

Housing Tools and Strategies Project Charter – October 2018

Overview

Housing affordability and availability is a long-standing and growing problem in Eugene. City Council has had multiple work sessions devoted to the topic, and expressed interest in identifying actions to address affordability that has resulted in a number of staff-led initiatives currently underway. However, there is a lack of a comprehensive, coordinated approach that considers the spectrum of tools and strategies available to promote more housing affordability, availability, and diversity and their relative effectiveness at addressing the problem.

In May 2018, Eugene City Council passed a motion to have staff implement a process to identify barriers to housing affordability, availability, and diversity, and to suggest, evaluate, and recommend possible strategies and tools to address the barriers. The recommendations from the Housing Tools and Strategies process will be presented to Council on December 10, 2018.

Goals

The goal of the Housing Tools and Strategies project is to produce a set of short and long term recommended actions for the City Council to act on. The actions should implement the *Provide Housing Affordable to All Income Levels* pillar of Envision Eugene by:

1. Identifying barriers to housing affordability, availability, and diversity of type, including accessory dwellings, duplexes, cottage clusters, row houses, and other missing-middle types.
2. Identifying tools and strategies to effectively address the barriers in order to increase the supply of housing across the city.
3. Engaging stakeholders in identifying solutions that can be supported by the broad community as well as decision makers, while also highlighting areas with varying viewpoints for City Council consideration.

Scope

The Housing Tools and Strategies project will identify barriers to housing affordability, availability, and diversity, and suggest, evaluate, and recommend possible strategies and tools to address the barriers. The project is structured around a working group of stakeholders from across the community who will convene four times between September and late November. Their work will be informed by technical research conducted by a housing economist, who will evaluate the tools and strategies from an economics perspective. The City has contracted with Strategic Economics to conduct the technical analysis.

The Housing Tools and Strategies project will address the following tasks:

- **Identify Housing Barriers.** The stakeholder working group will work to understand the primary issues that are affecting the affordability, availability and diversity of housing across the income spectrum and identify local barriers that are limiting the supply of diverse housing types through stakeholder engagement.

- **Identify Potential Tools, Strategies, and Actions.** The working group will collaborate with staff and the housing economist to identify a robust inventory of tools, strategies, and actions the City could take to address the barriers.
- **Evaluate Potential Tools, Strategies, and Actions.** The housing economist will evaluate the relative effectiveness and impact of a subset of tools from an economics perspective.
- **Recommended Actions for City Council.** The stakeholder group will identify areas of agreement along with benefits and tradeoffs of the recommended actions.

Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives

The Housing Tools and Strategies process overlaps with and complements other local and statewide initiatives already underway and will be coordinated with these efforts.

Comprehensive Land Use Code Audit

The City of Eugene received a grant from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to conduct a comprehensive audit of the City's Land Use code to identify barriers to housing development. This code audit will be an important piece to identify code barriers that will help the City of Eugene focus on aspects that may need to change to reach our desired housing outcomes, but it will not be part of the information reviewed by the stakeholder working group. The code audit will be completed by June 30, 2019, after the working group has completed its process to develop recommendations.

Clear and Objective Housing Criteria Approval Update

Staff is currently working on the Clear and Objective Housing Approval Criteria Update, which will identify land use approval criteria and procedures that need to be updated, added, or removed to mitigate barriers to housing while effectively addressing development impacts. The target is to request City Council action on a proposal for updated approval criteria in January 2019 (one year from UGB acknowledgement by the State).

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)

Council has adopted an ordinance intended to address the legal requirements of Senate Bill 1051, which requires local governments to allow ADUs in residential areas. The ordinance has been appealed to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) by the Homebuilders Association, and the City is currently assembling the legal record. Once LUBA issues a decision on this appeal, the City will respond to the decision as necessary. Staff anticipate the Housing Tools and Strategies process will address some issues pertaining to ADUs.

Next Steps

The goal of Housing Tools and Strategies project is to deliver policy recommendations that City Council can take action on to address housing affordability in Eugene. The steps to implement the recommendations will depend on what the individual recommendations are.

Staff will assemble draft recommendations of housing tools that will be presented to City Council for consideration and action. The recommendations will be categorized by decision-making authority (e.g., City Council or staff.) Some solutions may be administrative in nature and action could be completed at the staff level while others may require further deliberation and action by City Council.