

Agenda

Housing & Community Development Commission (HCDC)

Thursday, June 20, 2019
6:30 P.M.

Senior Center, Room 202
28 S. Linn Street, Iowa City
*Use the Washington Street entrance or
2nd floor skywalk via Tower Place parking garage*

1. Call meeting to order
2. Approval of the May 16, 2019 minutes
3. Public comment of items not on the agenda
4. Discuss City Steps 2025, the City of Iowa City's Consolidated Plan for 2021-2025, with Mullin & Lonergan Associates
5. Review and consider recommendation to City Council on approval of 2019 Fair Housing Choice Study (Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice)
6. Discuss modifications to the Aid to Agencies process
7. Staff/commission comment
8. Adjournment

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CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

Date: June 13, 2019
To: Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC)
From: Neighborhood Service Staff
Re: June 20, 2019 meeting

The following is a short description of the agenda items. If you have any questions about the agenda, or if you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact Kirk Lehmann at 319-356-5247 or Kirk-Lehmann@Iowa-City.org.

* Indicates Action Item

Item 1. Call Meeting to order

Item 2. Approval of the May 16, 2019 minutes*

Item 3. Public comment of items not on the agenda

Item 4. Discuss City Steps 2025, the City of Iowa City's Consolidated Plan for 2021-2025, with Mullin & Lonergan Associates

The City is currently soliciting public input for City Steps 2025, the 5-Year Consolidated Plan for services, housing, and jobs for low- and moderate-income households. Annually the City receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and HOME funds from HUD. To continue receiving funds, the City must identify and prioritize its needs, then explain how it will address these needs through local projects. Mullin & Lonergan Associates were hired as consultants and want HCDC's input.

Item 5. Review and consider recommendation to City Council on approval of 2019 Fair Housing Choice Study (Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice) *

Staff will provide an overview of the draft Fair Housing Choice Study, followed by discussion, proposed changes, and consideration of recommending the Plan to Council.

In accordance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements, the Study identifies impediments to fair housing choice and provides recommendations to overcome those impediments over the next several years. The Study is part of the City's efforts to affirmatively further fair housing by combating unlawful discrimination against those in the housing market based on age, disability, color, race, national origin, creed, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, presence or absence of dependents, or public assistance as a source of income.

A 30-day public comment period for the Study began June 15 and will run through July 16, 2019. The City Council is scheduled to hold a public meeting and formally approve the Plan on Tuesday, July 16, 2019. Public copies will be available at the Iowa City Public Library, Neighborhood Services Department at City Hall, and online at www.icgov.org/actionplan.

Item 6. Discuss modifications to the Aid to Agencies (A2A) process

City Council approved changes to the A2A process for FY20. However, after HCDC provided their funding recommendation, Council requested that HCDC again revisit the process. This meeting will continue the multiple discussions on the process for FY21 and beyond.

Item 7: Staff/Commission Comment

Item 8: Adjournment*

MINUTES

PRELIMINARY

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MAY 16, 2019 – 6:30 PM
SENIOR CENTER, ROOM 202**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mitch Brouse, Charlie Eastham, Vanessa Fixmer-Oraiz, Christine Harms, John McKinstry, Peter Nkumu, and Maria Padron

MEMBERS ABSENT: Megan Alter, Paula Vaughan

STAFF PRESENT: Kirk Lehmann, Erika Kubly, Tracy Hightshoe, Steve Rackis

OTHERS PRESENT: Peggy Aguilar, Laura Bergus, Mark Sertterh, Sara Barron, Cady Gerlach

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL:

By a vote of 7-0 the Commission recommends City Council approve the Iowa City Housing Authority 2019 Annual Report.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Fixmer-Oraiz called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 18 & APRIL 24 2019 MINUTES:

Eastham moved to approve the minutes of April 18 and April 24, 2019. Brouse seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR TOPICS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

None.

PRESENTATION ON THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING LOCATION MODEL (AHLM):

Tracy Hightshoe (Director of Neighborhood and Development Services) came to present background information on the AHLM and answer questions from the Commission. She stated the City has used the current AHLM since 2011, it has been modified since that time, but the reason behind the model is that when the City provides assistance to affordable housing in certain areas, especially multifamily and rental housing, there has been neighborhood concern or outright opposition to place any more. The City, this Commission, and Council have always struggled to find the right balance of where to allow, encourage, and subsidize affordable housing. Hightshoe stated for a while they had a model based on census data, that only certain census tracts could add affordable housing, but it was modified over the years. In 2010, the Iowa City School District held a symposium regarding barriers to education and one of the main barriers was concentrations of lower income students in certain parts of Iowa City and the School Board asked Council to look at placing affordable housing in areas that did not already have concentrated areas of lower income students. Hightshoe noted at the same time there was also a controversial situation where the Commission awarded HOME funds to an applicant to build a multifamily building but the funds were denied when that went to Council due to the neighborhood opposition of an already high poverty area. This prompted the creation of a task force to decide what areas in the City should be encouraged to

add affordable housing. The Council developed three goals, which have been consistent since 2010.

1. To not further burden neighborhoods and elementary schools that already had issues related to a concentration of poverty.
2. To have diverse neighborhoods in terms of income.
3. Determine the views of the School District on the issue of affordable housing.

The School District recommended not putting any additional affordable housing in elementary school areas that already had high free and reduced lunch or high mobility rates. Based on those goals, Hightshoe stated the City met with HCDC, Council, and staff to develop seven criteria for an AHLM.

1. Distance to existing assisted housing, 400 feet or approximately one city block from existing subsidized housing.
2. The elementary school mobility rate, how often are children moving in and out of that school.
3. Median household income.
4. Change in residential sales price.
5. Crime density.
6. Elementary school performance.
7. Elementary free and reduced lunch rates.

Hightshoe noted this was not to say affordable housing was a trigger to crime, but rather that the City wanted to place affordable housing in neighborhoods with low crime to benefit the families placed in assisted housing. That being said, only two areas of the City light up when looking at the 95 percentile of crime, and the biggest is downtown where there is not much assisted housing because it is so expensive.

Based on those seven criteria the City came up with a “score” for each area of Iowa City and based on the score (over or under a certain threshold) it either encouraged or discouraged new affordable housing. Hightshoe showed the map and noted this only applied to new rental construction or new rental permits for families. This model does not apply to rental rehab, housing for seniors or persons with disabilities, or homeownership. Since this model has been in effect, the City has continued to invest in areas that don’t allow new development, including around \$1.2 million in the South District between HACAPs transitional housing on Broadway and Southgate’s Orchard Place which renovated over 100 units.

In 2017 the City modified the AHLM per a recommendation of their Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, and as some of the data made no significant difference in the model. So they looked at the data to see what was meeting the Council’s 3 goals. The model was updated to only prohibit new rentals in areas that feed into elementary schools with free and reduced lunch rates of over 50%, areas within 400 feet of two or more subsidized units (original model was just one unit), and areas with crime densities in the 95th percentile (which is just two areas, downtown and a small area by Town & Campus apartments; to be updated every three years). All the exceptions listed in the original model still apply.

In 2018 HCDC voiced an interest in reviewing and perhaps revamping the AHLM and that request went to the City Manager, the City Manager noted staff was working on the Fair Housing Study and the new City Steps Plan so there was not staff capacity to undertake this project at this time. Council agreed with the City Manager. Therefore, this is the AHLM used today.

Eastham asked if the AHLM has been subjected to a racial equity analysis. Hightshoe acknowledged it has not noting at the time of creation and updates to the AHLM they did not have that toolkit.

Padron wondered if this model is the right way to disperse the affordable housing because if people want to live close together this may deter that. Hightshoe stated that if people choose to live close together it is not a problem, but it may become an issue if they have to live close in certain areas because there is no other location that is affordable.

Eastham stated the AHLM method does not include factors indicating where lower priced housing is located in the community, as to where people have options to move if they want to. Hightshoe noted Council is aware of the cost difference of land prices in certain areas of the City.

Fixmer-Oraiz questioned if the new school on the south side, Alexander, which was built to attract new housing and families was given any type of overlay to allow affordable housing because at this point it can’t happen in that area but it is an emerging area. Hightshoe noted one of Council’s goals of not

placing additional affordable housing in areas where elementary schools already have high free and reduced lunch rates was the main concern so unless Council changes that goal it will not change the map. She also noted the City does not have control over where the School District sets their attendance areas and over time with new housing the rates at Alexander may change to allow for more affordable housing in the area. The AHLM map is updated every school year with the free and reduced lunch data.

Eastham stated Council could adopt a policy to say they will avoid placing more affordable housing in an area with a high free and reduced lunch rate unless it causes a racial disparity. He also noted most of the people of color in Iowa City live south of Highway 6 and do not live in publicly assisted housing, it is just a more affordable area.

Lehmann added there are HUD standards for HOME rental new construction, if it is an area of "minority concentration" they must meet standards to not negatively impact neighborhoods. The City's standard is more restrictive in that it also affects new rental acquisitions.

Eastham noted the director of the largest nonprofit affordable housing in Iowa City despises this model. Also Council has never followed through on the commitment to provide additional rental subsidy dollars for projects that can be located in non-embargoed areas. Hightshoe noted Council created the Affordable Housing Fund and committed \$1 million to that fund with 50% going to the Housing Trust Fund. Eastham said in his view there has been no systematic effort to maintain a comparable rate of affordable units in the non-embargoed areas.

Brouse noted the purpose of the AHLM was to put affordable housing in the non-embargoed areas. Eastham said the purpose of the AHLM was to decrease the rate of affordable housing in the embargoed areas only. Hightshoe noted since the model has been in place they have a new project going up on Dubuque Street and 36 units going up on Rochester Street. Eastham acknowledged affordable housing units have been built, but their prices are too high. Brouse understands that a lot of the more affordable lots for new construction are in embargoed areas, so to build new affordable housing in areas where the City wants to increase available affordable housing to create more diverse neighborhoods may require additional positive incentives, such as more funds, etc. Eastham stated the data does not support that the land costs in the areas embargoed are significantly lower than land costs in other areas of the City. Hightshoe stated Council is aware of the cost differences in areas of the City and it would cost more to subsidize housing in certain areas but that was a choice they made at that time.

Eastham reiterated the major problem with this model's approach is it disproportionately impacts black and Hispanic families. Lehmann noted that based on the information he has seen it doesn't seem to negatively impact the amount of Hispanic or non-white housing households that are getting affordable housing in Iowa City, those households are still getting benefits. Eastham said that is true if they want to relocate. Lehmann said it only affects them if they want to move to a newly constructed house or apartment in a neighborhood where that is not allowed, not for rehab. Eastham stated that is an issue.

Hightshoe added that the City has contracted with Opticos to do a form-based code in the Alexander Elementary area, which is different than what a standard subdivision looks like, it will address the missing middle and not create all single family homes in one subdivision. A subdivision can only have a certain percentage of single family and a certain percentage has to be multifamily so there is a mix of options and diversity of housing types. Riverfront Crossings is also a form-based code area but that is producing mostly multifamily high-rise and commercial properties because of its location. Eastham asked if an implementation of a form-based code works in the Alexander area it would be nice if affordable housing providers could build there using public dollars to produce very low priced rental housing.

Fixmer-Oraiz noted her take on the AHLM is it is one approach and her concern is not just housing but also quality of life and the South District in terms of walkability, connectivity, parks and accessibility to things like grocery stores is more concerning. Hightshoe stated the City did a survey of the Broadway area and most people reported they were happy where they lived. Fixmer-Oraiz stated in graduate school they did a survey of the area and knocked on doors and the response to how they like the area was met with "this is my neighborhood".

Padron asked if there was data showing if people could choose, where they would want to live. Would they go somewhere else because they want to be in a more diverse area or do they want to stay in their current neighborhood? What she heard from the Forest View neighborhood was one of a strong community that did not want to move away from each other. Eastham agreed, people definitely form communities and neighborhoods no matter what their incomes and don't want to leave it. But if they want better housing they will have to leave. Padron stated as a Latina she would want to be close to other Latinos but that may not be true for all people.

Eastham said the Housing Choice Voucher program offers a glimpse into where people are choosing to live and he did an analysis of the data provided from that program of where participants from different racial groups were actually living, noting there are limitations on the Housing Choice Voucher program, but it showed people are definitely choosing to live in specific areas, including the southeast side. He acknowledged the City could invest in a survey to see if that is true. Lehmann added the Housing Choice Voucher program allows people to live housing that is not publicly assisted.

Sara Barron (Affordable Housing Coalition) noted Eastham raised issues that the AHLM measures the incomes of families based on participation in school free and reduced lunch rates but doesn't measure the number of units available at specific price points. Barron stated it is difficult to collect rental information for units throughout the City and this is really a question of opportunity across spaces and places. If a family has \$500 a month to pay in rent can they afford to choose any neighborhood in Iowa City as the place that feels like the right fit for them? Barron raised this same question with the School District and said if they feel economic segregation is a problem, then there are two categories of neighborhoods that are segregated. One is areas that contain higher percentages of low income families and the other is neighborhood that contain a high percentage of high income families, both would be considered economic segregation. So when the City is thinking about where to incentivize building new affordable rental units, and looking at the Coalition's value (Opportunity Across Spaces) then a family with a low income could choose to live in this neighborhood if it felt like the right fit for their family and incentivizing the opportunity to create housing in neighborhoods that are economically segregated toward wealthier families is ultimately where you would want to see that goal met. Barron stated there is some deficit thinking to say "not in this area because there is already too much", it can cause some natural resistance to the City's policy even if that is not the intention of the policy. Barron reiterated it should be about opportunity of choices and if a family wanted to live in a certain location, could they, and that is what the policy should address.

Eastham noted that language is important and when this approach was being developed, the two or three years preceding this model there were Council members, including Connie Champion, who referred to the southeast Iowa City as a ghetto.

McKinstry stated economic and racial segregation in Iowa City and Ames, because of the large universities, has actually been increasing rather than decreasing over the last 40 years. Because of the universities there is a more diverse population and due to the pressure on housing economic segregation happens and because race and ethnicity in our culture are so closely tied to economics they cannot be separated. For that reason there is also an increase in racial and ethnical segregation.

Fixmer-Oraiz agreed and noted institutionalized racism is at the heart of this and asks whoever is doing the City's GIS to visualize the areas of high incomes and low incomes on the map. Lehmann said just looking at the free and reduced lunch rate maps will show that data.

Hightshoe noted because of the Fair Housing Study and Consolidated Plan they just don't have the staff time to work on the AHLM and staff was instructed by Council in October to not revisit this for a while and to focus on other things. She added all communities struggle with this topic.

Fixmer-Oraiz agreed she does not want to overburden staff but perhaps just having a map so this committee could see the concentration areas would help in future discussions. Lehmann said that data could be pulled from census data and a map could be created.

Eastham is interested in working with Council members to persuade them to revisit the goals. Fixmer-

Oraiz agreed and having a map to show the economic segregations would help. Hightshoe said the Council is looking at affordable housing action steps and staff is recommending to Council to change the HOME owner-occupied group to include HOME rental rehab instead of having nonprofits or private landlords having to wait for just once a year to apply for funds, they could apply throughout the year and have the same financial incentive as homeowners. This would especially help in one of the targeted rehab neighborhoods to give them 50% grants. This is important because it is found that most low-income housing folks live in existing homes and not new construction due to costs. This would allow the ability to improve where people are living now.

REVIEW AND CONSIDER RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL ON APPROVAL OF IOWA CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY 2019 ANNUAL REPORT:

Rackis noted this is a HUD required document and an annual report showing the data of who the Housing Authority serves, reports on funding, reports on programs, demographics, etc.

Eastham noted there was no changes in participation rules so he assumes there will be no changes this year. Rackis said this is just a demographic report, there will be another plan created following the Consolidated Plan, a five-year plan, that will be substantially equivalent and matches the goals of the Consolidated Plan. The Housing Authority will partner with Community Development during the development of the Consolidated Plan to set goals. They also have an Admissions and Continued Occupancy which is the plan that states how they will operate their public housing program and also the housing choice voucher program. At this time there are no changes to either one of those documents.

McKinstry acknowledged it is a very well run operation.

Rackis noted there was this notion in the general public that the housing choice voucher program was driving free and reduced lunch numbers, but as seen on page 9 of this report he has captured what the School District is reporting. They report all the kids they determine are eligible for reduced lunch and lower. This year the School District had 5184 kids that qualified for free and reduced lunch, when he matched the incomes of the families in the housing choice voucher program against the guidelines of the free and reduced lunch program, they can only account for a little over 1000. Also with The Housing Fellowship, they have about 170 units and at any given point and time 60% of those units contain voucher holding families. Pheasant Ridge has 240 units and even with those kids, plus the other 40% from The Housing Fellowship does not add up to the other 4000 kids. So there are a lot of families eligible for the free and reduced lunch that are not receiving assistance from anywhere. The School District published a map a few years ago that showed a large concentration of free and reduced lunch are contained in the mobile home parks that are in Johnson County, not necessarily in the city limits of Iowa City, nor in the South District, but predominately mobile home parks. Rackis added this is also important to show why there is a need for more affordable housing knowing there are 4000 kids in the free and reduced lunch program that could also benefit from more stabilized housing.

Eastham noted it was perfectly clear before the City adopted this AHLM that the concentration of free and reduced lunch students in different elementary schools was not be driven by location of assisted housing or number of housing choice vouchers.

McKinstry agreed noting the population served by vouchers is a lot older, whiter and more employed than the presumed recipient. Rackis agreed, those benefiting from affordable housing are elderly, disabled and working families.

Eastham added the School District has never tried to study whether or not students whose families participate in housing choice vouchers, publicly owned housing or other publicly assisted housing have more or less academic proficiency than other students.

Rackis noted there is a snapshot in the report on what the public housing looked like at that particular point and time, but there are other documents that will have different numbers. HUD processes on a fiscal year budget and other documents are on a calendar year basis. So it looks like they went from a

99% occupancy rate in public housing down to 94%, and the difference is based on a point in time versus what the calendar year utilization is or fiscal year.

Brouse moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Iowa City Housing Authority 2019 Annual Report. Eastham seconded the motion, a vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.

PERIOD FOR COMMENT ON THE FY20 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN – AVAILABLE AT www.icgov.org/actionplan:

Lehmann updated the Plan based on comments from the last meeting and added the rents to appendix and also updated the numbers for The Housing Fellowship with the increased funding to be used to rehab two units.

Eastham appreciated the including of rent information and noted the rents in the \$499-\$599 range are mostly group home rates, not a single family home. Lehmann agreed and said to break down the number of units assisted versus the number of people assisted can be tricky because SRO units inflate the unit counts.

DISCUSS MODIFICATIONS TO THE AID TO AGENCIES PROCESS:

Fixmer-Oraiz noted after reading the discussion at the last meeting she put together a draft survey to get a sense of what agencies feel about the process. She outlined the changes of extending the deadline to apply, eliminating redundant questions on the application, inviting agencies to respond only if their applications had gaps or questions arose, changing method of allocating funds based on priorities, and creating a separate emerging agencies grant for newer agencies or those that had not received funding in the past. Fixmer-Oraiz would like to know if the others felt those were good changes and if there was feedback on the survey before sending it out to agencies.

Padron would like to know if the agencies feel the process is objective and if there are suggestions for improvements. Fixmer-Oraiz agreed and hopes that will come from the survey. Lehmann stated he talked with the City of Duluth and they use what seems like an objective ranking system where it shows instructions for what the points mean for each ranking criterion. This would help to understand the reason for the ranking. He can send the Duluth application out to the Commission for review if interested, it appears to be a good model. The Commission could modify it for our needs.

Fixmer-Oraiz noted another issue is the tenure of the Commission, since the membership changes whomever comes next needs guidance on rankings and why.

McKinstry stated the agencies may feel the Commission doesn't have all the knowledge to make informed decisions and likes the survey Fixmer-Oraiz created, especially the open-ended questions.

Padron noted some of the questions are not applicable to all agencies and it is hard to rank or put a number on those questions and the agency shouldn't be punished for not being able to supply information. Perhaps certain questions should be eliminated for some agencies. McKinstry agreed, certain agencies do not collect certain information about their clientele because to do so would be a violation of the relationship whereas some other agency could collect such information easily. Brouse agreed and stated the Commission is trying to allocate money to agencies that all do different things so it is hard to have a perfectly objective grading system and you can't compare providing food, providing shelter, and assisting battered families. The Duluth system is more project based so the applications are probably more similar. He feels they could do better, but it will never be perfect. Fixmer-Oraiz agreed the collecting of data is important but does question if it should be a ranking criterion. The data is helpful and important but should be more as a tool and not a ranking point.

Lehmann noted it is an undertaking for an agency to do the joint application process so he is curious if there is a way to get together with Coralville, United Way and Johnson County to see what data they use

when making their decisions and possibly cut back some of it. Fixmer-Oraiz agreed that would be helpful and those municipalities may be facing similar questions as this Commission. Eastham would support having a combined application. Lehmann agreed but is interest in condensing the application so agencies aren't asked for information no one uses. Brouse agreed and feels that would help with the objectiveness.

Fixmer-Oraiz returned to the survey, which asked if the ranking was inadequate or an improvement and asked why. She also asked if there were additional information to help with the application process what they would prefer, grant workshops, etc., what is one thing they would change about the process and one thing they would change about the application. She hoped to get comments from both those statements separately. She also wanted to know what they like about the new application process and finally asked for any additional feedback. She tried to cover a broad array of things in the survey with some specificity.

Eastham asked if there would be a question asking specifically if the HCDC is an appropriate way to go about this process. Fixmer-Oraiz will add the question of if HCDC is the appropriate avenue for recommending these allocations to City Council.

Padron liked the positive question on what the agencies like about the application process and maybe add if there is anything they would not want to change about the process. Lehmann said to word it as what is one thing you like about the application process and would want to keep the same.

Fixmer-Oraiz will amend the survey with suggestions made this evening and send out to the agencies next week.

Eastham called three agency directors this week and had an informative discussion with each regarding how to come up with a change of the amount of money the City is allocating to the Aid to Agencies budget and their view of the current City process. Regarding the funds part, as he understands it the City Manager has held one or more meetings over the last few weeks with one or two groups of agency directors to identify changes to the current process for developing an Aid to Agencies budget. One thing being considered is inviting agencies into the process earlier than the HCDC process and treating it like he does when developing department budgets. Eastham feels that is an encouraging change and suggests this Commission encourages that change in the process. He also feels the recommendation of how much money the City awards to the Aid to Agencies fund should be made from the agencies. He is not clear on how those conversations are progressing and when decisions will be made.

Also when talking with these three agency directors, Eastham heard their thoughts on the current and past processes and the feedback is not positive. A fundamental question to him is if HCDC as appointed by Council is an adequate body to do these kinds of review. One agency commented that some reviews have been done by program officers, which is an entirely different level and amount of expertise, and Eastham feels it is possible for staff to do the review the Commission is currently doing and making estimations. Other Commissions such as Planning and Zoning have the staff review the application, make a recommendation to the Commission and the Commission can choose to follow the staff recommendation, make changes to it, or deny it. Eastham feels there is a question among agency directors of whether the City has a review process with expertise. Lehmann agreed he has heard some of this same feedback in informal conversations with agencies. Fixmer-Oraiz feels that is a surprising reaction given the level of commitment the Commission made to Council on behalf of the agencies this year and may have not been received by Council if by staff. Eastham believes it could have happened in previous years if staff had been more involved in asking about funding and asking for increases.

Eastham stated they also talked about improving the process by doing what United Way does in assigning each committee review member three agencies to visit and become familiar with and then advocate for or against their agencies. This allows the review members to have more knowledge of the agencies and why they need the money. He suggested members of this Commission go ahead and reach out to agency directors to learn more about all the agencies.

Kubly noted that historically Aid to Agencies was allocated by staff and there was just a limited number of agencies that applied, it wasn't open to all different agencies. Eastman said one method is for staff to make a set of recommendations and for the Commission to look at the recommendations and make a

choice about what the staff recommends.

Eastham also was told by one agency director they should drop the minimum allocation requirement because there are situations where they actually need less for an important purpose. Fixmer-Oraiz noted the minimum was set due to staff time. Lehmann added the idea was it takes the same amount of staff time to administer a \$1,000 award as it does a \$15,000 award.

Personally Eastham is looking forward to some significant changes the Commission can agree upon by the end of the summer and feels the City should at least double if not more the allocation they give to Aid to Agencies.

Mark Sertterh (Shelter House) noted he was not one of the people Eastham spoke to but would echo what they told Eastham and wanted to stress it is not that agencies don't think the Commission is doing a great job, it is just hard for an agency because the membership on the Commission changes all the time and therefore can add some subjectivity in the process. Two years ago Shelter House could have gotten a lot of money from HCDC based on the members then and then membership changes and the new group has other funding priorities. Also while there are high, medium and low priorities set by the City, most requests fall into the high category. As such, it is important to talk about the Consolidated Plan which is a good opportunity for the Commission and City to lay out what they want to fund and what should be classified as high, medium and low. If everything is a high priority, it is virtually impossible to read the applications and score them objectively.

Eastham asked if Sertterh and other agencies would take a firm role in working on the Consolidated Plan. Sertterh said he knows his agency will give input and feels others will too. Lehmann agreed knowing there needs to be better communication, cooperation and coming together of the agencies and the City to figure out priorities for the Plan. He also noted based on the conversations the City has had with the consultant so far they are encouraging agency participation. The consultants will come to the next HCDC meeting as well to talk to the Commissioners.

Lehmann noted Eastham also attended the Human Rights Commission meeting to discuss overlapping funds. Eastham attended their work session and one of the issues they are working on is whether or not the social justice grant process should be focusing on new, previously un-city funded organizations. It occurs to Eastham that HCDC is also working on the same thing with the Aid to Agencies funding so he tried to suggest to the staff on the Human Rights Commission to get together with staff on HCDC to make some recommendations on a new organization receiving some social justice funding and then some more permanent Aid to Agencies funding. Because it is two different commissions, perhaps there needs to be some coordination so the agency has an easier time going from one commission to the other. Fixmer-Oraiz asked if that's what came out of the meeting. Eastham indicated it was not and that he wasn't sure what the HRC Commission thinks about that approach.

DISCUSS REQUESTING RENTS FOR RENTAL PERMITS:

Lehmann added this to the agenda to give an update and included in the packet the formal request from the Affordable Housing Coalition for Iowa City to include a field that will include the unit price at the time of permit application or renewal. Also included in the agenda packet was the City Manager's response to the request. First the City had concerns about legal standing to require such data on the application, because there must be a clear connection between the information requested and required to do a rental permit versus what is in the application. Secondly, staff would not have the ability to verify data that is submitted because rents are subject to change and many rental permits are on a two year cycle. Finally it is difficult to account for unique offerings that may influence rental amounts such as utilities, parking, size of rooms, etc. The City Manager noted that as they design and customize new permit software they can look at its functionality and see what types of inputs could be offered. Lehmann added it will be some time before this new permit software is online. Kubly added this request came at a good time as they are working on the software, next week they will be looking at demos from the software company, but they are about 18 months out from full implementation and to start collecting this information.

Eastham asked if the software will not be able to capture the rent amounts could the City do a survey. Lehmann said the City has done informal surveys to inform staff, they do not share these results with the public because it is an informal survey. Eastham feels data on rent prices city-wide would be a great help in deciding where to site rental assisted projects as well as the overall approach. Lehmann recently discovered the Comprehensive Housing Assessment Strategy (CHAS) data shows the amount of units affordable to individuals at different income levels and what family types are at different income levels. This information will be in the Fair Housing study and may be of interest to the Commission. There is also the American Community Survey which has an average over five years, so it is more current but less accurate than a census count.

Eastham asked if the Commission is willing to recommend to the City Manager to see if a survey approach to gather rental amounts could be done. McKinstry asked if that would mean they don't want to pursue having rental amounts collected at the time of rental permits. Kubly noted the software they would collect that data with won't be implemented for another 18 months and due to the rental cycles of one or two years it would be several years before all information was collected. She added it would be voluntary, the City cannot force a landlord to provide accurate information. Eastham noted a survey would have the same issue of accuracy of information, if provided at all. McKinstry is in favor of doing a survey as an interim process until the software can be used to gather this data.

Sara Barron (Affordable Housing Coalition) thanks the Commission for the support of an idea of a survey if the software isn't available. She noted they are exploring a third option to use the Assessor's Office to collect data. The City Attorney has been asked by Council to inform them of their legal opinion about how far the Assessor's Office can go in requiring rental information, rental prices per unit specifically. One of the three methods Assessor's use to determine the value of a property is how much income it generates. Barron noted the Iowa Code may grant Assessors the right to ask questions that will help them fairly determine the value of a property. The Johnson County Assessor's Office cites that Code in the letter they send to landlords and they get a much higher response with that specific information on the rents charged. The Iowa City Assessor's Office as advised by the City Attorney has a slightly different read. Barron believes the City Attorney will provide Council an update on this and the reasoning for limiting the City Assessor's ability to request that information. Before a survey is considered, the Coalition would like to explore the two ideas of collecting the data at rental permitting or from the City Assessor further.

McKinstry stated it makes sense if this data can be collected as part of a general process that has to be done anyway rather than a special survey. He noted this data needs to be collected continuously and consistently to see trends and the best way it through the City. Fixmer-Oraiz agreed, a survey would be just a snapshot of that one point in time. Brouse stated the Assessor data would be particularly helpful noting they already collect lots of data. Lehmann agreed noting it would likely be more accurate than what may be provided on a rental permit.

Eastham asked for the City Manager to give an update on his action plan for this topic within the next meeting or two. The Commission agreed.

DISCUSS MOBILE HOME PARK RENT INCREASES:

Lehmann added this to the agenda as it was brought up at the last meeting and is a topic of interest. The history of this is outside investment firms have bought a couple of mobile home parks in Johnson County and have increased lot rent prices steeply. This impacts quite a few folks and the Affordable Housing Coalition put out some information about Habitat trying to help residents move to other mobile home parks where these predatory practices are not present and there are ongoing discussions about what the City can do. The Affordable Housing Coalition is currently creating a task force to address.

Sara Barron (Affordable Housing Coalition) stated the idea to form a task force to discuss mobile home parks came from Councilors Salih and Cole and the discussion is what they can do to prevent this from happening to other mobile home parks in the future. There can also be discussion on what possible mitigating things can be done for the current parks undergoing these rate hikes. The goal is to find a way to make sure mobile home parks are stable housing for the residents that live there. There are about

3000 households in Johnson County that live in mobile home parks and probably one of the biggest naturally occurring affordable housing options in Johnson County. During the Council work session they discussed the idea of a task force and asked if the Affordable Housing Coalition would be willing to convene the task force and they agreed. There will be two Iowa City Councilors that will serve on the task force and a member of the Johnson County Board of Supervisors, and are also hoping Coralville and North Liberty want representation as well and finally they identified some other stakeholders such as mobile home residents or mobile home park owners. Barron is welcome to suggestions and feedback from the Commission. Once the group is complete they will finalize a schedule to meet and want the end goal to be a set of strategies, big and small goals, short, medium and long-term actions on what the communities can do with the leverage and resources available to stabilize mobile home parks and keep these predatory investors from disrupting housing.

Padron is interested in knowing when the task force is meeting to be able to listen to the conversations.

Lehmann asked if the task force meetings would be open to the public. Barron replied it hasn't been determined yet, they won't have a majority of any of the public bodies present so they won't have to follow the public open meeting rules, but they want to make sure all voices are heard on this topic. She imagines the task force will discuss how to get more public input on this topic for recommendations.

Eastham is interested in this topic and strategies particularly the one Salih and Cole emphasized which is alternative ownership.

Nkumu asked if this is similar to what happened to tenants at Lakeside Apartments (Rose Oak) and if the Coalition will assist residents. Barron said there are some similarities, there are different tenant rights for people who live in multifamily housing versus tenants in mobile homes. There are actually fewer rights for people who live in mobile homes. However the City of Iowa City is better positioned as it has the history and capacity to address large scale displacement because of what happened at Rose Oaks and is probably ahead of the game compared to the other municipalities in Johnson County who haven't looked at displacement on this scale before and need to figure out what resources they have available. With Rose Oaks the Iowa City was able to fund some relocation through Shelter House and other community services and also gave a direct relocation stipend to families who were impacted by the move. Barron also noted the Forest View residents are another example of how potential displacement catalyzed a stronger neighborhood. Eastham added that Golfview and Sunrise Village residents are not literally being forced out of their homes, but they are certainly being priced to a point where it may be hard for some of them remain there. McKinstry agreed but there is speculation that some of the out of state investors that buy mobile home parks raise the rent to make money in short run but to also hold onto properties so they can later sell the land for redevelopment. Eastham said if they want to redevelop they would have to rezone and meet a variety of conditions. McKinstry agreed noting that is why there needs to be in place strategies of inclusive zoning, relocation plans, etc. Brouse noted that most of the mobile home parks outside of the City are actually zoned commercial and may not need to be rezoned for development. McKinstry noted some of this may need to be addressed at the State level with legislature too.

Lehmann will keep the Commission posted on the task force.

STAFF/COMMISSION COMMENT:

Lehmann said they originally had a break with no meeting in June scheduled however since the consultants will be in town in June and will attend this Commission's meeting. The summer break will likely be pushed back to August so we have the July meeting for new commissioners and orientation.

Lehmann gave an update on some CDBG/HOME projects. Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County siding project is now complete, Successful Living purchased its final home, Mayor's Youth purchased its final home and The Housing Fellowships housing rehab from FY17 is now complete.

Lehmann noted the rental permit moratorium that the City has in effect because the rental permit cap that existed for neighborhoods near downtown capped rental permits for single family and duplex rental

permits at 30% and new ones would not be issued above that percentage. The cap did not apply to multifamily. The State overturned the ability of cities to create rental permit caps, the City will have a third reading to pass a rental permit moratorium for new single family and duplex permits for those areas where rental permits are at or above 30%. The moratorium would be in effect for 10 months so staff has time to research and recommend ways to approach the situation.

Lehmann noted they are starting on the form-based code project for the South District. The first hearing of the Forest View rezoning passed, second hearing will be at the next meeting.

With other news, Lehmann announced the Aging in Place forums. The Johnson County Affordable Living Communities look at Aging in Place in Johnson County and will hold monthly forums over the summer and he included a flyer in the Commission packet. The next forum is June 12.

Eastham noted in the current Council work session packet there is a memo from Kubly about the South District home investment program where staff proposed in the FY19 CDBG/HOME funding round buying two duplexes on Taylor and Davis Streets After Council guidance to look for rentals where the tenants were interested in becoming homeowners, staff only found four or five duplex owners willing to sell and none of the current occupants were interested in home ownership. So staff is proposing to modify the program and will present it to Council at the next work session with three different options, the third one is the one Eastham supports which is to discontinue the program. The other two options involve displacing tenants, which he feels the Commission is adamant they don't want tenants displaced under any program. The second option is to increase the price of the units they will buy which would then make it so a low income resident would not be able to afford. Eastham is upset that staff is considering displacing tenants in favor of homeownership in an area where the residents are heavily from underrepresented communities. Kubly noted the City was not able to continue with the program under the current parameters, none of the tenants were interested in homeownership so this would allow the City to look at properties that are currently for sale and they would prioritize properties that are vacant to not displace any tenants. Eastham stated in this area of town the numbers indicate this type of program would disproportionately displace residents and the proposal also doesn't say where the homeowners would come from, if solely within the project area or from anywhere. Kubly said it would be the same parameters from the initial program. Eastham is not in favor of this modification of this program. Kubly noted the properties that are for sale, the tenants will be displaced either way and by the City purchasing the property the tenants will get the relocation benefits. Eastham stated if the property is sold in the private market they may not be displaced.

Lehmann read the recommendations as they are listed in the memo to Council for the work session:

- 1) The City considers duplex properties with a rental permit listed for sale in the larger neighborhood as identified in the equity analysis as seen below. The City would not consider listed properties that have long term tenants (those in the unit for five or more years). If tenants will be impacted, staff would provide financial counseling to either or both tenants interested in purchasing their unit or provide the federally required relocation benefits to ease their transition to a comparable unit.
- 2) The City expands the program to include single-family homes with rental permits that are listed for sale under \$165,000 within the larger neighborhood as identified in the equity analysis. This option will increase the number of homes available, but has the disadvantage that the home's selling price, compared to a duplex unit, will be higher and we may not be able to offer homeownership opportunities to those at much lower incomes. The rehabilitation costs for single family homes will likely be higher as well.
- 3) Discontinue the program and re-allocate the funds to other eligible housing projects. The City would need to conduct a mid-year funding round to solicit applications for eligible housing projects that could proceed quickly.

Lehmann noted the Commission's recommendation to Council when they allocated the funds still stands. When HCDC recommended the funding, it was for the application which stated the City would purchase, rehabilitate, and sell two duplex properties on Taylor Drive or Davis Street as affordable, owner-occupied homes. HCDC did not recommend additional parameters except for an equity analysis. After completing the equity analysis and identifying policies to help prevent displacement, Council asked for the additional

program modifications. Therefore, the program remains the same as recommended by HCDC and it is up to Council to decide what they feel is the best course of action to proceed.

Fixmer-Oraiz asked if the three options in the memo are options or recommendations. Lehmann said staff is looking to Council for guidance, so they are all options for Council. Staff is not looking to purposely displace tenants as is being insinuated. Eastham noted the memo states that staff recommends Option 1. Lehmann agreed.

Fixmer-Oraiz feels at this point it is not an agenda item for HCDC so they will have to revisit another time and see what guidance Council gives.

Brouse noted he is moving away from Iowa City so this will be his last HCDC meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Fixmer-Oraiz moved to adjourn. Padron seconded. A vote was taken and passed 7-0.

**Housing and Community
 Development Commission
 Attendance Record**

Name	Terms Exp.	7/10	9/20	10/11	11/15	12/20	1/17	2/21	3/14	4/18	4/24	5/16
Alter, Megan	6/30/21	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	X	O/E
Brouse, Mitch	6/30/21	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	X	X	X
Eastham, Charlie	6/30/20	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fixmer-Oraiz, Vanessa	6/30/20	X	O/E	X	X	X	O/E	X	X	O/E	X	X
Harms, Christine	6/30/19	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lamkins, Bob	6/30/19	O/E	O/E	X	O/E	O/E	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
McKinstry, John	6/30/20	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	X	X
Nkumu, Peter	6/30/22	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	X	X	X
Padron, Maria	6/30/20	X	X	O/E	O/E	X	X	X	X	O/E	X	X
Vaughan, Paula	6/30/19	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O/E

- Resigned from Commission

Key:

X = Present
 O = Absent
 O/E = Absent/Excused
 --- = Vacant

CITY OF IOWA CITY

Neighborhood Services



City Steps 2025 Consolidated Plan & Annual Action Plan

For more information contact :
Kirk Lehmann
Community Development Planner
410 E Washington Street
Iowa City, IA 52240
PH: 319-356-5230
kirk-lehmann@iowa-city.org

PUBLIC MEETINGS

- ▶ Tuesday, June 18 | 6 pm
Broadway Neighborhood Center, 2105 Broadway Street
- ▶ Wednesday, June 19 | 1:30 pm
Emma Harvat Hall, 410 E Washington Street
- ▶ Wednesday, June 19 | 6 pm
Pheasant Ridge Neighborhood Center, 2651 Roberts Road

Beginning June 17, take our online survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CitySteps2025>



CITY OF IOWA CITY
UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE

DRAFT

FAIR HOUSING CHOICE STUDY

2019 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice
Full Draft Available at www.icgov.org/actionplan



EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

Neighborhood & Development Services

410 E. Washington Street, Iowa City, IA 52240

Adopted XXXX XX, 2019

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Executive Summary

The principles embodied in “fair housing” are fundamental to healthy communities. Codified in the Fair Housing Act, they ensure that persons are not denied equal opportunities to housing because of any protected characteristic, and in the process, address historic patterns of segregation and the denial of access to opportunity. The City of Iowa City strives to affirmatively further fair housing by regularly identifying fair housing issues, developing concrete plans, and implementing policies to create positive change.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affirmatively furthering fair housing as taking meaningful actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation, promoting fair housing choice, and fostering inclusive communities free from discrimination. Specifically, this includes actions that together address disparities in housing need and access to opportunity, replace segregated living patterns with integrated and balanced living patterns, transform racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and maintain compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws. The City’s duty to affirmatively further fair housing extends beyond federal programs, like the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Programs, to all activities and programs relating to housing and urban development.

Federally, impediments to fair housing choice are any actions, omissions, or decisions taken because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin that restrict housing choices or the availability of housing choices, in the public and private sectors. Iowa City also extends protections to include age, creed, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation, presence or absence of dependents or public assistance source of income, including rental subsidies. Impediments may include:

- Violations and potential violations of the Fair Housing Act.
- Actions counterproductive to fair housing choice such as NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitudes/community resistance to: people of color, persons with disabilities, and/ or low-income persons moving into White and/or moderate- to high-income areas; or to the siting of housing facilities for people with disabilities in residential neighborhoods due to its future occupants.
- Actions or omissions that in effect restrict housing opportunities for a protected class.

Impediments also include policies, practices, or procedures that are neutral on their face, but indirectly or unintentionally limit housing choices for protected classes.

Fair housing planning is the first step in the City’s ongoing process to affirmatively further fair housing. As directed by HUD, the City regularly conducts Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice, i.e. this Fair Housing Choice Study, to assess issues. After developing its plan, the City incorporates and implements it through subsequent efforts that connect housing and community development policy and investment with meaningful actions. The City’s approach to fair housing planning utilizes data to assess issues and contributing factors and sets priorities and goals to overcome them, ultimately leading to meaningful action. Public input is essential to the City’s process to craft goals, strategies, and actions. This is because fair housing planning must tackle tough issues to be effective, so the whole community must have an opportunity to participate in the discussion and make decisions.

Methodology

The scope of this fair housing study is broad and covers a wide array of topics affecting housing choice. This includes a comprehensive review of impediments to fair housing choice encompassing private and public sector housing within the City, not just housing assisted by Federal, State, or local government programs. Specifically, the Study:

- Evaluates the availability of affordable, accessible housing in a range of unit sizes;
- Reviews the City's laws, regulations, and administrative policies, procedures, and practices;
- Analyzes public and private factors that affect fair housing choice for all protected classes; and Assesses how the City's practices affect the location, availability, and accessibility of housing.

As such, this document serves as the substantive, logical basis for fair housing planning in the City. It also provides essential and detailed information to policy makers, administrative staff, housing providers, lenders, and fair housing advocates and helps build public support for fair housing efforts both within the City's boundaries and beyond.

Overview

Overall, the City utilized a comprehensive approach to complete the analysis, including both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The following are the primary sources used for analysis:

- The most recently available data regarding population, households, housing, income, and employment at the census tract, municipal, and larger levels of analysis (including Census, American Community Survey (ACS), Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS);
- Financial lending institution data from the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) database;
- Local knowledge and local data including parcel, zoning, human rights, housing inspection, real estate and administrative information;
- Public and administrative policies affecting the siting and development of housing and community development efforts (including private, local, state, and federal sources)
- Feedback from agencies that provide housing and related services to members of the protected classes;
- Input from other targeted stakeholders and civic leaders, including the University of Iowa; and Information from the general public.

Quantitative data helped identify and analyze trends, including those related to demographic, income, employment, and housing. Special attention was given to data associated with protected classes within the City. Quantitative information from HMDA and public agencies, including the City, provided additional information to help assess existing barriers to fair housing choice.

Qualitative data supplemented quantitative data by identifying barriers to fair housing choice in which data are not collected and by identifying causes and meaning. Meetings, interviews, surveys and discussions with the general public, targeted stakeholders, civic leaders, and others were especially important. In addition, first-hand accounts helped illustrate how barriers affect lives.

Funding

This plan was funded by Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) administrative and planning dollars. Assistance in reviewing the document was provided by the City's volunteer's commissions and other agencies focusing on fair housing issues. Numerous other individuals also gave their time through meetings, interviews, surveys, and open-ended discussions. Maximizing available resources helped obtain a wide range of information on fair housing problems to develop a realistic, comprehensive set of actions.

Project Team

City of Iowa City staff from the Neighborhood and Development Services Department (NDS) and the Office of Equity and Human Rights (EHR) conducted this fair housing study to identify and analyze impediments to fair housing choice.

NDS works to find solutions that promote healthy neighborhoods and a vibrant business community. This includes assistance from the following divisions:

- **Neighborhood Services** administers various housing and community development services, including the Community Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) programs, rehabilitation programs, housing inspection services, neighborhood association outreach services, and Iowa City's public art program.
- **Iowa City Housing Authority (ICHA)**, part of Neighborhood Services, assists more than 1,200 low-income families to acquire and maintain affordable housing through rental and homeownership programs including the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV), Veterans' Supportive Housing (VASH), and Public Housing Programs.
- **Development Services** provides the public planning and building inspection services. This includes coordinating long-range planning efforts, reviewing development proposals, conducting related building inspection services, and coordinating historic preservation efforts.
- **Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC)** provides transportation planning services and assists with transportation-related questions and needs as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Iowa City Urbanized Area.

EHR oversees the Iowa City Human Rights Ordinance, fields discrimination complaints, and works closely with the Human Rights Commission. In addition, EHR is responsible for the following tasks related to human rights and equity:

- Receive, investigate and make decisions on complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, enforce anti-discrimination laws, provide trainings and materials to educate the community on civil and human rights, and collaborate with community groups in the planning and coordinating of events.
- Coordinate with City departments to assist in efforts to eliminate racial inequities in City programs and services with the end purpose of improving outcomes for all, report on racial equity and social justice, and manage the social justice and racial equity grant.

Their considerable role in fair housing is covered in later sections in greater detail.

Extensive advice was also sought from members of NDS and EHR. The executive committee most involved in the creation of the study included:

- Tracy Hightshoe, Department of Neighborhood and Development Services Director
- Stefanie Bowers, Human Rights Coordinator & Equity Director
- Erika Kubly, Neighborhood Services Coordinator
- Steven Rackis, Iowa City Housing Authority Administrator
- Kristin Watson, Equity and Human Rights Investigator
- Kirk Lehmann, Community Development Planner

Boards and Commissions also played an important role. The Housing and Community Development and Human Rights Commissions (HCDC and HRC respectively) helped guide the document and provided valuable feedback.

Public Participation

Fair housing planning affects the whole community, so all people in the community must have the opportunity to be at the table and participate in making those decisions. The City also recognizes that those most familiar with fair housing issues are the people who have experienced these issues.

For this reason, the City made community participation an important part of the planning process to help ensure the integrity and success of the City's efforts to affirmatively further fair housing. In addition, the City's public participation process helped create effective, ongoing relationships with the community that provided for a clear and continuous exchange of concerns, ideas, analysis, and evaluation of results.

In total, staff have had more than 330 contacts with the public through meetings, interviews, and surveys. This section details that process and summarizes feedback from those events.

Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews:

Targeted feedback from stakeholder and focus group interviews provided detailed knowledge about specific fair housing issues within the community and helped identify possible solutions to overcome those issues. Feedback included representatives of agencies and organizations involved in the provision of public services and amenities, private and public sector housing, and human rights in Iowa City. In total, some 83 individuals attended 6 different focus groups. These included:

Johnson County Local Homeless Coordinating Board (LHCB). On September 12, 2018, staff met with 22 members of the LHCB, a collaboration of 20 different local nonprofits, government agencies, and communities of faith with an interest in ending homelessness and improving the lives of those experiencing homelessness. Often cited challenges for renters included rental deposits and application fees; landlord requirements for credit, references, criminal histories, online applications, or bank withdrawals for rent; and discrimination based on appearance, especially for those experiencing homelessness. They also noted a need for the City to better allocate funds in alignment with the City Council's adopted Strategic Plan and CITY STEPS goals, especially where citizen commissions can affect decision-making. They noted more local dollars should be invested towards the Strategic Plan's priorities, the City needs to plan more regionally and more long term, and that renters should have additional protections from retaliation when reporting landlords and property managers.

Iowa City Area Association of REALTORS® (ICAAR). On October 3, 2018, staff met with five participants from ICAAR's fair housing committee which included a lender representative. Attendees noted several main concerns regarding barriers to fair housing in Iowa City, such as how the clustering of affordable housing in certain areas has created a stigma which may disadvantage those who live there, and how informal steering of new residents by coworkers/residents occurs. Attendees encouraged City staff to continue investing in disadvantaged parts of the city to overcome concentrations of poverty and agreed that education is one of the most useful ways of working towards improving fair housing in Iowa City. Education on home maintenance as a renter or homeowner was mentioned specifically, which could be especially beneficial for foreign and refugee families in Iowa City who are not as familiar with the area.

University of Iowa (UI). On October 18, 2018, staff met with eight participants from UI to discuss concerns of students, faculty, and staff. Attendees noted a pattern of informal steering by realtors, staff, and department heads for people, especially families, recruited to Iowa City. This affects recruitment and retention of diverse students and staff. Concerns for those with limited physical mobility was also discussed as it can be a challenge to find attractive, available, and appropriate housing with adequate transportation to work. The lack of available public transit in more affordable/accessible areas is a barrier too, as is housing affordability for families who want to live in certain areas or near jobs downtown. Low wages exacerbate the issue. Finally, landlords pressure

tenants to sign leases far in advance and they often don't maintain their units, which disadvantages first-generation students or those who don't have funds for large deposits. Due to the cost of housing in Iowa City, many newcomers live outside Iowa City and commute in, resulting in transportation costs that are a financial burden. To address issues, attendees suggested increasing the availability and reliability of public transportation, providing more education on fair housing, providing tenant and owner education on leasing and renting, investing in neighborhood associations, and enforcing property standards in all rental properties.

Greater Iowa City Apartment Association (GICAA). On October 23, 2018, staff met with 23 participants from the GICAA. Attendees provided feedback on public and private sector barriers to fair housing in Iowa City. Barriers mentioned include a lack of inter-jurisdictional collaboration, increasing costs and inspections for rental permit fees and requirements, the impacts of school districts and elementary attendance areas on the market, a lack of education on fair housing and unit maintenance for small owners and tenants, lack of deposits, and a lack of ADA accessible units and affordable units for families in the expensive market. To overcome these barriers, GICAA suggested collaborating more with landlords, improving fair housing education, working better across jurisdictions and programs, streamlining public processes, and using public funding for programs to effectively accomplish goals.

Greater Iowa City Home Builders Association. On October 24, 2018, staff met with nine participants from the Greater Iowa City Homebuilders Association. Input included that there are too many regulations which add cost and complexity such as architectural design review and upfront development investments required at early stages of the zoning/development process, Iowa City is an expensive market to build in, decision-makers need to better understand the cost and timing of development, old housing stock makes accessibility challenging, many oppose new, often denser, development in Iowa City, and there is a general lack of education regarding maintaining properties for both tenants and homeowners. To overcome these barriers, builders suggest streamlining the approval, permitting, and review process, allowing greater development by-right, improving collaboration with developers and the school district, and better clarifying new housing code and affordable housing rules.

Affordable Housing Coalition (AHC) - On October 26, 2018, staff met with 16 members of the AHC, a grassroots group striving to increase access to affordable housing for households with lower incomes in Johnson County. Attendees found current zoning codes and lending policies to be barriers. They cited income requirements for loans, heavy use of credit ratings, the difficulty of working across jurisdictions, high fees for builders, and policies restricting housing density as barriers to fair housing. Attendees noted that both informal and formal steering are issues, specifically away from South Iowa City. Attendees also noted bias against Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) tenants in Iowa City, despite them being a protected class. They noted that those who use vouchers are still often turned away by landlords. They also discussed the need for affordable housing for students. Many federal programs have eligibility restrictions on full time students, which is exacerbated by a lack of state funding for higher education, the recruitment of international students, and the construction of new dorms which has driven up prices. The Coalition suggested making zoning/building codes less restrictive towards density, increasing affordable housing incentives and partnerships with developers, securing designated funding sources for affordable housing; raising the minimum wage; and actively testing for housing discrimination.

Following the drafting of the study, targeted groups were invited to comment on the plan, including:

- **Advocacy Groups** that have among their concerns the needs of particular segments of the population, such as people with disabilities; families with children; immigrants and homeless persons; and specific racial or ethnic groups;
- **Housing Providers**, in particular those who are aware of, and can speak to, the problems of providing moderate- and low-cost housing in the community; and landlords and owners;

- **Educational Institutions**, including the administrators and teachers/professors who can assist in conducting studies and developing formal and informal educational activities for delivery;
- **Financial Institutions** that can provide loans and other financial support to improve homes or areas of the community where living conditions have deteriorated;
- **Fair Housing Organizations** including commissions and voluntary, nonprofit organizations focusing on fair housing problems;
- **Other Governments** in the metropolitan area or region; and
- **Other Organizations** and individuals such as neighborhood organizations that provided ideas, information, or support in identifying impediments to fair housing choice at the neighborhood level and in developing and implementing actions to address these problems

Fair Housing Survey

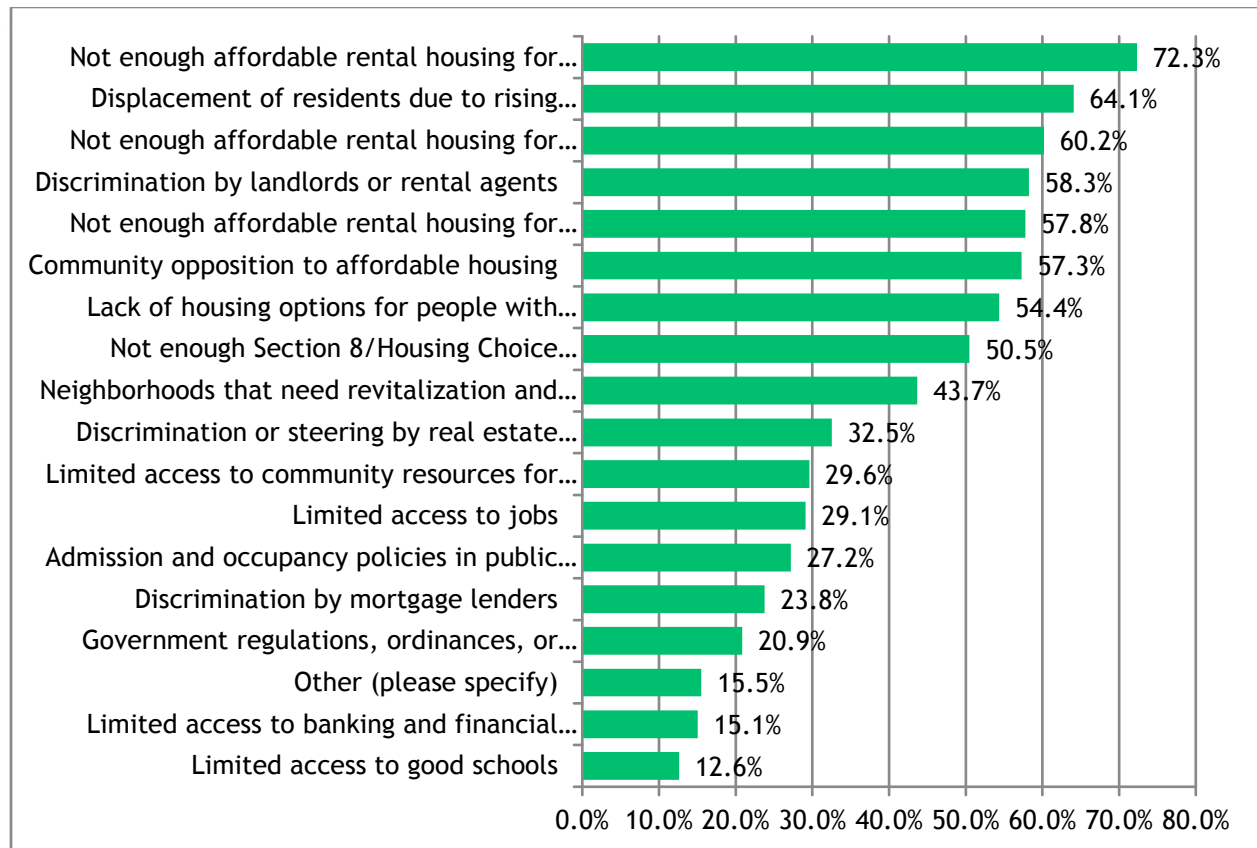
To gain broad public feedback from renters, owners, and buyers, the Office of Equity and Human Rights conducted a Fair Housing Survey more than 3 months at the end of 2018. Copies were available online or in hard copy (either mailed in self-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes or at the public library) depending on preference. The survey was available in English, Spanish, Chinese, and African French. A copy of the survey is available in the appendix.

The survey was advertised through multiple avenues including the City's primary channels, affordable housing service providers, advocate groups, public service providers, the Housing Authority, and other social and community groups. The survey remained open for approximately 4 months. In total, 234 individuals responded. Notable findings included:

- **Lack of understanding/reporting.** Only 43% of respondents felt they understood their fair housing rights and 37% said they knew where to file a housing discrimination complaint. This is problematic because 26% felt they believed they experienced discrimination since living in the area, but of those only 3% filed a complaint. Most respondents (69%) said they didn't know what good filing a complaint would do, 31% stated they didn't know it was a violation of the law, 24% didn't know where to file, and 18% were afraid of retaliation.
- **Discrimination Occurs.** Out of 63 respondents who experienced discrimination, 47 stated it was by a property manager or landlord. The most commonly cited protected characteristic for discrimination was public assistance as a source of income (46%), followed by age (28%), disability (23%), race (20%), and familial status (18%).
- **Barriers to Fair Housing Choice.** Barriers identified by respondents are identified on the following page. Lack of affordable housing was the most cited barrier, primarily for individuals, though also for large families, small families, and persons with disabilities. More than half also noted that displacement due to rising housing costs, discrimination, community opposition to affordable housing, and too few housing choice vouchers were barriers to fair housing choice.
- **Public Barriers.** Respondents were also asked to specifically identify public barriers to fair housing choice (see the next page). No response got more than half, but city funding practices was most cited, followed by zoning then housing codes.

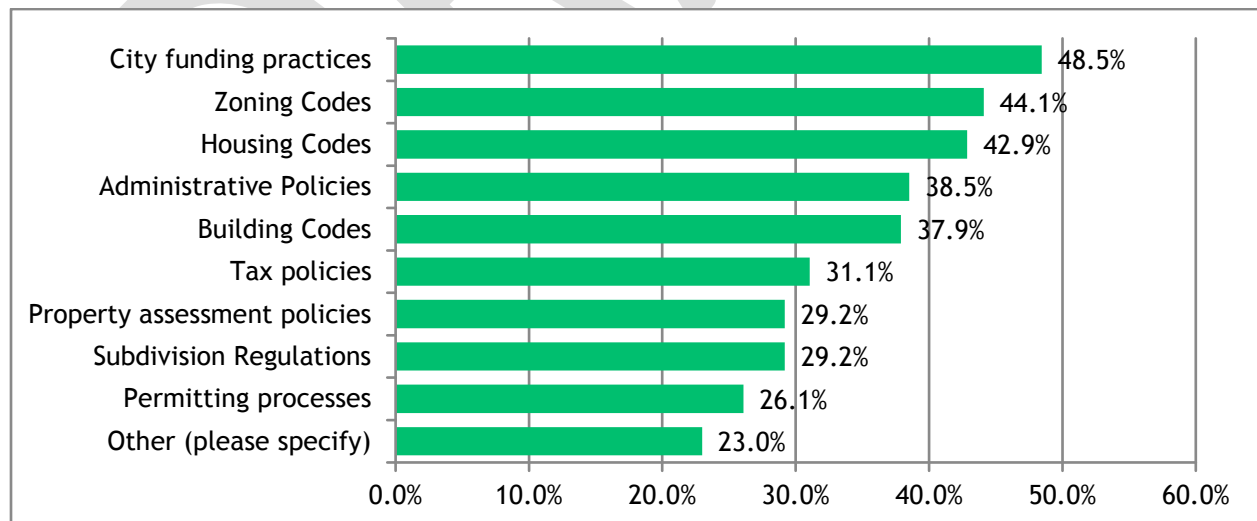
Generally, the survey had good representation of protected classes, though it skewed towards higher incomes. Other results from the survey are included in relevant sections of this document. Full responses to the survey and specific demographic breakdowns can be found in the appendix.

FIGURE 1: DO YOU THINK THE FOLLOWING ARE BARRIERS TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE IN IOWA CITY?



Source: 2018 Fair Housing Survey, 206 answered

FIGURE 2: WHAT CITY POLICIES OR PRACTICES MAY ACT AS A BARRIER TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE?



Source: 2018 Fair Housing Survey, 161 answered

Public Events and Adoption

Communication with the public, including representatives such as City Council and the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC), was essential in the creation of the plan. The City went beyond the requirements in its citizen participation plan, including its consultation procedures. Additionally, the City encouraged the participation of diverse groups and populations and took steps to ensure that communications and activities were accessible to persons with disabilities. This feedback was especially instrumental in the initial identification of impediments to fair housing choice, determining possible solutions to those impediments, and improving the quality of the plan.

The following briefly summarizes those public events which includes events in the adoption process.

Public Kick-Off Event. On September 27, 2018, 12 participants met to discuss private- and public-sector barriers to fair housing in Iowa City, their top priorities, and their ideas of how to address fair housing issues. Attendees highlighted the following concerns in their discussions:

- The high cost of living and housing in Johnson County, especially downtown Iowa City, make it challenging for people to afford housing.
- There is a lack of fair, adequate, and accessible housing for people with disabilities. This is particularly a problem in older homes, which are often not accessible.
- There is a lack of available housing in general, due in part to the high occupancy rate of students, especially downtown, and the concentration of rental housing. Additionally, the competition for these units can lead to discrimination.
- There is especially a lack of housing that is affordable for Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) holders as well as discrimination by some landlords against those who hold vouchers. This is attributed in part to the lack of information readily available for landlords and the public about housing vouchers.
- Frequent informal steering contributes to a lack of diversity in race, age, and income in many neighborhoods. However, the lack of data on rental rates and patterns and general lack of resources for investigating and describing disparate impacts exacerbates these issues.
- Urban sprawl leads to poor walkability and the general lack of public transportation, in addition to limited bike infrastructure, makes transportation within Johnson County difficult.
- Overly restrictive zoning codes, specifically for single family homes/single-use zoning, and a low percentage of affordable housing in the overall housing stock prevents diverse housing types/density which act as barriers to fair housing choice.
- There is lack of a sustainable funding streams for the City to use towards incentives for development and/or to supplement income.

Some potential solutions proposed by attendees are:

- Providing educational resources for builders and contractors about Aging in Place.
- Provide grants and/or programs for those with disabilities to remodel, build, and/or rent homes/apartments that are mindful of Aging in Place and Universal Design.
- Improve public transit, walkability, and bike routes.
- Reform the zoning code to encourage inclusionary zoning, the creation of balanced neighborhood, and to make it easier to densify.
- Support a higher minimum wage.
- Continue to support private/public partnerships to further fair and affordable housing.
- Increase the quantity and quality of both public and private housing.
- More strongly enforce rental codes.

Other meetings that led to the adoption of the Fair Housing Choice Study for Iowa City included:

- **HCDC Public Meeting** - March 14, 2019, discussed initial findings
- **Public Comment Period** - June 15, 2019 through July 16, 2019, open draft for public comment
- **HCDC Public Meeting and Adoption** - June 20, 2019, discussed draft plan and allowed opportunity for comment
- **City Council Public Meeting and Adoption** - July 16, 2019

Overall, the following common themes continued to recur throughout the public input process.

- **Affordability:** Housing in Iowa City is expensive, but incomes are not correspondingly high. In addition, housing is not diverse enough within neighborhoods where there are often large areas homogenous areas of single family or other types of homes. This does not allow an opportunity for many individuals, especially those with particular needs, to choose between neighborhoods. Furthermore, both affordable market rate and affordable assisted housing opportunities are limited, which can especially impact those in protected classes.
- **Housing Stock:** Rentals in disrepair and poor quality and housing accessibility are challenges in older areas of town. The City should strive to develop and encourage a diversity of housing opportunities throughout Iowa City. This would better allow individuals with special needs or preferences to find housing that is suited for them in a variety of areas.
- **Public Policy:** Development codes limit flexibility for providing a variety of housing choices throughout neighborhoods, and they increase costs and burden through processes such as design review. The City should strive to ensure policies and funding allocation processes align with the goals in adopted plans, including the priorities listed in City Steps. The City should also seek to streamline processes without losing their integrity and intent. This includes a need to continue to enforce the maintenance of rental housing and to ensure compliance with fair housing law.
- **Coordination:** A more regional and collaborative approach is needed for the area, including encouraging more cooperation and coordination between jurisdictions and with other actors such as builders, landlords, the UI, and school districts. This would help overcome challenges related to complicated and changing rules and would assist the City and region in implementing a more strategic, long-term approach to addressing fair housing and affordable housing issues.
- **Education:** Tenants, owners, and professionals involved in the housing market all require more education to understand their fair housing rights and responsibilities. As such, the City should prioritize educating the general public on their rights, while also sharing best practices with institutional actors such as landlords to ensure those rights are respected. Tenants and homebuyers should also receive objective information on neighborhoods, including schools and amenities, to allow them to make their own decisions which may help counteract informal steering and reduce NIMBY attitudes.

Executive Summary

Demographic Profile

Iowa City has experienced strong population growth for decades, growing at a rate well above that of Iowa, though lower than the County. In addition to an increasing population, Iowa City is one of the densest urban areas in Iowa. The five Pentacrest tracts are especially dense.

As would be expected due to the university, the city's population is younger with an especially large number of residents aged 18 through 29. Most households are not families, either living alone or with roommates, and a relatively large number live in group quarters such as dorms. Conversely, the City has comparatively fewer families, children, and adults over the age of 35. Historically, the proportion of family households has declined, while single-headed families and nonfamily households have increased. The Pentacrest tracts contain the most nonfamily households and far fewer children and families.

Iowa City is more diverse than Iowa, and it has become more diverse over time. Iowa City contains a larger number of Asians, Black/African Americans, and Hispanic/Latinos. Households of color have generally grown at a faster pace than non-Hispanic white households, with the Hispanic population growing especially quickly. Nonwhite/white segregation is low, but it has been increasing. However, black/white segregation is considered "moderate," the group to reach that threshold. The region tends to be more segregated than the City. Three tracts are considered areas of racial/ethnic concentration:

- **Tract 4:** Concentration of Asian/Pacific Islanders households
- **Tract 18.02:** Concentration of Black/African American households
- **Tract 23:** Concentration of Asian/Pacific Islander households

Areas that have seen the greatest increase in diversity includes tracts 18.02, 21, 23, and 5.

Much of the City's diversity is driven by foreign populations. The foreign born population has recently increased, as has the proportion of naturalized foreign born residents. This makes sense given the university's foreign exchange programs and job opportunities. The five largest foreign born populations comprise nearly half of total foreign born residents, including populations from China, Mexico, Korea, India, and Sudan. Most foreign born populations speak a language other than English at home, and nearly half speak English less than "very well." The highest rates of foreign born population live in on the west and south sides, either because of a desire to co-locate near existing social networks of immigrants or because they have been unable to find housing in other areas of the community.

Iowa City's population has a lower proportion of individuals with disabilities relative to the state, though it has increased over time. Some of this is likely due to the general aging of the population. The presence of disabilities varies by age, with the likelihood of disability increasing throughout life with a sharp increase after 75 years. In all age groups except those 75 years and older, Iowa City has a smaller proportion of persons with disabilities compare to Iowa, likely due to Iowa City's strong health care industry which attracts those with health needs. The most common disabilities are cognitive, independent living, and ambulatory. Native Americans and non-Hispanic whites are most likely to be disabled. Generally, persons with disabilities are well-integrated in the community.

Economic Profile

Iowa City's economy is diversified, robust, and vibrant. Employment is primarily tied to providing services rather than goods. The region's top 20 employers include institutions of higher education, public administration, health services, financial services, and manufacturing. The University of Iowa (UI) and the UI Hospitals and Clinics account for over 27,000 jobs, more than the remaining top employers combined. Education and medical services are especially important. Most recent job growth came from the private sector, though the public sector increased as a proportion of total jobs. This included large job growth in Healthcare/Social Assistance, in addition to Educational Services, Accommodations/Food Services and Professional/Scientific/Technical Services. Industries with job losses included Information, Administrative/Support/Waste, Transportation/Warehousing, and Manufacturing. Overall, these losses were offset by gains in other industries. 10-year projections suggest that employment will increase most in the higher-skill, higher-wage sectors, including those with an already strong presence in Iowa City.

Unemployment peaked at the end of the Great Recession and has fallen almost every year since. The City has consistently lower unemployment rates than the State, even as the labor force has expanded to accommodate the growing economy. Male unemployment is marginally higher than for females, and Asian/ Pacific Islanders, Other Races, and multi-racial workers tend to have lower unemployment rates, as do white workers. Blacks and Hispanics tend to have higher unemployment rates. Persons with disabilities had the highest rate of unemployment in Iowa City.

Non-Hispanic White householders had a median household income (MHI) of \$50,424, while Hispanic householders also had an MHI of \$45,285. Both increased since 2010. The growth in both groups suggests that income growth for non-Hispanic households of other races was weaker overall, though that varies between groups. For racial groups of all ethnicities, householders of another race had an MHI of \$45,933, followed by black householders, Asian householders, and then householders of two or more racial groups. Since 2010, black householders had the largest increase followed by householders of two or more races, and householders of another race. Asian householders were the only group that had a decrease in MHI. The Pentacrest tracts have some of the lowest incomes. Generally, Iowa City has a higher cost of living than Iowa, and it is slightly higher than the national cost of living as well.

More than half of Iowa City residents are Low- and Moderate Income (LMI), which has increased from 2010. The Pentacrest tracts are all primarily LMI except for Manville Heights. This suggests many LMI households in Iowa City are in fact students. Other areas considered LMI include: Northside/ Mayflower/ Shimek; Pheasant Ridge; Melrose/ Emerald; College Green; Court Hill/ Lucas; Mark Twain and Riverfront Crossings East; The South District; and around Cole's Mobile Home Park.

Iowa City has more than double the proportion of its population living in poverty compared to the state. However, looking at poverty rates for those not of typical college age (18 to 24 years) reveals an age-adjusted poverty rate that remains higher than the county and state, but within one percentage point. Several tracts in Iowa City have age-adjusted poverty rates greater than the City's rate, including three Pentacrest tracts, and areas to the south and west. With regards to race, black populations have the highest poverty rates in Iowa City, followed by Asian/Pacific Islanders, those of another race, and Hispanics. The highest percentage of nonwhite and Hispanic populations in poverty is primarily in the Pentacrest tracts. Overall, 38% of nonwhite and Hispanic populations in Iowa City lived in poverty compared with 25% of the non-Hispanic white population.

Housing Profile

Iowa City's existing housing stock is shaped by a high demand for housing, especially as it relates to rental units near downtown. Most units in Iowa City are renter-occupied, primarily in the Pentacrest tracts. Meanwhile, the homeownership rate in Iowa City 48%, an increase from 2000, but a decrease from 2010. This rate is lower than the State but is typical for college towns with large student renter populations. As a result, Iowa City has a higher percentage of multi-family housing units, many of which are near the University to accommodate students. The overall vacancy rate was 6.2%, which includes units not for rent or sale. When accounting for available units only residential vacancy rates are significantly lower with a homeowner vacancy rate of 1.4% and a rental vacancy rate of 2.7%.

Iowa City has experienced lots of new development following the Great Recession due to pent up demand for units from slowed construction but a growing economy. Generally, single family and duplex development has remained stable with recent increases being caused by an increase in multi-family projects, often in mixed use buildings. 2016 saw an especially large number of new units, partially due to upzoning with the Riverfront Crossings Form Based Code.

The median value of owner-occupied housing was \$202,200 in 2017, higher than the State's median value. House values steadily increased since 2010 at a rate slightly higher than the increase in median household income. Median housing values ranged from \$128,700 to the South to \$495,800 downtown. Notably, the Pentacrest tracts had some of the largest percent increases in value. Most homeowner households are non-Hispanic white. Homeowners of color increased from 2010 but are still far below their city-wide proportion. Nonwhite and Hispanic populations have homeownership rates between 25-45%, but black and other race households have homeownership rates below 15%. Five tracts had Hispanic or nonwhite owner populations that were larger than the City's overall rate, primarily on the west and south sides, in addition to downtown.

Rents increased significantly since 2010, and at a faster pace than house values. In 2017, median gross rent was \$924 including utility costs, much higher than for the State. Gross rents varied greatly across the City, ranging from \$735 in southwest Iowa City to \$1,347. Generally, areas outside of the Pentacrest tracts saw the highest percent increases in gross rent since 2010. A smaller proportion of renter households are non-Hispanic white households. Households of color occupy the rest, though they have decreased since 2010. Concentrations of black renters existed in south and east Iowa City, while concentrations of Asian/ Pacific Islander renters existed to the west. Overall, five tracts had Hispanic or nonwhite renter populations larger than the City's overall rate, located in west and south Iowa City.

Physically substandard units are a small and decreasing problem. However, high rates of housing cost burden indicate issues of affordability, especially in high-demand areas. Other non-Hispanic households are most likely to be severely cost burdened, as are non-Hispanic white households. Family households are least likely to be severely housing cost burdened, and nonfamily households are more likely to be severely housing cost burdened. In addition, areas with the greatest housing burden are downtown, followed by adjacent areas to the south and the far west side. Areas to the east have the lowest levels of housing problems. This points to students being among the most impacted by the housing issues. Non-Hispanic Native American, other, and black households are most likely to experience housing problems. Similarly, nonfamily households are also more likely to experience housing problems. Households of color are more likely to experience severe housing problems.

Summary

Many characteristics associated with lower income households (such as high poverty, high rates of LMI persons, lower median housing values, lower rents, overcrowded rental units and cost-burdened renter households) are found in the Pentacrest tracts. These conditions are typical in areas surrounding a large university that have a substantial transient student renter population.

When these demographic characteristics are found outside of the Pentacrest tracts, they may indicate potential impediments to fair housing choice if they occur in areas of racial or ethnic concentration. Three tracts, two to the west and one to the south, met the definition of areas of racial/ethnic concentrations. Two of those tracts also had higher rates of families with children, foreign born residents, persons with disabilities, renters of color, and overcrowded rental units. The one to the south also exhibited more LMI persons, female-headed households, overcrowded owner units, and cost-burdened owners. Meanwhile, the other tract stands out as a Pentacrest Tract, only exhibiting higher rates of poverty, older housing units, and cost-burdened owners. Overall, this suggests that the tract in the south district greatest reflects possible barriers to fair housing choice.

Two other tracts east of the river and south of the railroad also had some characteristics present that may indicate potential impediments to fair housing choice. Particularly, the higher rates of families with children, female-headed households, and persons with disabilities are coupled with higher rates LMI persons and overcrowding which may be a result of barriers to fair housing choice.

Fair Housing

Overall, Iowa City has strong fair housing protections in place for residents of Iowa City. Iowa City defines protected classes expansively for housing and has efficient enforcement mechanisms through the Human Rights Commission and Office of Equity and Human Rights. There is also a continuous outreach and education efforts that occurs in the City, though efforts could always be made to improve.

Overall complaints are down from FY12. Housing complaints average approximately 11-12 per year since FY14 with race, disability, and sex being the most cited basis for discrimination. However, about one third of complaints that come into the City are actually outside of Iowa City's jurisdiction. Another third reach administrative closure or are withdrawn (typically due to agreement or settlement), while the remaining require further investigation. State and Federal bodies, including the Iowa Civil Rights Commission and HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity have limited data available, but they receive another 13 to 26 housing complaints per year in Johnson County. Disability is the most cited basis of discrimination for both bodies.

Since past plan, the City has attempted to address each of the five findings as laid out in the Fair Housing Profile Chapter. More work may be needed regarding some of these previously identified impediments as discussed in the conclusions and recommendations.

Unfortunately, a lack of filed complaints does not necessarily indicate a lack of a problem. Some persons may not file complaints because they are not aware of how or where to file a complaint. Discriminatory practices can also be subtle and may not be detected by someone who does not have the benefit of comparing his treatment with that of another home seeker. Other times, persons may be aware that they are being discriminated against, but they may not be aware that the discrimination is against the law and that there are legal remedies to address the discrimination. Finally, households may be more interested in achieving their first priority of finding decent housing and may prefer to avoid going through the process of filing a complaint and following through with it. As such, additional information was gleaned from the City's 2018 Fair Housing Survey, conducted as part of this study.

A total of 234 respondents completed the survey to help evaluate fair housing choice in Iowa City by answering questions about their experiences in the housing market. Just over one quarter said they experienced housing discrimination since living in the area. Of those who felt discriminated against, only 3% reported the discrimination. The most common reasons for not reporting were that "I didn't know what good it would do," followed by "I didn't know it was a violation of the law", "I didn't know where to file", and "I was afraid of retaliation". These results mirror past surveys on these topics in that the primary reasons for not filing were helplessness, fear, and a lack of knowledge about how to file a complaint.

These results speak to a need for improving outreach and education levels around the City, including further developing its program to ensure broad knowledge of legal protections for all residents. Education should also address fears of retaliation if people come forward with concerns and showcase how the process has concrete outcomes. The City should also review its Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan to ensure these populations have equal access to information regarding fair housing.

Impediments and Strategies

Based on this study, three primary barriers to fair housing choice were identified, including a lack of adequate housing choice throughout Iowa City, disparate access to opportunity between neighborhoods, and a lack of awareness about civil and fair housing rights. In addition, a number of smaller barriers were also identified through this study. All of these, in addition to recommended strategies to address these barriers to fair housing choice, are laid out as follows (more information about each strategy can be found at Chapter 5).

1: Improving Housing Choice

One of the primary barriers identified in this Fair Housing Choice Study is the lack of adequate housing choices throughout neighborhoods in Iowa City. This includes a lack of availability in addition to diversity in price points, housing types, and locations that would facilitate equal access to housing across the City. Ensuring a diversity of affordable housing is available in a range of locations and types promotes fair housing choice, especially areas that promote access to opportunity. Several strategies to assist in addressing this impediment include:

- Strategy 1: Facilitate a Range of Housing Types
- Strategy 2: Lower the Cost of Housing
- Strategy 3: Continue investment in affordable housing
- Strategy 4: Retrofit Housing for Equal Access

2: Facilitating Access to Opportunity

Housing that affords access to opportunities may be cost prohibitive or non-existent for persons in certain protected classes, especially for those with lower incomes. Currently, Iowa City appears to experience disparate access to opportunity, especially when it comes to access to jobs and high performing schools are especially important. This study proposes a balanced approach to address disparities in access to provide for both strategic investment in areas that lack key opportunity indicators, while opening housing opportunities in areas with existing opportunity through effective mobility options and the preservation and development of a variety of housing in high opportunity areas. Several strategies to assist in addressing this impediment include:

- Strategy 1: Emphasize Variety in Housing in Areas of Opportunity
- Strategy 2: Community Investment
- Strategy 3: Enhance Linkages Throughout the Community

3: Increasing Education and Outreach

Based on public input, many residents of Iowa City lack of awareness about rights under fair housing and civil rights laws. This suggests lack of knowledge and awareness regarding fair housing rights is a major barrier to fair housing choice. In addition, ensuring access to information about housing programs and neighborhoods generally can also facilitate fair housing goals. Several strategies to assist in addressing this impediment include:

- Strategy 1: Increase Demand-Side Awareness
- Strategy 2: Increase Supply-Side Awareness
- Strategy 3: Increase Regulator Awareness
- Strategy 4: Provide meaningful language access

4: Operational Improvement.

Several other barriers to fair housing choice in Iowa City include smaller operational and planning changes that could help affirmatively further fair housing. These include impediments such as administrative processes and regulations which can slow down and/or stop projects that would benefit protected classes, a need for increased regional cooperation for issues that affect housing, a lack of information that could help identify or address other barriers, and a need to improve the transparency of fair housing enforcement. Most of these barriers should be addressed through operational improvements at the City level. However, most would also need cooperation with many actors in order to truly be effective. Strategies to assist in addressing these impediments include:

- Strategy 1: Review implementing procedures and regulations
- Strategy 2: Improve regional cooperation
- Strategy 3: Improve Data Collection
- Strategy 4: Increase Fair housing Enforcement Transparency

Draft Minutes

Human Rights Commission
May 15, 2019
Helling Conference Room, City Hall

Members Present: Jeff Falk, Cathy McGinnis, Bijou Maliabo, Jessica Ferdig, Barbara Kutzko, Adil Adams, Noemi Ford, Jonathon Muñoz.

Members Absent: Tahuanty Peña.

Staff Present: Stefanie Bowers.

Others Present: Andre' Wright, Wangui Gathua, RaQuishia Harrington, Charlie Eastham, Royceann Porter, Angelica Vannatta.

Recommendation to Council: No.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:42 PM.

Social Justice and Racial Equity Grant: Chair Peña could not make the meeting due to a work conflict. Falk began the meeting with a reading of an email sent by Peña.

- 1) *Our goal is to continuously improve a process which is fair and inclusive.*
- 2) *The current process reflects a ranking based on aggregate information from all commissioners.*
- 3) *We would greatly appreciate that if you think a part of the process didn't work well, please tell us about different approaches that would improve it.*

Falk then opened the floor to any comments from the public.

Andre' Wright asked for the Commission to clearly state what the process is for the grants.

Falk provided an overview of the process that including, how each Commissioner reads through the grants individually and does their own scoring and then at the end all rankings are put together and averaged.

That ranking is provisional and then Commissioners are asked if anyone wants to make any comments on the rankings so the rankings at that meeting are not written in stone the meeting is the purpose to discuss as a group the applicants.

Falk noted that usually the rankings are accepted, and no one has any comment that changes any one's consideration of the rankings except for this year there was a change.

Draft Minutes

Human Rights Commission

May 15, 2019

Helling Conference Room, City Hall

Muñoz added that the process is at some level like a communal process, City Council gives guidelines and a matrix to score, the Commission just recommends, the Council ultimately makes the final decision. Organizations that are not recommended by the Commission to be funded can always go to Council to voice their concern.

Kutzko mentioned the first year was really trial and error but this evening she wants to hear from those in attendance to hear their comments and suggestions. Commissioners want to do the right thing in their decisions and reach out to those in most need.

Wangui Gathua asked: How much is the grant? What is the turn around?

Muñoz mentioned that in the last funding year the Commission did allow for organizations to receive consecutive funding which concerned him.

Staff mentioned that the Commission should distinguish between consecutive funding for the same organization in the same project versus consecutive funding of an organization with a new project and that the total amount of the grant is \$75,000.

Ferdig noted that an organization can ask for the full amount. There are no rules and regulations on how much an organization can ask for.

RaQuishia Harrington representing Sankofa Outreach Connection mentioned that they were one of the first grant recipients. Sankofa has since applied in the last two grant cycles but through the process they have thought about what they were doing and how to make improvements. Unlike a lot of other applicants, they did not have established funds and it did help them to receive the grant.

She then inquired as to whether there are guidelines that all Commissioners follow. And asked why Commissioners chose to continue to give funding to the same organizations because it discourages other organizations from applying. Her suggestion is to look at those new up and coming organization that don't have a lot of funds to begin with. She would like to see more consistency in the scoring process.

Muñoz asked her if she believes Sankofa should get funded over an organization that has not received funding, should the Commission take that into consideration? Harrington said the Commission should take that into account. But added that organizations should be looking for additional funding too.

Ferdig would like to see improvements to the rubric. There is a lot in there that would allow a Commissioner to apply their own criteria and not create consistency amongst them.

Draft Minutes

Human Rights Commission

May 15, 2019

Helling Conference Room, City Hall

Falk believes the rubric plays off the application. Each Commissioner has their own set of values that they bring to scoring an application. Falk mentioned in the last funding period the rubric had three additional boxes after each section for other items Commissioners might have considered in evaluating an application. Falk said the budget is taken as legitimate. The Commission in the past has not questioned a budget and so amounts that are funded are not halved or split.

Charlie Eastham serves on the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC). He noted that some organizations that are applying for the social justice and racial equity grant are new. HCDC makes the recommendations to Council on who should be funded through aid to agencies which has significantly larger funds than the social justice and racial equity funding. He would like to see a process where just starting out agencies could receive funding through the social justice and racial equity grant and then, if they become established, could then go apply for funding through aid to agencies for more long-term funding support.

Staff asked for clarification.

Eastham reported that ideally there would be a process set up whereby the Commission would allocate their funding for new organizations but not exclusively with the goal being they would have some path to the aid to agency funding.

Royceann Porter serves as a Supervisor but is here today in her capacity as a member of Black Voices Project. She started by asking the Commission to individually tell her what social justice and racial equity means to them. She added when we talk about the grass roots organization in the community, they are all doing great work. Johnson County through JJYD gives out \$200,000 and every year it is the same agencies and organizations. Because of this new organizations do not even stand a chance. She is aware of organizations doing great work that have not received the social justice and racial equity grant. For example, The Dream Center, Jones Academy of Performing Arts. Humanize my Hoodie, and the Fifth Ward Saints. If you would ask these organizations why they do not apply for grants they will tell you there is no point. It is always the same people who receive all the money, even though they are the organizations doing the work.

She would suggest when the Commission receives these applications they should go out and into the community to see what work they do. We all know what Crisis Center does, what DVIP does, Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County, Shelter House. Johnson County just gave Shelter House \$630,000.

She added we have to do better. The people doing the work are the people getting screwed. They are the ones who aren't eligible for the funding. Did anyone consider the

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question that is asked on your application, have you received grants before and if so, how long and for how much.

She further noted that the budget is the most important thing for Commissioners to look at. Just because they ask for X amount doesn't mean they need X amount to do it.

When you look at these bigger organizations, for example Big Brother Big Sister, Johnson County Neighborhood Centers they close at 5. Who are the people out doing the work after these places close There has got to be a way for the Commission to come together and figure this out. The pot should be set for everybody. It would be good if the Commission, after you give the money, to go out and do site visits with the organizations you funded. Look at what you are doing because you are hurting the people that are doing the work.

Maliabo replied that she did reach out to Jones Academy of Performing Arts and asked them to apply and she does not know why they did not apply. Porter responded that organizations are tired of the system and how it is set up. Why apply if we know we are not going to get the funding. She furthered encouraged Commissioners to go out and see what the Center for Worker Justice does, G World, and The Dream Center.

Muñoz added that he does pay attention to the budget. For his own rankings he does look at who has received funding in the past and that he did oppose funding Shelter House because they had received funding in the last grant cycle. Social Justice for him is correcting the natural distributions and inequities.

Porter then invited Andre' Wright back up to the podium. She then spoke on how Humanize My Hoodie, which had applied for grant funding in the last grant cycle meets the criteria of the grant, for example, builds community, education, and criminal justice. She could not understand not giving them the money but giving another organization money to take people to the movies. When Wright is out there educating on implicit bias.

Angelica Vannatta served on the Marion Human Rights Commission and works at the Shelter House. The Marion Human Rights Commission has a similar grant that uses motel tax revenue to support the fund. She feels that the current application used by the Commission is very straight forward. It appears the biggest learning curve for the Commission has been the scoring process. So, what Marion did was use a scoring rubric that had weighted questions. They also had a smaller group of commissioners evaluate all the applications and give a recommendation to the entire commission. After which they all discuss the recommendation at a regular commission meeting.

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Vannatta believes that the Commission should continue the informational sessions but should add a part that provides some perspective for organizations who have not applied for grant funding in the past.

Because she works for Shelter House, she did point out that the funding they have received from the Commission for two different projects were not funded by any other grants the Shelter House has received. She also reported that it may appear that Shelter House gets everything, but they do not.

She ended her comments by asking Commissioners to consider whether for profit organization should be allowed to apply and to think about how the Commission can encourage collaborations between organizations. For example, Shelter House can do a joint application with The Dream Center.

Eastman spoke again to support the comments made by Porter. He agrees that there are a number of predominantly Black and Hispanic organizations that are doing great work and at a level and effectiveness of other organizations. He hopes that this Commission and HCDC can work with the Council to establish a system of priorities and preferences so that those groups can, if not recruited, at least apply and receive support from this City in an easier and more effective manner.

Falk touched on his experience of serving on three rounds of the social justice and racial equity grant process and how he still struggles with the difference between social justice and social service. He was hoping that eventually the Commission would have a discussion with each other and with the persons in attendance on trying to get a better handle on what that is supposed to mean. He looks upon social justice as not being about whether an organization is for profit or not but as fighting against the injustices that exist. Social service is supposed to ameliorate those injustices by finding somebody who is somehow not being treated the way they should and trying to figure out a way to fit them in the system so that they can get more advantages from the system.

In his mind that is not combating a system that is trying to fit somebody into it. But he thinks there is a lot of injustice inherent in the system and that those things have to be combated but he does not see any of the organizations who applied for the grant as fitting that definition of social justice I see them as trying to ameliorate things. And he doesn't know if an organization that is militant would be the kind to get a grant or think of applying for a grant from the City because the City is something that keeps the process going, keeps the system going. There are inequities in and throughout the City and so he was hoping the Commission would have some kind of discussion about that.

Falk noted that staff prepared a memorandum which recommended for the Commission to define social justice and racial equity and gave some examples and he cannot think of any application that would fit into that definition because it was really changing

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policies, institutions, and structures and not really fitting people into existing institutions and structures.

Falk responded to Porter's comments about knowing what groups are doing and how do you get to know what groups are doing. Well you go out and find out, that is one way. You also have a space on the application where the group fills out what they are doing, and you can try to get information that way. Being on the Commission doesn't give insight into hardly anything because in order to get the insight you have to be out in the community seeing, feeling and hearing what is being done.

Porter then commented on a dance troupe she had in the past and that she had applied for a \$7500 grant from the AM Rotary and they (AM Rotary) asked her to bring the kids to their 7AM meeting. So, she took 64 kids and their parents to the meeting. So it is not just a matter of going to them but asking for groups to come to you.

Falk taking off on that said that a question could be added to the application for organizations to provide a time or place where a few Commissioners can go and get a sense of what work they do.

Kutzko mentioned it is disheartening that there are things being done, very important things, in this community and that people are afraid to apply or reluctant to apply because they have not been funded and that they really need the funding to be successful. Is there some way to encourage persons from those organizations to come to a Commission meeting at some point or can the Commission send someone there to talk to or encourage them to apply.

She thinks it is important for those organizations to get involved and apply and for the Commission to reconsider its selection criteria because she thinks there are a lot of wonderful organizations that are being overlooked. There are a lot of things being done that are not being properly funded and therefore cannot move forward.

Adams noted that at past meetings he has mentioned more funding from the Council so the Commission can support more organizations. Because all these organizations are doing good work and if there is more money, he thinks the Commission can distribute it to a lot of organizations and right now the Commission only has \$75,000 and had 28 applications if the Commission had \$150,000 maybe they could give to more organizations.

Vannatta then asked the Commission to consider a grant limit so that if you have \$75,000 you say up to \$5000 that way you could award more organizations.

Gathua then responded with the definition of social justice. Those of us in that field have played around with many words to address it even social justice is blanket it is not

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addressing it and so I will go with racism and discrimination. But she will leave it there and not go into that. She thanked Kutzko for the opening. Gathua wonders if the application can allow for an additional question to set a date to come visit to see what groups are doing.

Muñoz believes that as a practical matter he feels the problem is it will be hard to coordinate because of quorums but every Commissioner in their individual capacity or in a subcommittee could go visit.

Gathua mentioned when you talk about people being discouraged from applying how do you ensure that the historic social justice is not routine.

Maliabo said to invite us to your events so we know about events and organizations.

Muñoz said organizations can also arrange to come and speak with the Commission at their monthly meetings by contacting staff, but this shouldn't dissuade Commissioners from going out to visit groups still.

Ferdig on a personal level wants a process that is unbiased and fair and a systematic process for evaluation. She does not want the Commission to spend time at an organization and give it money and then hear the "oh you favored them for X, Y, and Z". She feels the commission needs to come up with a system, a process that captures what things are occurring and what is being done in all organizations but that can also be evaluated fairly and justified by this Commission. She believes that is the most difficult thing. How to create a perfect process. She does not have an answer for how to create a perfect process.

Ford mentioned that she is in her first year on the Commission and did not participate in the process this funding cycle (due to a conflict). One thought that has been emerging in her brain is that it is an extremely painful place to be to be exercising justice and our community needs a lot of it. She also knows that \$75,000 per year will not solve all the pain the City is suffering from but that it shouldn't mean we don't try. But she also thinks there is not a perfect system, we are fighting national, international, systemic, structural injustices.

She agrees with Ferdig that the Commission does need to figure out on their meaning of what this grant is and how to define fairness and justice both are culturally bound. We need to look at our own local culture to see what is fair in our community and that is not an easy task, but she appreciated, I appreciate all the points that is what we are here for to hear what it is like for those applying. I think more of these community exchanges will help us find maybe not the perfect way but the best we can.

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Falk, I want to thank all of you for participating this evening. I appreciate and I regret that it doesn't often happen. In terms of people who are working for your community and many of you are and that is what prompted you to say something it gives me a lot more things to think about and how to do things.

Kutzko I want to say thank you too because your input here tonight has given us a lot. Thank you for taking the time.

Maliabo don't be discouraged from applying again.

Commissioners will make suggestions for change in the rubric, the mission statement, and the application, item by item.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 7:13 PM.

Member Attendance Sheet

Member	Term Exp.	1/8	1/24	2/19	3/19	4/16	5/15	5/21	6/18	7/16	8/20	9/17	10/15	11/19	12/10
Maliabo	1/2021	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present								
McGinnis	1/2021	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present								
Muñoz	1/2021	Excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present								
Kutzko	1/2020	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present								
Falk	1/2020	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present								
Peña	1/2020	Present	Present	Excused	Present	Present	Excused								
Adams	1/2022	Excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present								
Ferdig	1/2022	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present								
Ford	1/2022	Present	Excused	Present	Excused	Present	Present								

KEY:

- X = Present**
- O = Absent**
- O/E = Absent/Excused**
- NM = No meeting**
- = Not a Member**