

Promoting Affordable Housing: Neighborhood Guidelines for Affordability of New Rental Construction

WHEREAS, the Campus Area Neighborhood Association, Capitol Neighborhoods, Marquette Neighborhood Association, and Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association (together, the “Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition”) believe that a lack of affordable housing downtown is one of the greatest threats currently facing the area’s vitality, enjoyability, and desirability, and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition has convened a special work group to identify possible initiatives and policy suggestions that might, in part, help address housing affordability and access for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, etc., and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition jointly holds that while the downtown desperately needs additional residential units to keep pace with the growing nature of our city and local economy, we must collectively ensure that deference to unchecked growth does not effectively exclude low income residents and many from historically underrepresented communities from considering downtown as a place to live,¹ and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition hopes to encourage the construction of sufficient additional affordable housing while avoiding a net loss of affordable housing downtown, and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition understands that providing joint guidance regarding the type of affordable units our collective neighborhoods hope are offered in new developments will help remove uncertainty and delay in the development process.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition has determined that residential units in a proposed development will be considered “affordable” by Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition members if a tenant’s monthly rent would constitute 30% of the monthly income of an individual making 30%² of the area median income of Dane County, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition strongly holds that affordable units in a development should not be segregated from market rate units in the same development, either by floor or separate partition of the proposed project, and

¹ https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/191102_NhoodRoundtable_Final.pdf (Slides 42-43)

² [Reports.nlihc.org/oor/wisconsin](https://reports.nlihc.org/oor/wisconsin) (Notable statistic: in Madison at minimum wage, it takes 110 hours of work per week to afford a one bedroom apartment/94 hours for a studio. At the average wage (\$17.24/hour), it takes 46 hours to afford a one bedroom. Service industry averages are around \$10.30/hour)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition expects that units designated as affordable maintain the same quality as market-rate units, including the use and installation of non-toxic materials and furnishings, new and sustainable appliances and fixtures, and appropriate space, daylight (e.g. windows), and balconies where applicable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition strongly encourages all residential property developers considering new proposals in our neighborhoods to examine the viability of affordable units in all new proposals, regardless of size or location, and requests that at least 15% of available units be qualified as affordable, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition expects developers to seek out financial assistance from the City of Madison, Dane County, federal, and/or other local funding partners, if necessary for the construction of affordable units prior to indicating to neighborhoods or development approval bodies (like the Plan Commission) that affordability was not an option for the given project,³

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition expects that units designated as affordable when the given project is developed shall continue to be affordable for the lifetime of the unit's use; as an example, units originally designated as affordable should not have the affordability only extend for a period of years - or until transferred to a new owner - prior to transforming to market priced units,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition members will take steps to actively encourage and recruit neighbors in underrepresented communities and from populations that would benefit from greater access to affordable units to participate in developmental steering committees, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition members will, individually and collectively, advocate for affordable housing units in every new development to come before neighborhood steering committees as developers seek input and feedback from neighborhoods as they embark upon the City of Madison project approval process.

[Signatory neighborhoods page follows]

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<https://cityofmadison.com/dpced/communitydevelopment/funding/2020-affordable-housing-fund-tax-credits/150/>;

https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/nonprofits-cooperatives-to-tap-citys-affordable-housing-fund-in-new-way/article_befa8ce2-a324-5874-a8fe-cec0268d1add.html;

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/blog/millions-of-dollars-to-support-affordable-housing-in-madison>

Adopted and agreed to by each member of the Downtown Neighborhoods Coalition as provided herein:

Campus Area Neighborhood Association

Adopted: January 10, 2022

Capitol Neighborhoods

Adopted: November 23, 2021

Marquette Neighborhood Association

Adopted: November 15, 2021

Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association

Adopted: January 13, 2022