared a narrative about the nature of the problems we're facing and the potential options available to us to achieve the desired outcomes. If this means we have to go door to door in order to reach community members who, for various reasons, can't come to us, we'll do that. There are many innovative ways to engage our community by putting the local knowledge and experiences of our citizens at the center of our decision-making processes and we're excited to try new methods as we move forward.

During the community engagement process some asked about the City's Affordable Housing Strategy. The proposed code changes have raised awareness around affordable housing issues and the complexity of addressing a multifaceted community need. These community conversations show that many in our community do not know about the City's Affordable Housing Strategy and our ongoing commitment to addressing affordable housing needs.

The City has an affordable housing strategy, and has for many decades. The City uses the goals, objectives and policies within the Comprehensive Plan to address the creation and implementation of policies and programs to address the community need for affordable housing. The Comprehensive Plan has included a chapter addressing affordable housing since 1991. In addition, Gainesville undertakes the development and adoption of a Consolidated Plan every five years. The Consolidated Plan is based on data documenting housing needs in the community, creates a plan to address the need and designates funding sources to address the needs. Our community has had a Consolidated Plan since at least 1995.

In the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan, Gainesville anticipates receiving a total of \$9,826,795 from HUD to address the priority needs, goals, and objectives identified in the Consolidated Plan. These issues include addressing: housing rehabilitation; new construction; relocation assistance; homeowner assistance; code enforcement; and public services.

The adopted plan states:

Low income households, including both renters and owners, face a shortage of affordable and available housing which has resulted in severe housing cost burdens. Increasing the production of housing would reduce housing cost burdens for owners and renters including extremely low-income renters that have the highest rate of cost burden. With a projected growth in both cost-burdened renters and owners, new unit production could meet the growth in low-income households to keep the affordable housing shortage from worsening. New unit production, including infill housing, may be needed in areas that the City has targeted for revitalization, to bring about long-term transformation.

The City of Gainesville, overall, faces a shortage in funding and financing available for the types of revitalization and housing projects needed to address priority needs. There are also significant barriers related to Not In My Backyard concerns across the City, particularly in high opportunity neighborhoods.

The proposed GNV RISE and ADU provisions are amendments to the Land Development Code that follow through on the adopted policies and programs the City has adopted through the Comprehensive Plan and Consolidated Plan, potentially adding one more tool to the toolbox that is needed to addressing the spectrum of housing need in our community.

There is much more for us to focus on in the future as well. We've clearly heard from the community that gentrification is a concern. City staff is working with the new Community Land Trust to explore ways to support their work. The city is looking to create a tenant landlord advisory board that can assist with addressing issues regarding maintaining and preserving affordable rentals in the community. All of these are important steps that can be explored and undertaken to help meet the need of housing in our community.

Through partnering with the private market, not for profit housing providers, community activists and our citizens we will continue to develop a series of programs and policies that will help the community move forward with addressing the diverse housing needs within in Gainesville.