

Jessica Lynch

From: Robb Davis <robbathome@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 7:57 AM
To: Planning Commission; Jessica Lynch
Cc: Lucas Frerichs; Dan Carson
Subject: Comments and recommendations on the Draft Housing Element 2021-2029

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To: City of Davis, Planning Commission

From: Robb Davis, 105 E Street, Apt 3E, Davis

Re: Draft Housing Element 2021-2029

Dear Planning Commission Members;

I am writing today to support the recommendations sent to you by the Housing Element Committee and ask that you include them in the input and direction you provide to staff and to the Davis City Council. I would especially like to note the following:

1. While pre-approved by HCD, the method for assessing the affordability of ADUs most likely does not apply to the Davis situation. I believe it over counts the estimated number of ADUs in the City for the lower-income category. Pending a local cost study, these units should be removed from the very low and low housing capacity list.
2. The Davis Housing Trust Fund proposal from the Social Services Commission should be included as an appendix to the Housing Element. The Housing Element should include an immediate analysis of revenue sources to fund the Housing Trust Fund as part of the Program Implementation. While revenue generation options are probably limited—especially those that generate a predictable revenue stream—all options should be analyzed as soon as possible.

In addition to these two points (and general support for all the recommendations made by the Committee), I would note the following:

1. The Housing Trust Fund is just one important way to expedite the development of new, permanently affordable housing units while safeguarding the current permanently affordable stock. In addition, the City can do more within the Housing Element to make the development of new affordable units possible by adding a limited number of critical City-owned property to the inventory of developable land. City-owned land provides a substantial subsidy that increases the probability of affordable housing developers obtaining financing and tax credits necessary to build new units expeditiously. The Housing Element should include at least the following City-own properties—signaling a serious commitment over the coming eight years to create more affordable (and possibly market-rate) housing:
 - a. The property at the corner of Anderson and F Streets (would require reimbursement to the City's open-space fund)
 - b. The property behind the current City Hall and bounded by King High School, the Senior Center, and County Buildings.

- c. The current fire department building property and adjacent property on 5th Street between D and E Streets
 - d. The western side of the City Corporation Yard—current site of the Respite Center.
- 2. For the Housing Element to be a proper strategic guiding document, it must do more than merely fulfill state requirements. It must act as a guide throughout its life, and it must include some missing elements to increase its usefulness.
 - a. It should include a “look back” on the prior Housing Element to describe the extent to which planned actions were accomplished AND how the land inventory compared with actual development. This action will enable a second essential function.
 - b. The Housing Element should also include an assessment of the probability of inventoried land to be developed throughout the life of the Element. Historical analysis will help, and while a fully quantified statistic may not be possible, the method for assessing the probability of development should be spelled out.

By taking these two actions, the Housing Element becomes an assessment tool that can guide Council actions in the future.

One final note, while I support the notion of “by-right” approval, I question its actual effectiveness short of a General Plan update that addresses the full range of land use issues in the City. It is past time to proceed expeditiously toward a full update, which could include specific plans.

Thank you for your consideration of these points and let me know if you have any questions/concerns.

Robb Davis

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