

Scenic Foothills Community Council
Daniel Clift, President
sfccakpresident@gmail.com

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SFCC Resolution

Whereas current, restrictive, and exclusionary zoning laws have led to a city of mostly large-lot, single family homes in the Anchorage housing market, driving up costs, preventing young families and starting professionals from accessing the housing market, and helping put lower income people on the streets to fend for themselves without shelter; and

Whereas the social and economic costs of our current housing crisis are borne by all of us and it is imperative that we take action to remove barriers to increasing housing supply in our city; and

Whereas, economic segregation is enforced by zoning laws and reinforced by arguments about "neighborhood character," excess square footage requirements, confining multi-family dwelling units to busy "traffic corridors," and many rules about landscaping, setbacks, parking spaces and the number of windows you must put on your home, to name a few; and

Whereas, local lobbyists employ these exclusionary tactics when they rail against modest, common sense changes using misleading arguments about landscaping, walkability, current zoning, and public process; and

Whereas, the Assembly has made positive progress on gradual reforms to land use regulations in the last few years that have increased flexibility and made incremental change more possible; and

Whereas, while zoning is not the only limitation to housing development it is the one that is most easily remedied at the local government level; and

Whereas, the Housing in the Municipality for Everyone (HOME) project is a significant step towards a more usable, transparent, and fair zoning code that will help facilitate more opportunities for new and creative housing development of all types, without requiring any property owners to change anything about existing properties; and

Whereas recently proposed changes have gone through a public process and have been proposed in a collaborative effort that includes the Assembly, the administration, the Planning Department, Building Officials, Traffic, Fire Inspectors, and industry experts; and

Whereas, strict building requirements contribute to the fact that, in Anchorage, we build just 400 units of housing per year - not even half of what is called for in the 2040 Land Use Plan, compared to 2000 housing units per year built in the Mat-Su, and

Whereas, in addition to increasing homelessness and pricing many people out of the market, lack of housing leads to outmigration and economic stagnation; and

Whereas, we desperately need a "change a little bit of everything" approach to addressing our housing shortage by encouraging gentle density and making it easier and more economical to build every type of housing.

Therefore, Scenic Foothills Community Council urges the Assembly and the administration to allow greater density and flexibility by removing exclusionary, burdensome, expensive, and unnecessary zoning requirements so that Anchorage can increase housing stock and affordability, therefore rebuilding a healthy, vibrant economy, decreasing homelessness, and beginning to reverse our current trend of outmigration. We support the Assembly's HOME initiative.

Resolution Vote:

For:

Against:

Abstain: