

Summary of the Mayor's Housing Taskforce

The City of Winona and the Port Authority of Winona contracted Maxfield Research to complete the 2016 Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment to provide the City of Winona, developers and the community with a meaningful sense of the current and future housing market to formulate:

- Strategic housing priorities given the scarcity of land
- A guide for policy making decisions
- Interest from builders/developers of various housing products
- Additional funding sources for housing and community development programs
- A defined relationship between housing and economic development
- A framework to accommodate future growth
- A housing plan allowing Winona employers to retain and recruit employees to expand business

Following the release of the Housing Study, former Mayor Peterson appointed community members to the Mayor's Housing Task Force (HTF), during the February 6, 2017 City Council meeting. The HTF was composed of diverse stakeholders and leaders representing businesses, real estate, lending, development, landlords, property management, subsidized housing, non-profits, and local government. The HTF was charged with identifying and prioritizing current and future housing needs by analyzing community growth trends, economic and employment characteristics, income levels, commuting patterns, and housing data.

The HTF was committed to providing recommendations to the City Council for ways in which housing could be maintained and expanded in our community. The recommendations were viewed as a "toolbox" to maintain and create new housing choices through identifying developable land and the financial programs available to spur investment. This has been done in an effort to promote diversity with an emphasis on workforce housing to reach a wide range of income levels and have a greater community impact by serving occupations such as; teachers, police officers, nurses, and frontline professionals. This included the focus areas of Multi-Family Preservation and Construction, Housing Rehabilitation and Single-Family Construction.

Following their appointment, the HTF first met on February 23, 2017 and continued to meet monthly. The City Council approved the recommendations in January 2018. The HTF established the recommendations to Council by following the objectives below:

- 1) Preserve the traditional, older neighborhoods in Winona to maintain the current workforce housing stock, which will allow the homeowner to continue to live in their own home and community safely regardless of age, income, or ability.
- 2) Create incentives for developers to encourage the rehabilitation and construction of workforce housing; resulting in a rich diversity of housing types and sizes, ensuring safe, decent, and affordable housing is available to a broad range of income levels and will allow citizens to age in place.
- 3) Increase community and business awareness of the workforce housing shortage and promote existing programming and efforts administered by the City of Winona, Winona Housing and

Redevelopment Authority, Habitat for Humanity, SEMCAC, SEMMCHRA, Volunteer Services, Xcel Energy, and Minnesota State College Southeast serving low-to-moderate income households.

- 4) As Legislation approves financing tools, establish a funding source to sustain workforce housing initiatives to leverage federal, state, and private funding.
- 5) Encourage the collaboration of City staff, citizens, educational institutions, businesses, community organizations, and developers to meet our workforce housing needs.
- 6) Engage and partner with local employers to establish an Employer Assisted Housing (EAH) Program for their employee base.

One of the most interesting and important aspects of the work done by the HTF was discussing the need for additional housing. It was through these conversations, we were able to meet one of our objectives, and a very important one at that—to let the community and businesses know that Winona does have a housing shortage and that is restricting our economic development. As the community has become aware of our housing shortage; new development has begun to occur. Below is a graph outlining the goals noted in the Housing Study vs. Actual Development.

