

PROPOSED STRATEGY– CARRBORO TOWN-OWNED LAND USE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Based on research of public land disposition for affordable housing, lessons learned from working on the Hill Street lot, assessing the Town’s current capacity, and receiving feedback from the AHAC, the following outline for a proposed strategy and process to use the Town’s land to create affordable housing in Carrboro is provided.

STEP ONE – INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

As explained in Attachment B, in 2015, staff assessed Town-owned parcels for development suitability to create affordable housing and determined that five parcels, or three sites (if two parcels are combined) had the highest potential for affordable housing development. The Town will evaluate any parcels that may be added in the future, as well as any parcels previously assessed that may warrant further exploration. Criteria for suitability and possibility include:

- Ease of development from topographical and environmental perspectives
 - Land survey, soil testing, etc.
- Zoning considerations - potential number of units, need for re-zoning, etc.
- Proximity to public transit, groceries, pharmacies, schools, healthcare, etc. – similar to criteria used in scoring Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects

The Town will engage outside expertise to conduct pre-development assessments of identified properties and preliminary designs based on the site potential.

STEP TWO – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & GOALS FOR THE IDENTIFIED PROPERTY

After pre-development assessments, the next step is to conduct community engagement to develop the project design. An inclusive community process helps build trust in the project and address possible issues early in the project. This step involves:

- Pre-design work to help the community visualize potential options
- Community outreach and engagement conducted through the lens of racial equity, using One Orange Racial Equity protocols and strategies
- Design-centered approach
- Design consultant involved in process
- Determine the goals for property, based on Carrboro Connects, community engagement, property factors such as location, unit potential, other Town priorities (racial equity and climate action) and the preliminary site assessment
- Population served
 - Household AMI
 - Prioritize housing for 30% AMI and below, who are disproportionately people of color who have been historically excluded from the private market, and who are the most housing cost burdened (AHAC)
- Type of housing

- Single or multi-family
- Rental, homeownership, mixed
- Mixed-use
- Desired community amenities and sustainable features

STEP THREE – REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

With pre-development work complete and a community vision for the development in place, the Town is in a strong position to seek developers to complete the project. A Town affordable housing project may be very attractive to a developer because, in addition to the conveyance of the property, much of the up-front costs and work have been completed.

The Town will work to develop an expedited review process and will use a staff intermediary to shepherd the project through. This benefits the developer, saving them time and money, as well as the Town, by bringing more affordable housing to the community through a streamlined process.

With identified project goals and design, Town staff will develop a targeted and detailed request for proposals packet:

- RFP based on identified goals and vision, such as the # of units, intended residents, affordability mechanism, type of housing, community features, etc.
- Eligibility limited to nonprofit developers, or for-profit developers who can maintain the intended affordability structure
- Developer engagement and advertising
- Clear expectations to the developer at the outset
- Create an expedited review process to facilitate affordable housing development
- Land conveyance at the appropriate time in the process
- Determine affordability mechanism, i.e., deed restriction

Estimated Timeline

Key to the strategy's success will be proceeding through the process deliberately and methodically, gaining new insight along the way. This graphic is intended to show the steps of the development process. Times listed are estimates as each project will be unique and have different requirements. Any funding needs or requirements by funders are not included in this timeline. These requirements could hasten or extend the process, as could the timing of any action in relation to the Council's schedule, staffing, and the number of other projects underway.

