

RACE & EQUITY POCKET QUESTIONS

Title & Purpose of this Initiative: Legislative Public Hearing for Text Amendment Relating to Density in PUDs

Department: Planning, Zoning and Inspections

What are the Racial and Equity impacts? Lack of representation on elected and appointed boards (advisory boards also provide comments for public hearings), and a perception of not being heard can make it difficult to feel welcome. Disparate access to quality education as well as historical barriers to government for community members of color can lead to undue burden.

Who is or will experience community burden? Shift workers and people who have limited time, transportation choices and/or children may have difficulty finding the time to learn about a proposal, attending meetings, understanding how and when to provide input, and to whom. It takes time to learn the development process and to obtain a comfort level to participate. Language may also provide a barrier for some residents.

Who is or will experience community benefit? The public hearing process is intended to provide a mechanism to provide information in a public forum. In the case of a proposed change to a land use regulation, a public hearing provides a public forum for an applicant (land owner or local government) to present information to members of the public and the decision-making entity (elected officials/board of adjustment). Hearings provide opportunities for public comment and allow for decisions to occur in a public setting for transparency. Public hearings for text amendments involve a legislative decision, one which allows for applicants and members of the community to engage with elected officials and voice support or concern for the matter under consideration. Residents who are already engaged with the Town and follow Council meeting agendas may feel comfortable reaching out to the Town or attending meetings to express opinions on land use matters.

What are the root causes of inequity? Working individuals and families may find it difficult to attend public meetings, may be reticent to speak in a public setting and may have an overall distrust in government and governmental processes, based on personal experiences and/or examples of structural racism in government decisions, particularly those relating to land use.

What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy? Changes to land use regulations can affect land values and quality of life experiences for surrounding property owners and occupants in ways that can be beneficial and, albeit for some, less desirable. The public hearing process is intended to provide a way for developers and community members to learn about a proposal and provide input in a public setting. Even with published notice and social

media releases, some people may not learn of a proposed amendment to the Land Use Ordinance in time to provide input and/or feel that that they understand the project and/or approval process enough to fully participate. The Planning Department has completed the analysis for a REAL lens for the amendment process. The staff core team and Racial Equity Commission have not yet completed their review.

How is your department planning to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences? Suggestions outlined in the REAL lens assessment involves options for better public engagement moving forward. Of note, this would involve efforts to go beyond what is required by state statute and the Land Use Ordinance.