

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Affordable Housing Update 10/6/2023

CAJM's Affordable Housing Committee has been busy since the Nehemiah Action of 2023, holding meetings with city and county elected officials and [Blueprint](#) staff, and strategizing in order to capitalize on the momentum from the 2023 Nehemiah Action to find one or more avenues to fund affordable rental housing for very and extremely low-income families. Here is the story of our efforts this calendar year:

- At the March 2023 Nehemiah Action, the four city commissioners who attended, Mayor Pro-Tem Diane Williams-Cox, Commissioner Curtis Richardson, Commissioner Jeremy Matlow and Commissioner Jack Porter, committed to the following:
  - Establishing, in consultation with CAJM and other interested parties, a new incentive financing program to increase the numbers of new rental units set aside per year for very-low and extremely-low income households;
  - Allocating at least \$5 million per year in recurring income to finance the program
  - Commissioners Matlow and Porter also committed to directing city staff to develop options for generating \$12 million to seed the program.
- CAJM held follow-up meetings with Commissioners Richardson, Matlow and Porter (Commissioner Williams-Cox declined to meet). Commissioner Richardson agreed to discuss CAJM's proposal with City Manager Reese Goad. Commissioners Matlow and Porter agreed to raise the issue at the upcoming city budget workshop.
- Commissioner Matlow made a motion at the Commission's June 14 budget workshop to allocate \$5 million in the 2024 General Operating budget to finance an incentive program as proposed by CAJM. Commissioner Porter supported it, but the other three commissioners did not support it. Mayor Dailey suggested instead the possibility of allocating \$5 million or more for such an initiative from projected increases in Blueprint sales tax revenues.
- CAJM enthusiastically followed up on the mayor's suggestion, meeting with county commissioners who agreed to meet with us prior to the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency (IA) Board Meeting on August 24. County Commissioner O'Keefe agreed to make a motion at that meeting to direct staff to develop an agenda item for funding an incentive program to increase the numbers of new rental units set aside for very-low and extremely-low income households and allocate \$25 million over five years for the program.
- About 40 CAJM members attended the Blueprint Board Meeting, and several spoke during public comment seeking support of the CAJM proposal. At the end of the meeting, before Commissioner O'Keefe could make his motion, Commissioner Williams-Cox made a motion directing staff to bring back a proposal to address CAJM's recommendation for an affordable rental housing incentive program. With the exception of Commissioner Maddox who had to

recuse himself since he is now the CEO of Family Promise of Big Bend (formerly Big Bend Homeless Coalition), this motion was unanimously approved by the IA Board.

- Members of CAJM Affordable Housing Committee met with Blueprint staff on October 5 to discuss the IA Board actions that will be addressed in the staff report to the Board, procedural actions needed, and timeline. Staff expect to provide a report to the IA Board at their November 7 meeting. However, they anticipate that the Board will have to take a series of actions that likely will stretch into February 2024.

**It is clear that CAJM has raised awareness of the severe shortage of rental units that very low and extremely low income households can afford. It is also clear that effecting change through the political process will continue to take patience and perseverance. The Affordable Housing Committee strongly believes that increasing the supply of affordable rental housing for those with the least financial means is essential not only for those affected directly but also for our community as a whole and that CAJM needs to persist until an effective long-term program to address the issue is established.**