



## HOMELESS COORDINATING COUNCIL

### Housing Committee

January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

1:00-2:30 p.m.

#### Minutes

**Co-Chairs:** Betty Valdez (BernCo Housing Dept, Executive Director), Mark Childs (Professor Emeritus UNM School of Architecture & Planning), Lisa Huval, (Deputy Director of Housing & Homelessness CABQ FCS Dept)

**Attendees:** Lisa Huval, (CABQ FCS Dept); Betty Valdez (BernCo Housing Dept); Mark Childs (UNM); Councilor Isaac Benton (CABQ), Commissioner Debbie O’Malley (BernCo), Jenny Metzler (AHCH), Leonette Archuleta (BernCo), Linda Bridge (AHA), Robert Baade (BHI Supportive Housing), Laura Norman (CABQ consultant), Bobby Griego (CABQ Planning), Felipe Rael (GAHP), Izzy Hernandez (MFA), John Ames (HopeWorks), Jolene Wolfley (CABQ)

Item:	Discussion of high impact strategy implementation
Continue developing specific plan for implementing high impact strategies for affordable housing	<p>Minutes of the 12.16.20 meeting approved.</p> <p>Lisa Huval said the bulk of today’s meeting will be to check in on progress for high-impact strategies. She shared-screen with committee’s matrix of strategies and sub-strategies.</p> <p><b>Regarding #1, Increase supply of permanent supportive housing,</b>  <i>Sub-strategy A, Optimize and fully leverage existing resources to meet spectrum of PSH needs</i>  <i>Action step: Conduct a review of existing data.</i> Lisa Huval said that an entity at UNM might be the best to do this; Mark Childs and Lisa Huval made an informal presentation to HIVE at UNM a few weeks ago, but Carol Pierce has also submitted email to UNM President Stokes more formally requesting support for research efforts. Will be on the HCC meeting agenda next week. Mark Childs said he believes a population health department grad student is interested in studying the supportive housing piece. Also, someone in the school of architecture has been assigned to work on the neighborhood impact issue for Homeless Services System committee. Jenny Metzler pointed to the importance of expertise being needed, for best methodology, etc; so ideally a student <i>and</i> one of the research entities. If President Stokes says yes to investing money in this request, the assignment will likely go to BBER or another research entity within UNM to do. A student will produce a different level of research. The two paths could happen simultaneously. If both do get traction, need to ensure they work together.</p> <p><i>Sub-Strategy B – Identify new recurring funding sources</i> (Commissioner O’Malley and Councilor Benton not in the meeting yet for updates)</p>



*Sub-Strategy C- Fully utilize Medicaid:* AHCH is working with others and will keep committee updated

*Sub-Strategy D- Develop landlord Incentives:* No specific activities underway now. Will be helpful to understand what other communities are doing. Affordable Housing Coalition has expressed willingness to assist. Mark Childs suggested Lisa Huval contact Serg Martinez at the Law Clinic who may have insight.

*Sub-Strategy E- Address capacity issues:* City is trying to increase technical assistance for housing providers. Community Outreach Coordinator position posted on city; part of this person's role will be to work with these providers. As part of the one-time \$2 million received for FY 21, City is contracting with some agencies that are new or somewhat new to doing housing vouchers.

**Regarding #2, Acting aggressively to preserve existing**

*Sub-strategy A- Maximize existing funding sources.* Izzy said there is good news to report; there has been approval of relief funds which locked in 4% tax credit. A move in the right direction for affordable housing. This doesn't provide same amount of subsidy as 9% but still good. Commissioner O'Malley said the 4% is a challenge when it comes to County for abatement, but they use HUD guidelines. Not reaching a lot of the people want to reach with these programs. Commissioner O'Malley pointed to an issue of using HUD qualifications when looking at rents. Actual gap between wages and housing is getting bigger. Guidelines don't recognize taxes and health expenses; they use gross wages. Need flexibility to look at take home pay.

Felipe Rael confirmed that there is a chance someone renting one of his apartments is cost burdened (paying more than 30 or 40% of income for rent). Need to find additional gap subsidies. Unclear if 4% tax credit lock will be extended beyond 2021.

Linda Bridge shared Commissioner O'Malley's concerns but pointed out that to get rents down, must fill gap with other subsidies. With 4,000 vouchers at the Housing Authority, that serves about one tenth of the population that needs them. Need more vouchers funded. Being aggressive to preserve existing rental housing stock that has project-based subsidy is important added Linda Bridge.

Local and state funding provides more flexibility than federal.

Lisa Huval asked Councilor Benton and Commissioner O'Malley for updates of #1 High level strategy. Legislators are aware of housing and impact of the current Covid crisis, Commissioner O'Malley said hope for some updates soon. Lobbying at a federal level to change policies a good idea per Councilor Benton, and it could be good time with new administration coming in.



Mark Childs commented that wages are another part of the equation, although not a direct charge of this committee. If wages increased, then some of these housing issues would be alleviated.

Jolene Wolfley introduced herself, from the City Planning Dept. Bobby Griego asked her to come and reflect on land use regulations and how they play into affordable housing. Will do her presentation shortly. The committee members introduced themselves.

*WHTF (workforce housing trust fund) update* – re-establish a set aside; Lisa Huval will work on and test waters for interest, but not report at this time. Also, *examine city policies and RFPs*, Lisa Huval has no report at this time.

Jolene Wolfley shared screen, a powerpoint – “Affordable Housing and Land Use Regulation” (copy of the presentation to be sent to committee later).

- Producing multi-family housing is arduous and market is likely to react slowly to zoning changes
- Entry by developers for low density housing is much easier
- ABQ is part of a metro market; take this into consideration in future IDO changes

*Land Cost is key variable:*

- Cost of land per unit
- There are no subsidies for land acquisition, just construction and rent assistance (later, committee members pointed out that City has bought land with workforce housing funds; so government can but private developers don't have land subsidies)
- ABQ Housing Authority looking to develop on properties already owned, or redeveloping
- Local private affordable housing developers have said works best when buy land in depressed area

Any sense of AHA housing authority capacity, Mark Childs asked: Linda shared that 945 existing public housing units are to be rehabilitated and preserved. Where zoning will allow more units to be added, are doing so. And where demolish and build new/more units makes sense, are doing so.

Linda Bridge confirmed that yes are looking at opportunities for vacant land, but primarily focused on preservation. Access to affordable parcels then availability of tax credit and subsidy important.

Upzoning = more density than there before. Land prices likely rise when property is upzoned which tends to create a disincentive for affordable housing

*Existing neighbor response to multi-family housing a concern:*

- Homeowners try to block, as they perceive negative impact on their property value



- Suburban more likely to focus on negative aspects of new construction
- Urban residents where many businesses are located see potential benefits
- Therefore, improving perception of multi-family and affordable housing with existing neighborhood property owners the most effective way to promote affordable housing; this will allow developers to confidently use incentives that already exist in IDO

Discussion followed regarding design requirements and the balance needed to keep affordable housing development doable and having projects with character/acceptability. Jolene shared that there are some amendments going before planning commission on climatic responsiveness and building performance and geographic responsiveness leading to good design.

Linda Bridge shared that the cost incurred to do quality affordable housing with quality design is always an issue with MFAs; can be public and board pressures to scale back design and efficiency requirements due to costs.

*What was accomplished by the IDO (city of ABQ) to promote affordable housing?*

- Streamlined hearing process for projects
- Removed acre limit for multi-family zones
- Reduced parking requirements
- 12 foot height bonus for workforce housing
- Allowed multi-family to be built in the mixed-use zones
- Created a small lot R1-A
- Maximum lot size reduced to ¼ acre
- Allowances for more duplexes
- Allowance for two kitchens in a dwelling; 2 distinct dwellings may not be created
- Accessory Dwellings given a path to be legal (pre 1959); an advance would be to make ADUs permissive citywide
- Allowance for cottage development 10,000 sf lot; a 2020 proposal makes this citywide

Joylene Wolfley suggested to watch how market is responding to changes already made through IDO, as a lot of change was made.

Lisa Huval announced relative to one high-impact strategy – (increasing tenant protections) legislation is being introduced that supports source of income discrimination. Make aware that housing advocates will be introducing a bill that modernizes tenant protections. Once this is filed, Lisa Huval will send to committee. Will be on the HCC Meeting agenda next week to ask the Council to officially endorse this legislation.

NEXT STEPS: Joylene Wolfley will be invited to next meeting to continue this conversation.



	Next meeting: January 27th, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
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