

## Jessica Lynch

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**From:** Barbara Archer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 15, 2021 8:55 AM  
**To:** 'Sarah Risher'  
**Cc:** Jessica Lynch  
**Subject:** RE: Housing Element Update

Dear Ms. Risher,

Thank you for writing to the City Council with your comments about the Housing Element Update draft. All members of the Council have received your email, and I am acknowledging it on their behalf. I have also cc'd the staff person managing the project.

Thank you for your engagement on the update.

Best regards,

Barbara

**BARBARA ARCHER** (she/her/hers)  
*Communications & Customer Service Manager*

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**From:** Sarah Risher <sarahgracerisher@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 15, 2021 6:41 AM  
**To:** City Council Members <CityCouncilMembers@cityofdavis.org>  
**Subject:** Housing Element Update

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Esteemed Council Members,

I am writing to express my support for affordable housing and infill development within the City of Davis. As a city and a region, we face a housing affordability crisis, and one of the most important actions we can take to address this crisis is to build more affordable housing. Through the Housing Element update, the City of Davis has the opportunity to implement bold and creative housing solutions and it could not be a more perfect time to employ forward-thinking. Even as the State reopens from the covid-19 restrictions, the impacts of the pandemic will be long felt. The pandemic worsened California's already severe shortage of housing,

particularly for low-and moderate-income families and for people who are Black, indigenous, and/or of color. In addition to pandemic recovery, we must advance urgent and equitable climate solutions. Infill development will allow us to address both at the same time.

Infill development encourages a variety of designs and housing options. These include mix-used, townhouses, studios, and cohousing, which are closer to jobs and services and less expensive than oversized housing at the urban fringe. At first glance, infill development seems expensive but is actually less expensive than sprawl in the long run. According to the Urban Land Institute, urban sprawl eventually costs from 40-400% more than infill development due to the costs of building and maintaining new roads, sewers, fire stations and schools, not to mention the health and psychological costs of air pollution, traffic congestion and loss of open space. The costs of sprawl are passed on to communities as higher taxes, the deterioration of local businesses, and a declining quality of life. Infill development will help decrease vehicle miles traveled to and within the City, promote public and active transit, and protect our beautiful agricultural lands.

The Housing Element Committee voted on ten recommendations, which I urge the City of Davis incorporate into the updated Housing Element. I especially want to voice my support for:

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- **Recommendation 3:**
- Explore removing R-1 (Single Family) zoning from the Zoning Ordinance to allow for more flexibility to develop more dense housing and multifamily housing throughout the city.
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- **Recommendation 4:**
- Recommend that the City explore removing parking requirements from residential development within the city.
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- **Recommendation 6:**
- Recommend that the City permanently repeal the 1% growth cap ordinance.
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- **Recommendation 7:**
- Rezone strip malls from commercial property to mixed use property in this upcoming housing element to allow housing.
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- **Recommendation 8:**
- In the current Housing Element Update, the City of Davis will explore including a by-right approval process for housing projects which meet the current affordable housing ordinance as is and current zoning standards at the time of application.
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The last thing I wanted to share is that I have lived in Yolo County my entire life. I often joke that I am Yolo County raised and educated as I grew up in West Sacramento and have lived in Davis for all my adult life so far, as long as housing prices don't push me out. I stayed in this region to attend UC Davis and since graduating in 2018, I have continued to build a life for myself within this community. It is disheartening and dehumanizing to hear how some residents talk about current and former UC Davis students in the City's public meetings. Without UC Davis, the City would absolutely not be what it is today, and the pandemic proved that. We were a ghost town, businesses closed without the patronage of students, and the vibrancy of the community dulled. Students are not second-class community members, and they are also not the only ones in need of affordable housing here. I am a young professional who was furloughed due to the pandemic and facing higher costs of living. My rent will increase come this September, and if my rent increases again in 2022, I will need to look for more affordable options outside of Davis. My neighbor is a retired school teacher on a fixed income and has been a renter in her home for ten years yet is worried she's going to eventually be forced

out due to rising rents. She gets sad when thinking about it because absolutely loves our neighborhood and cannot imagine having to start all over elsewhere. All this to say, the cost of living is astronomical for all sorts of community members and progressive action is needed right now. UC Davis certainly has a role to play in adding more on-campus housing; though is absolutely not the enemy in this housing conversation or the scapegoat for the City not reaching their RNHA targets. It was a little mind boggling to hear certain remarks about UC Davis in previous public meetings because it seemed as if the university wasn't properly engaged as the City updated the housing element. No one seemed to know any facts or figures about the amount of units UC Davis produced in the last eight years and what they have planned for the future - that seemed like vital information before entering a conversation about on-campus housing. I hope the City and UC Davis increase dialogue and coordinate their planning on housing production. I also hope that the City continues to pursue State funding opportunities for infill development, affordable housing, and urban greening to help keep Davis a "15 minute" community and build our collective resilience in the face of extreme challenges.

Thank you for your time and attention to this vital matter. I look forward to hearing the discussion at the Council meeting.

Warmly,  
Sarah

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**Sarah Risher**

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