



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 2

Agenda Date: January 26, 2022

In Control: San Antonio Housing Commission Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Neighborhood and Housing Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Verónica R. Soto

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Briefing and possible action related to the Unified Development Code recommendations proposed by the Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Development & Preservation subcommittee

SUMMARY:

Briefing and possible action related to the Unified Development Code amendment recommendations of the Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Development & Preservation subcommittee.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Development & Preservation subcommittee (RBSC) was established by the Housing Commission in October 2021. The subcommittee met four times in November and December to continue previous work from 2019 that was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All subcommittee meetings were open to the public for in-person and virtual attendance. The subcommittee was charged, in the short term, with finalizing amendment

recommendations to the Unified Development Code (UDC) that would reduce cost burden of affordable housing development and increase rate of production. UDC amendments are due to the Development Services Department no later than February 1, 2022.

The Committee members are:

Jim Bailey, Alamo Architects, subcommittee Chair

Jordan Ghawi, STRAC, Tier 1 Neighborhood Coalition, subcommittee Co-Chair

Pedro Alanis, San Antonio Housing Trust, Housing Commissioner

Nikki Johnson, Community Advocate, Housing Commissioner, Public Engagement & Outreach subcommittee member

Michael Taylor, CrossTimber Homes

Taylor Allen, WGI Engineering & Consulting

Monique Chavoya, McCormack Baron Salazar

Melanie Cawthon, disabilitySA, Public Engagement & Outreach Subcommittee member

Jose Gonzalez III, Alamo Community Group

ISSUE:

The short term goal of the subcommittee was to develop a set of recommendations to amend the UDC that are aligned with housing related plans and reduce the cost of developing affordable housing in San Antonio. These recommendations were to be brought to the Housing Commission for approval before submitting them to the Development Services Department no later than February 1, 2022.

Over the course of the four meetings the subcommittee explored possible amendments to UDC sections that impact accessory dwelling units (ADU), stormwater detention facilities, parkland dedication, streets and sidewalk infrastructure, and tree preservation. The subcommittee drafted 20 amendments for five sections of the UDC that are specific to certain types of affordable housing developments.

Following the development of the draft UDC amendments, the subcommittee sought public input through a public feedback period developed in coordination with the Public Engagement and Outreach subcommittee. The public comment period was open from December 20, 2021 to January 14, 2022. A public survey on the City's SA Speak Up platform was open from December 20, 2021 to January 14, 2022. The survey was developed with input from the Public Engagement and Outreach subcommittee. The public was also invited to participate through a public meeting on January 5th. The meeting had in person and virtual participation options. The meeting also had ASL and Spanish interpretation provided. The meeting was recorded and placed on the Removing Barriers website for viewing by those unable to attend the meeting. Public comments were also accepted by phone and email.

Staff received 114 comments total. A log of all public comments received has been compiled by staff along with a document summarizing feedback. These documents can be found on the RBSC website.

In general, there was support for 16 of the 20 recommended amendments. The subcommittee

members elected to advance the following amendments for consideration of the Housing Commission:

1. 35-371(a)(3): Removing the requirement for the accessory dwelling unit to be connected to the central electrical, water and sewer system of the principal structure.
2. 35-371(a)(4): Removing occupancy limits of three (3) persons for accessory dwelling units.
3. 35-371(a)(5): The accessory dwelling shall not exceed eight hundred (800) square feet or 50% of gross floor area of the primary structure, whichever is greater.
4. 35-371(a)(6) Height limitation to two stories or 25 feet in response to public comment.
5. 35-371(b)(2): Remove section limiting floor area since this will be updated in 35-371(a)(5)
6. 35-371(b)(3): Removing the bedroom limit for accessory detached dwelling units of one bedroom.
7. 35-371(b)(4): Clarifying that only one accessory dwelling unit is permitted in the rear yard.
8. 35-371(b)(5): Removing the requirement that ADUs under 800 square feet must provide a parking space and removing the location requirement of the parking space. The parking space requirement remains effective for ADUs over with 800 square feet of gross floor area.
9. 35-371(b)(6): Removing the architectural design, style and appearance requirements for the accessory detached dwelling unit.
10. 35-371(b)(7): Changing the setback requirements for detached dwelling units to be five feet if overhang or three feet if no overhang.
11. 35-371(c)(1): Removing section limiting floor area since this will be updated in 35-371(a)(5)
12. 35-371(c)(2): For attached accessory dwelling units, removing the occupancy limitation of one person per 200 square feet.
13. 35-A101: Clarifying the definition of floor area to be “Gross Floor Area”.
14. 35-503 (c)(3)D: Allowing affordable housing developments to use the Trust for Public Land park score as an alternate method of calculating required parkland dedication.
15. 35-523: Allowing trees in the right of way to be counted toward tree canopy.
16. 35-506: Sidewalks, Curbs and Pavement construction Standards shall not apply to projects that provide at least 50% affordable units and are on lots under 20,000 square feet.

The following will be tabled for further committee discussion:

1. 35-523(a)(4)F For affordable housing projects only, trees or areas of tree canopy outside of the required minimum zoning setback areas, in response to public comment.
2. 35-506(d)(9)C Special reconstruction standards, in response to public comment. – would be better in other code rather than UDC.
3. 35-503(e)(1): Allowing parkland under 3 acres to be dedicated for affordable housing developments if publicly accessible upon developer request and City approval.
4. Appendix H 13.1 Stormwater detention facility dedication to the City, in response from staff recommendation from the Department of Public Works.

Additionally, an update to the definition of affordability in the Unified Development Code (Section 35-A101), as previously recommended by the Housing Commission and approved by City Council with the SHIP in December 2021 will be submitted to DSD.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact at this time.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Housing Commission may elect not approve some or all of the subcommittee's recommended amendments to the UDC which would prevent submission of the amendments to the Development Services Department and result in no changes to the UDC related to these items. Changes could still be made, but they would have to be done at the next UDC process in 2025 or via a Council Consideration request.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends Housing Commission approve of the recommended amendments presented by staff for submission to the Development Services Department by February 1, 2022.