



Legislation Text

File #: 20-1131, **Version:** 2

Resolution to Adopt an Affordable Housing Waitlist Policy

The City of Ann Arbor has recently adopted a series of policy changes to encourage affordable housing using incentives (such as Brownfield Tax Increment Financing) and changes to zoning (Downtown D1 and D2 zoning premiums and Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning). When utilized, these tools require the development and long-term maintenance of committed affordable apartments for households with incomes up to a specific Area Median Income (AMI) as well as caps on rent that can be charged.

There have been some previous examples of affordable units included in market rate projects through City Council action including Corner House Lofts and City Apartments. Through both examples staff has continue to learn to improve the process, including clarifying affordability agreement language, and the need for a centralized waitlist and marketing tool - to encourage broader and more equitable access to affordable rental units.

To assist in marketing these units to the broader public, and ensuring standardized review for household income, the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED), is launching a website and waitlist, and proposing a companion policy for developing and implementing an online waitlist for these properties.

Online Waitlist:

The website and waitlist will begin with a single property Beekman on Broadway (1140 Broadway) which required 15 affordable units as part of the Brownfield Plan approval. Eight (8) affordable apartments will be available this summer, and another 7 affordable units in 2021. The website and waitlist is designed to accommodate future properties and affordable rental units as required through use of these brownfield, zoning incentives, deed restrictions, etc.

The website will require interested parties to create an account, and provide contact information, which they will be responsible for keeping up to date annually. Additional information will be collected related to household size, household income, basic demographics, and a series of assurances, noting the information is accurate and complete, that applicants are responsible for updating contact info, and providing current income and tax information for review for income qualification about selection.

Recognizing that not all interested parties will be able to access the website online, staff and partner agencies will be able to assist interested parties with creating an account and signing up. If selected for review, staff will be able to contact applicants through e-mail or phone in order to request documentation to verify income qualification.

The HHSAB had two conversations about the website and waitlist - at the November 2019 and February 2020 meeting, ultimately passing on overall guidance to staff in development of the

attached policy. Highlights from the HHSAB conversations included:

- Desire to make sure system and process could be maintained over the long term
- Enforceability if there are issues with compliance
- Access to getting on the waitlist and ease of applying
- Careful consideration of how this could be utilized by the student population, Process that would allow students who are low-income to have access
- Compliance with Fair Housing guidance and recent changes to the City's anti-discrimination policy

The attached Affordable Housing Waitlist policy provides the detail of the waitlist establishment and ongoing management. In addition to working with the HHSAB, staff also consulted with the Ann Arbor Housing Commission leadership to learn from their experience in managing public housing and voucher waitlist. Many of their suggestions mirrored those of the HHSAB around simplifying the application and review process. This waitlist is not required to meet HUD requirements, creating the opportunity for less need for documentation, and ideally a quicker turnaround time.

Please see attached policy for full details.

Prepared by: Teresa Gillotti, Director Office of Community and Economic Development

Reviewed by: Derek Delacourt, Community Services Area Administrator

Approved by: Tom Crawford, Interim City Administrator

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor has recently adopted a series of policy changes to encourage affordable housing using incentives (such as Brownfield Tax Increment Financing) and changes to zoning (Downtown D1 and D2 zoning premiums and Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning);

Whereas, When utilized, these tools require the development and long-term maintenance of committed affordable apartments for households with incomes up to a specific Area Median Income (AMI) as well as caps on rent that can be charged;

Whereas, Previous examples long-term compliance of affordable units included in other city projects have not resulted in clear community awareness and access to committed affordable units by community members; and

Whereas, To assist in marketing these units to the broader public, and ensuring standardized review for household income, the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED), launched a website and waitlist, and is proposing a companion policy for developing and implementing an online waitlist for these properties;

RESOLVED, That City Council approves the attached Affordable Housing Waitlist Policy;

RESOLVED, That the staff and Housing and Human Services Advisory Board conduct periodic updates of the policy to allow it to evolve and change based on implementation; and

RESOLVED, That the City Administrator be authorized to take all necessary actions to implement this resolution.