

Agenda Report

DATE: August 5, 2002
TO: City Council
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: Recommendation on Housing Affordability Task Force

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Direct the Housing Affordability Task Force to provide recommendations and a plan for implementation that will address the issues listed in this report and present this plan to the City Council. An interim report will be submitted within four months including any completed recommendations, and a final report presented within nine months.
2. Appropriate \$10,000 from the unappropriated Affordable Housing Fund balance to account number 810-684120-51011 to support the work of the task force.
3. Appoint a task force with membership which reflects the broad variety of sectors involved in affordable housing (Housing Advocates/Service Providers, Developers/Architects/Builders/Investors, Financial, Business/Realtors, Commissioners, Residents & Others).
4. Consider one or more appointments to the task force from the Community Development Committee.

BACKGROUND:

On January 14, 2002, after a discussion of housing affordability, the Council directed staff to return with a recommendation for a housing forum, identify a list of issues to be studied, and solicit applications for a task force to consider strategies to improve the availability of affordable housing. On March 25, 2002, the Council approved a contract with the Enterprise Foundation to provide consultant services to assist with this effort.

Housing Affordability Forum:

With the assistance of the Enterprise Foundation, the City organized a forum on June 22, 2002. Citizens with an interest in housing the City's residents were invited, including housing advocates, developers, lenders, real estate brokers, and others. Over 100 people attended the forum at the Pasadena Community College's Foothill campus (Attachment A).

The agenda included a presentation of the housing issues and trends throughout the region. Staff presented the programs already in place to assist residents, as well as the local housing market data and conditions particular to Pasadena. Participants were encouraged to prioritize their concerns and possible solutions related to housing in the City. For a detailed account of the attendees' responses, please see Attachment B. The following list of topics represents the attendees primary concerns in order of priority:

- Lack of family housing
- Lack of regional coordination of affordable housing
- Commercial uses taking sites that could be used for housing
- Rent control
- Cumbersome city approval process
- Weight given to NIMBY concerns and points of view
- Lack of dispersion of affordable housing in Pasadena
- Lack of accessible housing for persons with disabilities
- Lack of education/information about affordable housing programs
- Lack of affordable housing financing tools and lack of knowledge about existing tools
- Federal fair market rents do not match Pasadena rents (even with adjustments)
- Excessive regulatory and code requirements
- Rising rents restricting affordability
- Lack of education on affordable housing development
- Gentrification
- Lack of identification of potential sites

Task Force

Over the course of nine months, the task force will be charged with making recommendations to address the issues listed below and report these to the City Council. Staff has reviewed the variety of responses generated at the forum, and has consolidated them into the following list of recommended issues for the task force to address:

- Additional programs and/or resources for the creation of additional affordable housing for families, and persons with special needs.
 - Coordination with regional housing advocates to expand affordable housing opportunities throughout the west San Gabriel Valley.
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- Evaluation of the City's process for approving the development of affordable housing projects, as well as the participation in affordable housing programs by the private sector.
- Recommendation regarding rent control in the City.
- Identification of potential sites for affordable housing to ensure equal dispersion throughout the City.
- Increasing awareness and education about affordable housing programs, development, and financing tools.

City staff and the Enterprise Foundation will provide research assistance and prepare materials in advance for the monthly meetings. The structure of the meetings will include three sections for each of the prioritized topics:

1. Situational Analysis – what tools are being used today along with data surrounding that issue as it pertains to the City of Pasadena
2. Comparative Analysis – what other cities are doing, and recommendations from experts in the field
3. Solutions – brainstorming for possible solutions that are feasible for Pasadena

At the four-month mark, the task force will provide a progress report to the Council and include any recommendations for completed items. Upon completion of the nine-month term, the task force should summarize their findings and make recommendations to the Council for the implementation of each of the issues listed above.

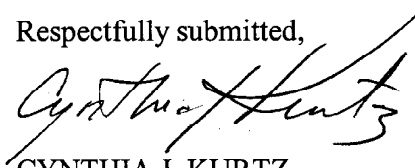
Community Development Committee

The Community Development Committee (CDC) is charged with taking a lead role in affordable housing development. It is recommended that one or more members of the CDC be appointed to the task force to ensure representation on the pertinent issues. A list of CDC members is included in Attachment C.

FISCAL IMPACT:

With the approval of recommendation number two, sufficient funds will be available in the Affordable Housing Fund budget account number 810-684120-51011.

Respectfully submitted,



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