

City of Cincinnati



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002401447

Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney
Vice Mayor

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MOTION

WE MOVE that the administration provide support for a short-term, diverse task force to consider and make recommendations to City Council with modifications to Item #202401447, the “Connected Communities Ordinance,” concerning the following concepts:

1. **Affordable housing:** Consideration of including affordable housing requirements and additional resources to address the urgent need for affordable housing for residents whose income is 60% AMI or lower.
2. **Infrastructure needs determination:** Review of the process to determine and address adequate infrastructure needs for multi-family housing.
3. **Architectural design guidelines:** Consideration of architectural design constraints for current Single Family zones that will be affected by the Connected Communities ordinance: In order to ensure that any newly constructed multi-family housing supports the “look and feel” of the neighborhood, additional guidelines such as acceptable architectural styles shall be considered as additions to the Connected Communities Ordinance.
4. **Tree canopy and green space:** Consideration of tree canopy and green space requirements in keeping with our Green Cincinnati Plan.


Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney


Councilmember Scotty Johnson

STATEMENT

The Connected Communities Ordinance is commendable in that it addresses the need to decrease racial and socioeconomic segregation in Cincinnati's neighborhoods, provide more "missing middle" housing options (2-4 family units and rowhouses) for our growing population, and encourage greater population density in and near neighborhood business districts and major transit corridors.

Through public comment, it has become apparent that the ordinance is missing several key elements that must be considered as follows:

Affordable housing: The City of Minneapolis' legislation that changed single family zoning to allow for multi-family housing, has been one of the models referenced by proponents of the Connected Communities Ordinance. It is worth noting that Minneapolis' legislation includes requirements for including affordable housing in its ordinance in order to address concerns about displacement. In 2023, Minneapolis preserved 876 units of affordable multifamily rental housing in 9 projects located throughout the city due to awards from Minneapolis' Affordable Housing Trust Fund and federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) programs. The funds were used to provide gap financing for the production and preservation of affordable rental housing for households earning less than 50% of area median income, with a priority for units affordable to households earning less than 30% of area median income.

Given our increasing Affordable Housing Leveraged Fund resources and streamlined process to help developers attain LIHTC to make inclusion of affordable units financially feasible, we are able to require the inclusion of affordable housing with market rate housing without slowing housing growth. At the same time, requiring the inclusion of affordable housing will prevent displacement of our residents, and meet the needs of an increased number of low and moderate income residents who do not have affordable housing.

Infrastructure needs determination: As stated in conversations about whether our city has adequate infrastructure to support the addition of missing middle housing in previous single family zones, climate changes are causing us to more frequently experience events such as "100-year floods." Members of the public have asked for a deeper dive and more data pursuant to the coordinated site review (CSR) process for missing middle housing projects in previous single family zoning.

Architectural design guidelines: The requirement that newly constructed structures must maintain the "look and feel" of the neighborhood could be strengthened to include architectural design guidelines. Some of our neighborhood plans even specify acceptable architectural designs, in order to ensure that new construction does not negatively affect the neighborhood's look and feel.

Tree canopy and green space: Consideration of tree canopy and green space requirements in keeping with our Green Cincinnati Plan.