

Planning staff has summarized the discussion from the first Working Group meeting on Housing and Neighborhood Development. Part of the discussion was about geographic or land use related issues in housing. Specific comments mentioned the location of various housing types (specifically low-income, group homes, mixed-use buildings, and renter-occupied and owner-occupied units). Another thread in this theme deals with commuting to work, school, places of business, parks, etc. There seems to be a sentiment that housing should either be accessible to a variety of essential services and recreational opportunities or to public transportation. This issue presents a possible meeting between Economic Development and Business Retention, Housing and Neighborhood Development, and Transportation and Transit. The three Working Groups would benefit from the others' perspective on recommendations for Neighborhood Business Districts providing appropriate services, the location of the districts within neighborhoods, and modes of transportation that the districts should support.

The Working Group requested several maps. The maps include locations of districts within neighborhoods, neighborhood boundary maps, land use, tree canopy, location of crime hotspots, abandoned buildings in each neighborhood, and location of essential services. Based on the requests for mapping, the Working Group seems to be concerned about economic aspects of housing, environment and health issues, and access to services. The Working Group also requested analysis of current and projected demographics. This information will be valuable for making recommendations about how the housing stock could be improved to accommodate the residents of Cincinnati and attract new residents.

Many comments concerned the economic aspect of housing and neighborhood development. This theme includes factors that affect property values including the condition of housing stock, proximity to heavy industry or business districts, "Does mixed housing really work?", affordable housing, and foreclosure. One Working Group member requested a map showing new housing/new renovations. This analysis could include a comparison of the locations of new/renovated housing with the location of vacant or abandoned housing and property value trends. Several comments mentioned

home-ownership and rental as it pertains to housing conditions and maintenance. Some other comments within this theme mentioned the fiscal impact of housing, as well as Building Code compliance.

Environment and health issues also entered into the discussion – specifically in reference to lead contamination, green construction, green and open space, and the impact of climate change on housing. Access to quality education will also be considered in this theme because it is correlated with healthy lifestyles and environmental stewardship. Some comments mentioned Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified building, Form-Based Codes (walkable urbanism), Local Initiatives Support Corporation – Building Sustainable Communities Model, and other smart growth concepts.

Finally, the Working Group discussed the need for a working definition of “successful” neighborhood. This definition would include qualities that are present in neighborhoods that are perceived as “successful.” To do this, the Working Group could start by listing neighborhoods that are perceived as “successful” and then study the qualities of those neighborhoods. Another approach is to list the qualities that an ideal would possess. The Working Group would then consider which neighborhoods in Cincinnati qualify as successful. Using this definition, the group would have a sound foundation for making recommendations specific to replicating the qualities of Cincinnati’s successful neighborhoods.