



To: Mayor Lucy Vinis and City Council
From: Jennifer Knapp, Urban Design Planner
Date: April 30, 2020
Re: Housing Tools and Strategies Update

Mayor and City Councilors,

The Housing Tools and Strategies (HTS) team committed to providing you with quarterly updates on the progress of items that address the affordability, availability, and diversity of housing. This memorandum provides progress since the [January 2020 HTS update](#). Updates have been provided on selected projects.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, Council directed staff to implement a process that would tie together the overlapping initiatives that address housing affordability, availability, and diversity of type. Staff implemented the Housing Tools and Strategies initiative to meet this Council directive.

In the fall of 2018, staff assembled a Working Group that identified over 80 recommendations to increase the availability, affordability, and diversity of housing in Eugene. Staff consolidated these recommendations into the HTS Action Inventory, a document that is intended to serve as a working list of actions that the City can take.

The HTS team has maintained regular contact with the HTS Working Group and other interested parties, keeping them apprised of the progress on recommendations in the HTS [Action Inventory](#). Additionally, staff have met with key stakeholders for feedback and brainstorming. [The HTS website](#) continues to be updated with new information.

UPDATES

Accessory Dwelling Units

In response to a request from City Council, staff provided a summary of financial incentives that could be established in Eugene to encourage the production of ADUs. The potential incentives included: property tax exemption, waive or scale System Development Charges, waive building permit fees, waive land use application fees, and develop pre-approved building plans for ADUs. Some of these ideas came out of the Housing Tools and Strategies work, and staff relied on the research and community outreach conducted in that work.

Project planning for creating a library of building plans for ADUs is underway. The goal is to offer plans that have already been approved to meet Building Code criteria. Property owners would see

reduced costs by avoiding design fees and some permitting fees. The first pre-approved plan will be available through Building and Permits Services summer 2020.

House Bill 2001

HS2001 seeks to address rising housing costs and limited supply. The statute requires cities with populations greater than 25,000 to allow duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, “cottage clusters,” and townhomes in lands zoned for single-family dwellings. The new legislation will apply to Eugene. The bill language is very clear in its intent which will assist with implementation.

Staff applied for a financial assistance grant from the Dept. of Land Conservation and Development. Our community has been identified as a potential recipient of funding and is moving forward with next steps. The State’s designated time frame of implementation by June 30, 2022.

Planning staff have developed a [Frequently Asked Questions document](#) to share information. To get involved in the process and stay informed of next steps members of the public should contact planning@eugene-or.gov.

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Committee

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Committee met in February and heard from City of Bend staff on the uses of Bend’s Construction Excise Tax. The advisory committee was unable to meet in March due to health and safety concerns around the coronavirus. On April 15, staff presented draft allocation options to Council during a work session. Committee members requested additional time to consider potential recommendations before Council takes action. The Committee is scheduled to continue its work on a recommended allocation at its next scheduled meeting May 19.

Eugene-Springfield 2020 Consolidated Plan and One-Year Action Plan

The Eugene-Springfield 2020 Consolidated Plan and One-Year Action Plan are proceeding on schedule, including three public hearings that were conducted virtually in April. The Consolidated Plan identifies priority needs, strategies, and goals for affordable housing and community development for the next five years. The One-Year Action Plan allocates the use of federal funds, including \$1,279,893 in HOME Investment Partnerships funds and \$1,427,820 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Staff are scheduled to present both plans to Council on April 27. The plans are due to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on May 15.

For more information on the 2020 Consolidated Plan, visit the project [website](#). For more information about the One-Year Action Plan, visit the [website](#).

Renters Protections Committee

The Renters Protections Committee met on March 11 and heard from five speakers about supports for tenants that were non-financial in nature. Guest speakers were from Homes for Good, White Bird Clinic, St. Vincent de Paul and Springfield-Eugene Tenant Association. Discussion focused on providing mental health support to tenants, keeping them housed, and preventing an eviction due to mental health related issues and stress. The Committee also passed a resolution at this meeting asking the City to prioritize support for emergency rental assistance. The committee did not meet in April. More information is available on the Renters Protections Committee [website](#).

Affordable Housing Land Banking: 1059 Willamette

The HTS Working Group identified expansion of the land banking program as a solution to the limited availability of affordable housing. On January 29, City Council approved the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to acquire the 1059 Willamette site for affordable housing. The use of CDBG funds requires that at least 51% of the units must be affordable housing for households at 80% of the Area Median Income (which is sometimes referred to as Workforce Housing). The remaining 49% can be leased at any income level, including market rate. The City's current vision for the property is to utilize a mixed income approach to maximize the financial feasibility of the project.

Since the last HTS update, the City has concluded due diligence (including an environmental review) on the building and is scheduled to acquire the building on April 30. The City plans on soliciting interest in development of the mixed income project through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Staff will draft criteria for the RFP and bring it to Council for approval later this year. A committee will review, score, and rank proposals. Staff will return to City Council with a project recommendation and funding options.

Align the Zoning map with the Comprehensive Plan map

At the March 2019 City Council work session for HTS, staff described two steps to implement the action item identified by the HTS Working Group: Align the Zoning map with the Comprehensive Plan. The two steps are:

1. To complete and adopt the Comprehensive Plan map with parcel-specific data;
2. To complete and adopt the housing chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

These two steps will reduce the need for some administrative processes for development applications, which will reduce costs for building housing. The Comprehensive Plan housing chapter and parcel-specific map will provide guidance and lay a foundation that will make it simpler to implement many other actions identified in the HTS Action Inventory. Completing and adopting the housing chapter will be part of the City's process for implementing House Bill 2001.

Since summer 2019, development of a parcel-specific Comprehensive Plan map has included working with Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) to develop a technical methodology to digitize the Metro Plan diagram and hiring an intern to assist in clarifying land use plan designation boundaries and improve the accuracy of the map at the individual property level through research and documentation of land use decisions, neighborhood refinement plans and other planning documents. Staff has focused this research on the River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan area to develop a parcel-specific map that will be part of the plan's adoption package. This effort will also help to inform a citywide approach for completing and adopting a parcel-specific map.

River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan and River Road Corridor Study

The River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan is wrapping up the Action Planning phase, which has focused on drafting, evaluating and prioritizing actions to implement the draft policies. The [Action Plan Highlights](#) are key priorities for implementing the neighborhood plan, and each highlight relates to one or more [draft actions](#). One of the highlights is to support a variety of housing options with development standards through land use regulations and financial incentives.

The River Road Corridor Study project team developed the [draft Preferred Zoning Concept Map and Code Framework](#) based on collaboration with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and community input. The draft concept supports creating thriving neighborhood centers at key locations to support 20-minute neighborhoods and provide a variety of housing options within ¼ mile of the River Road corridor that fit into the scale and character of existing residential neighborhoods. The concept includes draft zones that allow middle housing types such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage cluster housing and rowhouses. The draft Code Framework establishes the overall direction of the new base zones and outline the structure prior to the detailed development of draft code language through summer 2020.

Throughout the Action Planning phase, there have been a variety of opportunities for community input including an online survey, focused outreach to affordable housing communities and businesses, a large community event in fall 2019, and a series of neighborhood conversations in winter 2020, which were all held prior to Governor Brown's "Stay Home, Save Lives" executive order. The last conversation on March 19th was held virtually as the City had suspended in-person public meetings. Next steps are to review and summarize notes to share what we have heard on the website and in the project newsletter.

The CAC and staff will be exploring online or other remote options to continue outreach to the broad community as we work towards a recommended Action Plan with identified priorities. Community and technical input will continue to help inform the community recommendation from the River Road and Santa Community Organizations and the Community Advisory Committee. This community recommendation will be forwarded to Eugene and Lane County decision-makers to begin the formal [adoption process](#) later this year. For more information, visit the [project website](#) or sign up for the [project newsletter](#) for updates

Clear and Objective Housing Approval Criteria Update

Staff continues to prepare the package of proposed code amendments for formal adoption and anticipates scheduling the first public hearing once public meetings can safely resume.

Parks System Development Charges Methodology

The Parks SDC Methodology Council date of April 13th was postponed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

These little houses have been used throughout the HTS process and now serve to link initiatives to the goal of increasing housing affordability, availability, and diversity of type. These initiatives may be recommendations from the Working Group, existing projects or programs, or new approaches. By connecting programs, initiatives, plans, and projects we can begin to visually show the cumulative effect of these efforts. And, we can connect everything to the same narrative—that housing affordability, availability, and diversity of type is a wicked problem that crosses many departments and work groups; solutions take time, process change, and thoughtful balancing of values; and that all these items can contribute to the goals within HTS.



The HTS team has committed to providing City Council with updates on progress on a quarterly basis. For more information and to keep up to date on progress, visit the HTS website at www.eugene-or.gov/housingtools. For questions, contact Jennifer Knapp at JKnapp@eugene-or.gov.