
MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 8, 2003

TO: Council Members

FROM: Janice Jardine and Marge Harvey

SUBJECT: Housing Policy Discussion

CC: Rocky Fluhart, Dave Nimkin, DJ Baxter, Alison Weyher, David Dobbins, LuAnn Clark, Louis Zunguze, Sandi Marler

The City Council selected Housing as its key policy priority for 2003, and has held initial meetings to gather public input. Information and recommendations continue to be forwarded to the Council Office and all indications are that housing is a critical issue. The Housing Authority recently pointed out that they currently have a waiting list of 7,000 and this grows by 300 every month. They have only 60 vacancies to fill each month, so obviously the need for low income housing is outstripping the availability.

This report summarizes ideas raised to date through the April 3 housing fact finding meeting, the May 3 housing public hearing, written comments and items raised by Council Members. Below are potential process options for Council consideration and a summary of key housing policy categories based on information received from the following sources. Attachments A, B, C, and D are a more detailed summary of comments received to date.

POTENTIAL OPTIONS:

1. Initiate an update of the Council's current policies and the City's Community Housing Plan.
2. Schedule a Council briefing to receive information from the City's Boards and Commissions Chairs and Vice Chairs as a follow-up to the Council's letter requesting input or recommendations. (The Council recently approved a letter to the City's Boards and Commissions requesting input and recommendations regarding the City's housing policy direction. This briefing could be scheduled after the Council receives the written responses.)
3. Create a forum in which the Chairs of City Boards and Commissions with a housing component would meet quarterly with leaders of key community housing organizations along with City legislative and administrative representatives. The central purpose would be to discuss policy issues and topics that arise out of this policy issue identification process and identify steps that may be taken by either government or private entities to implement key policy concepts.
4. Another option would be to consider evaluating opportunities to co-host an educational session or policy development session with the non-profit community and other interested parties.
5. Create a Council subcommittee to review the issues and make a recommendation to the full Council.
6. Request that the Administration provide a briefing relating to housing policy in general and the status of the implementation of the City's housing plan and /or feedback that has been generated in this public process to date.
7. Request that the Redevelopment Agency staff provide an update on the housing-related efforts and approaches the agency has undertaken in recent years.
8. Any combination of the above.
9. Other options as identified by Council Members.

POLICY CATEGORIES:

- Affordable Housing
 - Suggestions include:
 - Make housing a top priority in the City
 - Establish a leadership role in:
 - Policy planning
 - Priority setting
 - Resource allocation
 - Facilitating better coordination and communication among the wide variety of groups involved in housing

- Zoning and other regulatory requirements
 - Suggestions include:
 - Reevaluate current zoning classifications and requirements specifically address density and parking
 - Consider rezoning areas identified for potential or future housing development
 - Streamline process procedures and timeframes

- Funding
 - Suggestions include:
 - Identify and establish a permanent funding source for the Housing Trust Fund
 - Increase efficiency in leveraging available funds
 - Provide better coordination:
 - Within City departments
 - With service providers, for-profit and non-profit developers
 - With the various levels of city, county, state and federal agencies