



FY 24 Pathways to removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing)

FR-6800-N-98

Applicant: City of North Charleston

9/26/2024

Important Notice: The City invites comments starting on Thursday, September 26th for the FY24 PRO Housing application. You can also share your thoughts with Linda Alston, Grants Coordinator, by emailing lalston@northcharleston.org or mailing to Attn: Linda Alston, City of North Charleston, P.O. Box 190016, North Charleston, SC 29416-9016. Comments should be emailed by 5pm on October 10th (or mailed by October 7th) to ensure consideration.

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City of North Charleston, SC
FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Exhibit A Executive Summary
September 25, 2024

To address the regulatory barriers hindering the creation and preservation of affordable housing, the City of North Charleston will implement a new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). This initiative aims to streamline and clarify regulations, making them more accessible for both developers and residents. As North Charleston continues to grow, there is an urgent need for new affordable housing units to meet population demands and replace aging infrastructure.

Historically, North Charleston has provided a significant portion of the region's naturally occurring affordable housing, evidenced by neighboring jurisdictions directing a large percentage of their housing voucher funds to our city. Recent data from the Charleston Trident Association of Realtors reveals that 54.2% of renters and 31.2% of homeowners in North Charleston are cost burdened. Compounding this issue, the median income in North Charleston is 30% below the Area Median Income for the Charleston/North Charleston MSA, intensifying the need for affordable housing solutions.

Current obstacles to housing development include regulatory, geographical, political, and fiscal challenges. Recent zoning code revisions have aimed to reduce barriers by decreasing lot sizes, setback, and parking requirements, and establishing an affordable housing overlay district along key transit routes. Furthermore, the City has utilized Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to preserve affordable housing stock and stabilize quality. Additionally, the availability of land for new development is constrained by sensitive wetland areas and inefficient land use practices from previous decades. The Charleston metro region's rapid growth is met with restrictive local policies, including moratoriums on multi-family developments. Additionally, high construction costs due to land, labor, and materials, coupled with stringent building codes for hurricane and earthquake resilience, further complicate the housing landscape. The lack of enabling state legislation for inclusionary zoning and an anti-tax bias limits funding for affordable housing initiatives, leaving local municipalities with inadequate tools to address these challenges.

Despite these efforts, key barriers remain linked to the City's outdated zoning code, which significantly impacts housing availability. A comprehensive review of existing land use regulations is essential, and the development of a UDO is a crucial step toward fostering diverse, safe, and affordable housing opportunities for future generations. This collaborative approach will engage local government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to facilitate the delivery of more affordable housing units and stabilize market prices. The City is committed to matching up to 50% of grant funds through in-kind and financial contributions, with the goal of delivering the new Unified Development Ordinance by the second quarter of 2027.

Physical Accessibility

The City of North Charleston provided three accessible ways for individuals with disabilities to comment on grant applications. Feedback could be submitted by emailing or mailing the Grants Coordinator, or by attending the Public Hearing at City Hall on October 10th. The City Hall building is ADA accessible, with additional accommodations available upon request. The grant application was also posted on the City's official website, ensuring it was accessible to all individuals.

Environmental Review

The City will not conduct an environmental review, as the grant activities do not involve any ground disturbance.

Demonstrate your progress and commitment to overcoming local barriers to facilitate the increase of affordable housing production and preservation, primarily by having enacted improved laws and regulations.

In recent years, North Charleston, South Carolina, has made regulatory changes to address barriers to affordable housing, including significant zoning code reforms to facilitate affordable housing development. These changes include:

1. **Increased Density Allowances:** Adjustments to zoning regulations to allow for higher density in residential areas, making it easier to build multi-family units and apartment complexes and single-family homes. Changes include the reduction of lot sizes, setback requirements and parking requirements.
2. **Mixed-Use Zoning:** Implementation of mixed-use zoning that combines residential and commercial uses, which can support affordable housing by integrating it into broader community developments.
3. **Relaxed Parking Requirements:** Reduction of parking space requirements for new residential developments, which can lower construction costs and make affordable housing projects more feasible.
4. **Affordable Housing Overlays:** The City has created and adopted two overlay districts along Rivers Avenue and University Boulevard to support the planned bus rapid transit project, the Lowcountry Rapid Transit line. These two overlay districts allow the minimum lot area per dwelling unit requirement to be waived (enabling unlimited density) if the minimum lot area per dwelling unit shall be 1,200 square feet and may be waived if 20% of the dwelling units for the proposed development are dedicated for affordable housing at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI) for a period of 20 years. These districts often allow for greater flexibility in design and land use to promote affordable housing development.

These regulatory improvements aim to lower barriers, reduce costs, and incentivize the development of affordable housing in North Charleston and contribute to a more robust and inclusive housing market. Additionally, the City of North Charleston has undertaken various non-regulatory actions to overcome barriers to affordable housing production and preservation. These efforts complement regulatory changes and aim to address the complex challenges associated with affordable housing. Here are some notable non-regulatory actions:

1. **Public-Private Partnerships:** North Charleston has engaged in a partnership with Jamestown, a private developer, to support attainable housing in the critical redevelopment of the Navy Yard. As the master developer of the site, Jamestown has committed that 17% of the units created will be attainable, which will lead to approximately 700 new attainable units.
2. **Support for Housing Non-Profits:** The city has provided support to non-profit organizations that focus on affordable housing. This support can include financial contributions, logistical assistance, and collaborative efforts to enhance the effectiveness of these organizations in addressing housing needs. In the last 5 years, the City has

allocated over 1 million dollars (\$1,004,970) in HOME funding for new construction of affordable housing.

3. Community Land Trust: The City has committed more than \$350,000 in HOME Investment Partnerships funding to the Community First Land Trust, which acquires land and develops homes within seven neighborhoods in the southern part of the city.
4. Preservation Initiatives: North Charleston has been active in efforts to preserve existing affordable housing stock. Over the last 5 years, the City has allocated over 2 million dollars (\$2,072,736) in HOME and CDBG funding for the rehabilitation of the City's existing housing stock through the emergency repair program, owner-occupied rehabilitation, and purchase/ rehabilitation for sale or lease to low- or moderate-income (LMI) households.
5. Advocacy and Policy Support: The City of North Charleston has actively advocated for policy changes to support affordable housing at the state level. One notable effort involved lobbying for amendments to the Military Base Tax Increment Financing (TIF) statute, which would have allowed TIF funds to be used for affordable housing within military redevelopment areas, such as the former Charleston Naval Complex. This initiative highlighted the city's commitment to exploring creative funding solutions for affordable housing and underscored our dedication to addressing housing challenges through policy advocacy. Additional efforts include support for the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce's People First initiative, which focuses on economic mobility and quality of life solutions – including attainable housing.
6. Sale/Lease of Publicly Owned Land for affordable housing: The City is currently in negotiations with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT) to sell seven City-owned parcels to the DOT for the construction of affordable replacement units for mitigation related to the planned widening of Interstate 526. The City has also donated several properties to affordable housing non-profit organizations for the development of both home ownership and rental housing opportunities.

These non-regulatory actions are integral to North Charleston's comprehensive approach to addressing affordable housing needs and creating a more inclusive and sustainable housing environment.

Do we have an acute need for affordable housing? What are the City's remaining affordable housing needs and how do we know?

The City of North Charleston’s acute need for affordable housing has been identified through various housing assessments and studies, including [Charleston County’s Consolidated Plan from 2021](#), which analyzes housing conditions, affordability, and gaps in housing supply. Analysis of demographic and housing data, including income levels, housing costs, and population growth trends, has provided insights into the scope of affordable housing needs. For example, the Consolidated plan found that the most common housing problem for Charleston region residents is housing affordability. There are over 28,000 households that are cost burdened or severely cost burdened. In fact, Charleston County has been identified as a priority geography for this grant due to its affordable housing need greater than a threshold calculation in *all three* measures: affordable housing not keeping pace with the population, insufficient affordable housing, and widespread housing cost burden/substandard housing.

The unique driving factors of acute need for affordable housing in the City of North Charleston include:

Housing Shortage: North Charleston has a growing population, and the demand for affordable housing has increased. According to [“Prime North Charleston”](#), a comprehensive plan adopted in 2020, the City’s population increased by over 13,400 people to approximately 111,000 residents in 2017. Much of the growth has been concentrated in specific areas of the city, principally within new developments along I-26 and along Dorchester Road within Dorchester County. Assuming the City continues to maintain the current average annual growth rate of 1.7%, an additional 50,000 people may call the city home by 2040.

Recent market studies confirm a regional need for rental units, with a preference for rental and for purchase units to be within mixed-income communities. In addition, citizens have noted needs for additional senior housing options in the city, which include opportunities to “age in place.” As of 2022 data from the US Census Bureau, the homeownership rate in the City of

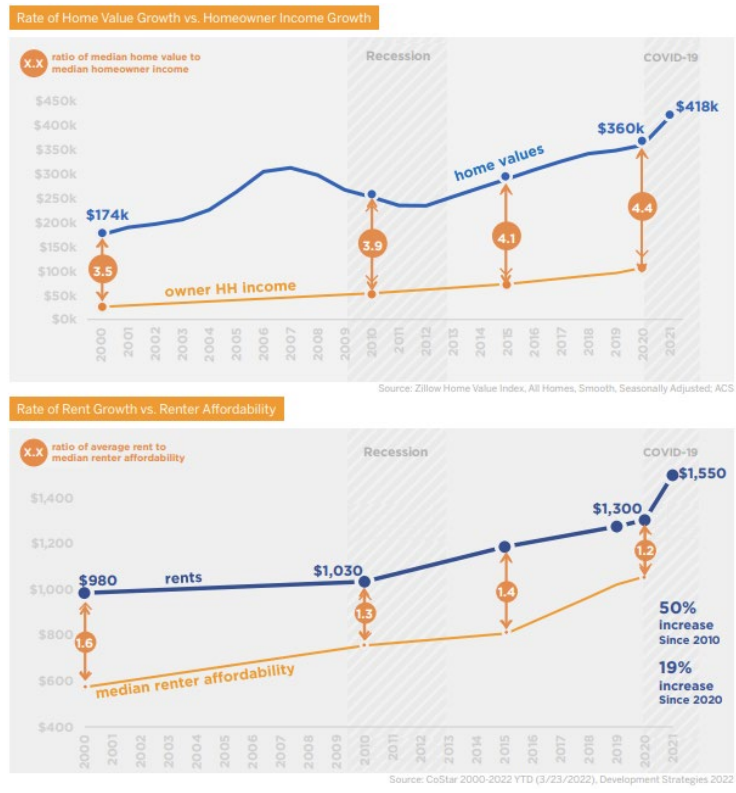


Figure 1 Housing Our Future, Charleston County

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North Charleston was over 20% less than the statewide average. The same data shows that 54.2% renters and 31.2% owners are cost burdened.

Rising Housing Costs: Housing prices and rents in North Charleston have been rising, which exacerbates affordability. Many residents find it difficult to afford market-rate housing, leading to increased housing cost burdens. According to a regional study of housing affordability completed in 2015, the City of North Charleston’s older neighborhoods, particularly those south of I-526, have the most affordable housing values and rents in the region. Given that these neighborhoods are located both where public transportation is available and closest to some of the region’s employment hubs, the relative affordability of these neighborhoods is attracting new residents who can pay higher prices.

According to Charleston County’s comprehensive housing plan, it costs \$140,000 more on average to buy a lower-range home (which tend to offer starter-home and affordable homeownership opportunities) in the County Higher housing values can increase assessment values for others in the neighborhoods, generating higher taxes and rents, making it more difficult for existing residents to afford to stay. s to afford to stay.

There is a significant gap between household incomes and housing costs. The Household Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) for the Charleston-North Charleston Metropolitan Statistical Area is \$80,000 to \$85,000. Certain census tracts, especially in central and southern parts, within North Charleston are concentrated with low to moderate-income persons. These areas often face higher rates of housing cost burdens and lower housing quality.

In 2017, over 17,000 or 44% of the City’s households spent more than 30% of the household income on housing costs in 2017, meeting the definition of “cost burdened”. The median household income in 2017 was \$39,944 (30% less than the regional median income), therefore housing less than \$120,000 or \$1,000/month in rent would be affordable to most households. According to 2022 data from the US Census Bureau, the median home value has risen to \$243,300, which is approximately \$43,000 more than would be affordable for the median household income. Median rents (\$1,288) have also exceeded the 30% affordability threshold for the median household income of \$58,534. These figures notorious lag actual market conditions.

Due to these factors, there is a continued need for the development of new affordable housing units to keep pace with population growth and to replace aging or deteriorating housing stock. Where possible, efforts are needed to preserve existing affordable housing to prevent displacement and maintain housing quality. A new UDO would support the City’s efforts around these initiatives.

What key barriers still exist and need to be addressed to produce and preserve more affordable housing?

Despite recent efforts, several key barriers still exist that need to be addressed to increase the production and preservation of affordable housing in North Charleston. These barriers are often a

product of the City's outdated zoning code, which plays a crucial role in shaping the housing landscape.

The city's zoning code was originally adopted by the City Council in 1976 and amended many times over the years to accommodate new development typologies, changes in planning standards, or other amendments as stakeholders requested. The city's zoning code has not been comprehensively reviewed or amended by a professional planner since its original adoption, and thus currently lacks consistency and clarity of zoning standards befitting an evolving city. Presently, the city's zoning code is a mix of urban and suburban styles that has been modified and hybridized over time to address the needs of this rapid growth mid-sized city.

1. **Zoning Restrictions:** Traditional zoning codes, such as the City's which is approximately fifty years old, often impose restrictions that limit the density and types of housing that can be built. For example, single-family zoning can restrict the development of multi-family units or affordable housing projects. To increase affordable housing production, zoning codes need to be updated to allow for higher-density developments and encourage mixed-use projects.
2. **Minimum Lot Sizes and Setback Requirements:** Zoning regulations that mandate large minimum lot sizes or extensive setback requirements can make it more difficult and expensive to build affordable housing. Reducing these requirements can help lower development costs and increase the feasibility of affordable housing projects.
3. **Parking Minimums:** Strict parking requirements can increase the costs of new housing developments, making it more challenging to build affordable units. Relaxing parking standards, especially for affordable housing near public transit, can reduce costs and improve project viability.
4. **Lengthy & Unpredictable Entitlement Process:** Providing clear guidelines and reducing uncertainties can be especially important for affordable housing projects, which often operate under tight budgets and need efficient, predictable processes to remain economically viable.
5. **Lack of Form Controls for Design/Character Consistency:** A lack of form controls—guidelines and regulations that help ensure design and character consistency—can present several challenges when developing affordable housing. Form controls are important for ensuring that new developments are designed in a way that is compatible with existing neighborhoods, meets quality standards, and gains community support. Their absence can lead to aesthetic and functional issues that might hinder the successful integration of new housing into established areas.
6. **Inclusionary Zoning:** Some jurisdictions implement inclusionary zoning policies that require a portion of new developments to include affordable units. However, due to legislation at the state level, this option is not available to the City of North Charleston in

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South Carolina. This requires the City to think creatively to generate opportunities and ways to incentivize, rather than require, affordable units.

What is the City’s vision?

To address these barriers, the City of North Charleston will create a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to allow for higher-density, mixed-use developments, and more flexible land uses that facilitate affordable housing. A UDO is a comprehensive regulatory framework that consolidates all the land use and development regulations of a jurisdiction into a single document. It typically covers zoning codes, subdivision regulations, design standards, and other development-related rules. The goal of a UDO is to create a more streamlined and coherent set of regulations that are easier for both developers and residents to understand and navigate.

Given the age of the City’s zoning ordinance and the recently adopted [Prime North Charleston](#), the city recognizes the need for more than just an incremental reform of the current zoning code. The new ordinance must be comprehensive, understandable by the public, and enforceable. The City would like to see a UDO that pulls zoning, subdivision/land development, and stormwater regulations under same cover. As part of the zoning piece, the UDO needs to incorporate Transit-Oriented Development, mixed-use and form-based code elements, while also retaining some of the standard suburban style districts. Augmenting some of those districts to allow for a greater housing mix is imperative to eliminating barriers to more affordable housing throughout the City. Additionally, the new zoning code must identify changes using an equity lens.

A UDO can specifically promote affordable housing through strategies like:

1. **Simplified Regulations:** By consolidating various codes into one document, a UDO can make it easier to implement and understand policies that support affordable housing. For example, it can include clear provisions for mixed-use developments, which can incorporate both residential and commercial spaces and potentially reduce housing costs through increased efficiency and reduced land costs.
2. **Incentive-Based Zoning:** A UDO can incorporate policies that incentivize developers to include a certain percentage of affordable housing units within new developments. This can be done through incentives like density bonuses, which allow developers to build more units than normally permitted in exchange for including affordable housing.
3. **Streamlined Approval Processes:** By standardizing and simplifying the development review and approval process, a UDO can reduce the time and costs associated with development. This can lower barriers for affordable housing projects, making them more financially viable.
4. **Flexible Design Standards:** A UDO can include flexible design standards that allow for innovative housing solutions, such as smaller lot sizes or alternative housing types (e.g., accessory dwelling units, tiny homes). This flexibility can help reduce construction costs and increase the supply of affordable housing.

5. **Form Controls for Design/Character Consistency:** A UDO can be an effective tool to address the lack of form controls and promote affordable housing by integrating design and character consistency into planning regulations, which would establish clear, context-sensitive design standards with integrated affordability.
6. **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):** UDOs can promote development around transit hubs or corridors, such as the upcoming regional bus rapid transit project (Lowcountry Rapid Transit or LCRT), encouraging higher-density and mixed-use developments in these areas. This can reduce transportation costs for residents and make housing more affordable by concentrating development in accessible locations.
7. **Relaxed Parking Requirements:** Relaxing parking requirements can help create more cost-effective and accessible housing solutions while promoting vibrant, walkable communities.
8. **Equitable Development Policies:** A well-designed UDO can include provisions that ensure development benefits are equitably distributed across different neighborhoods. This can help ensure that affordable housing is not concentrated in only certain areas but is integrated into a variety of neighborhoods.
9. **Multi-Modal Transportation:** A UDO can promote public transportation, bike lanes, pedestrian paths, and electric vehicle infrastructure. By encouraging the use of low-carbon or no-carbon transportation, it can significantly reduce emissions from traditional fuel-powered vehicles.
10. **Sustainable Development:** A UDO can encourage resilient development by promoting sustainable land use, energy-efficient buildings, green infrastructure, and multi-modal transportation, while preserving natural spaces and reducing carbon emissions through smart urban planning. Overall, a Unified Development Ordinance, by providing a cohesive and strategic framework for land use and development, can play a crucial role in fostering a more inclusive and affordable housing market. The City commits that new units generated under the UDO will be tracked and deed restricted for at least 20 years for 80% AMI.

While the process will take two to three years to complete once contracted, there could be immediate benefits for starting this conversation with the community about how to enable more affordable housing. This proposal is supported by findings from other regional efforts and plans to support affordable housing.

In 2021, Charleston County established a new Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization (HNR) to shepherd the County's comprehensive housing plan and to own the plan's implementation. "Housing Our Future" (HOF), was published in 2023 as a comprehensive housing plan for Charleston County, bringing together all elements needed to understand the full experience of housing in Charleston County. HOF describes the complex conditions impacting a

framework for improving housing attainability. Community and stakeholder engagement were driving forces throughout the planning process. HNR staff and consultants developed a comprehensive and tailored plan to engage as many residents as possible across the County’s 16 municipalities (including North Charleston) and 1,358 square miles.

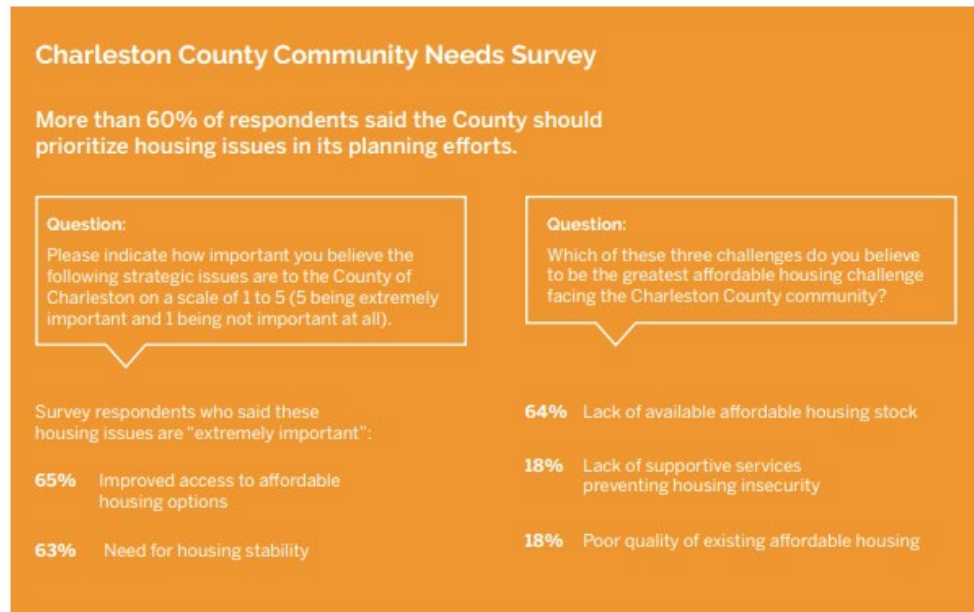


Figure 1 Housing Our Future, Charleston County

The planning team for HOF contacted representatives of every municipality in the county and representatives from the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG). The roundtable conversations with these representatives (including elected officials, planning department staff, and others) helped to shed light on specific challenges of the large cities, like North Charleston, versus the small towns and the beach communities versus rural areas. According to HOF, the County will need an estimated 29,000 to 36,000 new units of housing over the coming decade. Housing will be needed across the entire income spectrum, with approximately:

- 35% of units affordable to households with incomes less than 80% of AMI
- 20% of units affordable to households with incomes between 80% and 120% of AMI
- 45% of units affordable to households with incomes more than 120% of AMI

One of HOF’s Strategic Goals to address this need was to “Reduce barriers to adding needed housing supply,” making it easier to add the types of housing that the community needs. A key strategy identified is to collaborate with municipal partners to align zoning and other land use regulations. Each incorporated municipality has its own zoning code and associated development regulations. The City of Charleston, North Charleston, and Mount Pleasant together comprise most land within the County’s Urban Growth Boundary, meaning that their zoning and land use regulations play the most vital role in shaping development in areas with the greatest potential for housing development and walkable densities. Every community has its own complex

circumstances, and tailored zoning ordinances help to provide detailed guidance. Yet, county-wide, uncoordinated ordinances can create costly confusion and delays.

Based on HOF’s findings, Charleston County plans to support coordination around zoning issues and changes impacting housing attainability, including allowable densities, and housing types, entitlement incentives and density bonuses, permitting processes, TOD approaches, and affordability definitions and monitoring. In fact, one of the plan’s near-term implementation priorities is to “Provide collaborative technical assistance funding to municipal partners to address zoning and permitting challenges that delay the creation of needed housing supply.” This has materialized as convening an inter-jurisdictional working group to design TOD zoning supportive of mixed-income housing and affordable housing creation and preservation in preparation for the regional bus rapid transit implementation.

The region is working toward the creation of a 21.3-mile bus rapid transit line (LCRT) that will improve walkability and access to jobs. LCRT is South Carolina’s first mass transit infrastructure project. The project team is following the federal-mandated process to advance through the Capital Investment Grants program to receive federal funding. Through coordination with the Federal Transit Administration, the project is expected to open to the public in 2029. It will be critical to incentivize the creation of housing along the LCRT, including housing that is affordable to residents with a broad range of incomes, and especially to low-income households who are more likely to rely on transit to get around. The planned system will create time-sensitive opportunities to improve walkability, community cohesion, and access to jobs through creation of mixed-income housing and preservation of affordable housing. Within a half mile of the planned LCRT stations, there are over 4,000 units of dedicated affordable housing and 2,440 acres of vacant or underutilized land. Tools and policies that support TOD mixed-income housing along this corridor can help to alleviate growing traffic congestion, reduce transportation costs, and expand housing opportunities for households across the affordability spectrum. Additionally, there is also a large supply of “naturally occurring affordable housing” around station areas, especially in North Charleston.

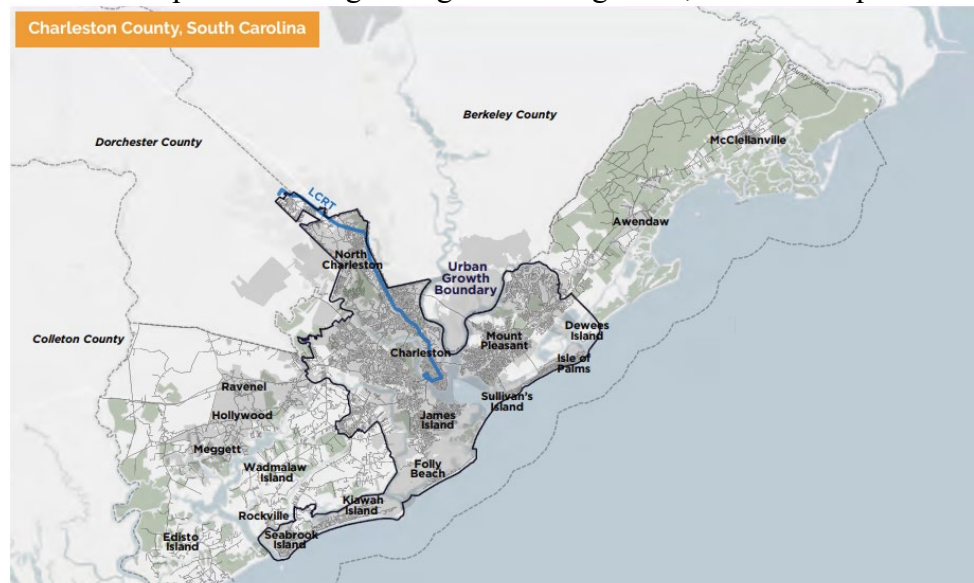


Figure 2 Housing Our Future, Charleston County

City of North Charleston, SC
FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Exhibit D Soundness of Approach
September 25, 2024

The LCRT corridor is also the focus of a “Missing Middle Housing” study, sponsored by the Charleston Trident-Area Association of Realtors in collaboration with Opticos and both adjoining municipalities. “Missing middle” is a term used to describe housing types between traditional single-family homes and larger scale multi-family housing. These housing types include duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, courtyard, bungalow, townhomes, and mixed-use housing that promote a live/work/play community. Accessory dwelling units can also play a role in diversifying and increasing the supply of housing of all types. Phase 1 of the study will occur in 2024 and includes reviewing the existing policies, stakeholder meetings, touring the LCRT corridor with officials, review barriers to entry, and a displacement risk analysis.

For the City of North Charleston, the study has identified the following regulatory barriers, which could be addressed by a new, pro-housing UDO:

1. Standards: Lot Size Minimums, Frontage Setbacks, Density Caps
2. Parking Minimums
3. Lengthy & Unpredictable Entitlement Process
4. Lack of Form Controls for Design/Character Consistency

Phase 2 will take place in 2025 and focus on market sensitivity, lot size analysis, test existing zoning and recommendations, and a presentation of the findings with the report. This study will look to incorporate, not duplicate, the efforts regarding the zoning framework along LCRT.

Additionally, the City of North Charleston was recently awarded a \$200,000 federal Safe Streets for All grant to create a new Comprehensive Safety Action Plan which will establish a safety framework on evidence-based, data-informed, equity focused approach to identify future roadway safety projects for implementation to establish complete streets and accessibility for all users. The City met the criteria for the grant partially because 63% of residents live in disadvantaged Census tracts, and it has an average annual fatality rate of 15.3/100,000 people within the past five years. The objectives of the project include prioritize strategies to significantly reduce roadway fatalities, identifying cost-effective measures that have a high impact over a wider geographic area to maximize effectiveness and reach, active engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders, and embrace innovative technologies that promote both safety & equity. This effort to focus on safety and equity will pair well with supporting TOD housing development under the new pro-housing UDO.

Among the significant environmental factors that impact both the community, and its housing strategies, flooding and drainage issues are particularly pressing due to the city’s coastal geography and climate. Aligning the new UDO with environmental resilience efforts can enhance community resilience while promoting affordable housing. Here are how these aspects are interconnected:

1. **Flood-Resistant Construction Standards:** Writing the UDO to include flood-resistant construction standards can ensure that new affordable housing developments are built to withstand flood events. These standards can include elevated building foundations, flood-resistant materials, and proper site grading to minimize flood risk. For instance, integrating flood mitigation measures into the UDO can involve requirements for new affordable housing projects to include features like raised building elevations and stormwater management systems. By ensuring that new developments are built to withstand flooding, the city not only protects its investment in affordable housing but also enhances the safety and livability of these communities.
2. **Incorporating Green Infrastructure:** The new UDO can promote the use of green infrastructure which helps manage stormwater runoff and reduce the burden on drainage systems. These features not only enhance environmental resilience but also improve the sustainability of affordable housing developments. Incorporating green infrastructure in affordable housing projects can also contribute to better stormwater management. Features like bioswales and rain gardens help absorb and filter runoff, reducing the risk of localized flooding and improving water quality. This alignment of environmental and housing goals supports long-term resilience and sustainability.
3. **Seismic & Wind Load Requirements:** Implementing stringent seismic and wind load requirements can significantly raise construction costs. For affordable housing projects, these additional costs can be prohibitive, making it challenging to stay within budget. Higher construction costs may deter developers from pursuing affordable housing projects, particularly if they perceive the financial risk as too high compared to potential returns. A new UDO could address this through incentives for resilient design and flexible design standards.
4. **Energy Efficiency –** While energy-efficient features can reduce utility bills eventually, they often involve higher upfront costs for installation and materials. Low-income homeowners may struggle to afford these initial investments. Developers might be hesitant to include energy-efficient features in affordable housing projects if they cannot recover the costs through higher rents or prices, leading to less emphasis on these improvements. A UDO could establish incentives, streamline standards, and promote cost-effective solutions to overcome these obstacles.
5. **Heat Mitigation:** Planting and maintaining trees and green spaces can incur additional costs for developers. These costs might be passed on to tenants or buyers or could make the project less financially feasible. There might be limited space for extensive green infrastructure, making it challenging to integrate trees and green spaces into affordable housing developments. Developers might prioritize other aspects of construction above heat mitigation strategies like tree planting if they are constrained by budget, potentially impacting the long-term livability and comfort of the housing. A UDO could counteract

these concerns by offering density bonuses in exchange for green space or other heat mitigation features and allowing flexibility in how those strategies are implemented.

6. **Air Quality:** Developing affordable housing in areas with poor air quality might require costly remediation or mitigation measures. This can include cleaning up contaminated sites or implementing advanced filtration systems, which can increase project costs. Addressing air quality issues can add to the overall cost of housing projects, making it more difficult to keep housing affordable. Developers might avoid areas with significant air quality concerns due to additional costs or perceived risks, limiting the available land for affordable housing. A new UDO for the City could provide incentives for sustainable sites (such as incorporating features that improve air quality, such as green roofs) or site selection flexibility by providing additional support to make these areas feasible for development.
7. **Land Use and Development Restrictions:** Having the UDO restrict development in high-risk flood zones can prevent construction in areas most vulnerable to flooding. This approach helps protect affordable housing investments and reduces the risk of damage to properties and communities.
8. **Promoting Resilient Neighborhood Design:** Zoning changes can encourage the design of neighborhoods that incorporate resilience features, such as elevated roadways, improved drainage systems, and floodplain conservation. By integrating these features into affordable housing projects, the city can enhance overall community resilience.
9. **Density and Mixed-Use Development:** Zoning reforms that allow for higher density and mixed-use developments can lead to more efficient land use and reduce urban sprawl. This can concentrate development in areas with better infrastructure and flood management systems, reducing the impact on vulnerable areas.
10. **Incentives for Sustainable Practices:** Through the city can offer incentives for developers who incorporate sustainable and resilient practices into affordable housing

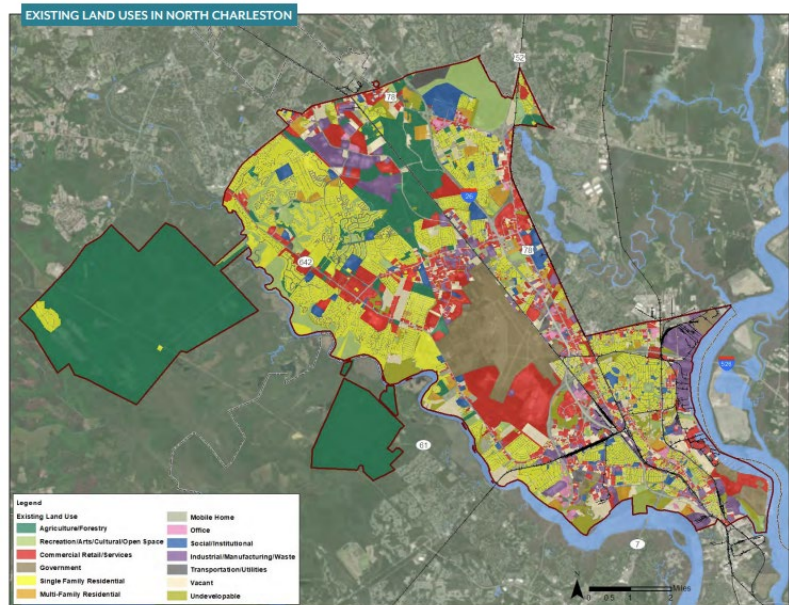


Figure 3 Prime Charleston, City of North Charleston

projects. These incentives can include expedited permitting, tax credits, or density bonuses for projects that meet specific environmental criteria.

11. **Public Education and Engagement:** The new UDO will be accompanied by efforts to educate the community about flood risks and the benefits of resilient design. Engaging residents in these efforts helps build support for new developments and ensures that the community is prepared for potential environmental challenges.

By addressing these environmental risks through a new UDO and integrating resilience measures into affordable housing projects, North Charleston can effectively promote community resilience and ensure that new developments are both sustainable and safe for residents.

What is the geographic scope? I.e. targeted locations, neighborhoods, cities, etc.

The UDO will apply to the entire City with zoning districts, overlay districts, and/or requirements that could be neighborhood specific. Developing a UDO for North Charleston to preserve and create housing units in high-opportunity areas, while expanding opportunities in underserved communities, can be a strategic way to address housing inequities and promote balanced development. These changes can promote more equitable development and improve access to essential resources and amenities for all residents.

Who are the key stakeholders? How are we engaging them?

When creating North Charleston’s UDO to promote affordable housing, engaging key stakeholders is crucial to ensure that the revised regulations meet community needs and address diverse perspectives. The consultant(s) and City will develop a public outreach strategy designed to inform community stakeholders and the public about the project. Consultant(s) will provide a methodology for community participation that allows for the active involvement by citizen’s p. In addition to all other means, the consultant(s) should expect the use of local television stations and social media to disseminate information to the public. The city staff will participate in these meetings and assist with coordination as needed.

As the new UDO will impact the entire city, outreach on this effort will be broad. With the specific focus on addressing affordable housing, subject matter experts will be identified and brought into the process. For example, a key group of stakeholders are the organizations the City provided CDBG and HOME funds to help with affordable housing efforts. These include the following land trusts, affordable housing developers, non-profit organizations, community development corporations and:

- Community First Land Trust
- Habitat for Humanity
- Home Works of America
- Operation Home
- Palmetto Community Action Partnership-
- Metanoia

Here is a breakdown of the other groups of stakeholders and methods for engaging them:

1. Residents of Public and Affordable Housing Units: These residents can provide firsthand insights into the challenges they face and suggest improvements to housing policies and practices. Engagement Methods: Host community forums, focus groups, and surveys specifically for current residents of affordable housing. Use neighborhood meetings and digital platforms to gather their input on needs and concerns.
2. Persons from Protected Class Groups Under the Fair Housing Act: Ensuring that the new UDO does not disproportionately impact these groups and addressing their specific housing needs is vital for equitable policy development. Engagement Methods: Collaborate with organizations specializing in fair housing and civil rights to reach individuals from protected groups. Ensure outreach efforts include diverse languages and accessible formats.
3. Business and Civic Leaders (including Neighborhood Association Leaders): Business and civic leaders can provide valuable perspectives on economic impacts, support for zoning changes, and potential collaborations for development. Engagement Methods: Engage through business forums, chamber of commerce meetings, and civic associations. Schedule one-on-one meetings with influential leaders to discuss how zoning changes can benefit the community and the economy.
4. Advocacy Organizations and Legal Groups: These groups can offer expertise on best practices, potential legal challenges, and community needs, ensuring that the new UDO is equitable and effective. Engagement Methods: Partner with local non-profits, housing advocacy groups, and legal aid organizations to understand broader housing issues and advocate for inclusive zoning practices. Organize workshops and policy briefings to discuss UDO impacts.
5. Developers and Real Estate Professionals: Developers and real estate professionals can provide insights into the practicalities of implementing the UDO, including financial considerations and market dynamics. Engagement Methods: Hold consultations, workshops, and advisory panels with developers and real estate professionals to discuss practical implications of UDO and gather feedback on feasibility.
6. Local Government Agencies (including North Charleston Housing Authority) and Officials: Government agencies and officials are crucial for integrating zoning changes into existing policies and ensuring alignment with broader municipal plans. Engagement Methods: Coordinate with city planners, housing authorities, and elected officials to ensure that the UDO aligns with broader city goals and regulations. Regular meetings and briefings can facilitate collaboration.

Previous actions by the City of North Charleston, which lead to community input in [Prime Charleston's](#) recommendations to update regulations and promote affordable housing, include:

1. Community Workshops and Public Meetings: The City of North Charleston has held numerous workshops and public meetings to solicit input on housing and development issues. These meetings often include presentations on proposed changes, followed by open discussions where residents and stakeholders can provide feedback.

2. Partnerships with Housing Advocacy Groups: North Charleston has partnered with local non-profits and advocacy organizations to gather input and support for affordable housing initiatives. These partnerships have included collaborative efforts to develop and implement housing strategies.

By actively engaging stakeholders and integrating their feedback, North Charleston can create a UDO that effectively promotes affordable housing, supports community resilience, and aligns with the diverse needs of its residents.

How does our proposal align with requirements to affirmatively further fair housing?

Developing the City of North Charleston, SC's UDO to promote affordable housing aligns with the requirements to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) by addressing systemic barriers to housing equity and fostering inclusive communities. Here are the ways these efforts align with AFFH requirements:

Addressing Housing Discrimination and Segregation

Reducing Barriers to Affordable Housing through Zoning Reforms: Single-Family Zoning restricts development to single-family homes, which often results in higher housing costs and limits options for affordable housing. Single-family zones are typically associated with higher-income neighborhoods, which can exclude lower-income residents. Large minimum lot size requirements can drive up the cost of housing and make it difficult to build affordable units. These requirements can also limit the density of housing, contributing to higher property values and increased segregation. Zoning codes that prohibit multifamily housing, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), or certain types of affordable housing can prevent lower-income families from moving into more affluent areas. Creating a new UDO to eliminate restrictive practices that limit the development of affordable housing addresses systemic barriers that perpetuate segregation and discrimination. By allowing a variety of housing types in more neighborhoods, the city can reduce concentrations of poverty and increase access to diverse communities.

Promoting Integration: Policies that require or incentivize mixed-income developments help integrate affordable housing into various neighborhoods, breaking down racial and economic segregation and promoting diverse, inclusive communities. Offering incentives such as density bonuses, reduced fees, or expedited permitting for developers who include affordable units in high-opportunity areas can make it financially viable for developers to include affordable housing in desirable areas, thus increasing the availability of affordable units in these neighborhoods. Encouraging or development near transit hubs in well-resourced areas can increase access to affordable housing. Improved public transit access enhances mobility for underserved groups, making it easier for them to live in high-opportunity areas and access employment and educational opportunities.

According to "[Prime North Charleston](#)" a comprehensive plan adopted in 2020, the population is balanced between African Americans and Whites. Since the year 2000, the Latino

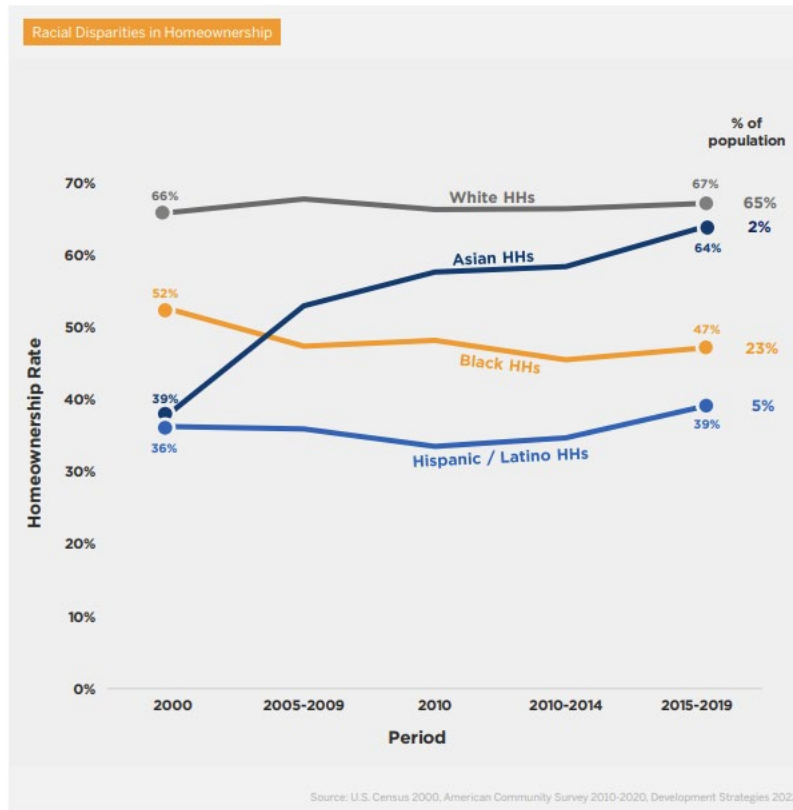


Figure 4 Housing Our Future, Charleston County

community has doubled in proportion to comprise 10.4% of the population. In North Charleston, the racial composition of individuals or households likely to benefit from such a new UDO includes:

- Historically, African American communities in North Charleston have been disproportionately affected by housing inequities and lower access to high-opportunity areas. Affordable housing initiatives can help address these disparities.
- Hispanic and Latino populations may also benefit from increased access to affordable housing in well-resourced areas, improving access to opportunities and resources.

- Other racial and ethnic minority groups, including Asian American and Indigenous populations, who are underrepresented in high-opportunity areas, will also benefit from increased affordable housing options.

Addressing Needs of Underserved Communities

Affordable Housing Targets: Set specific targets for affordable housing development in historically underserved (race, ethnicity, income, disability, etc.) neighborhoods and communities. This helps to counteract historical disinvestment and segregation.

Community Engagement: Engage with traditionally underserved communities during the planning process to ensure their needs and preferences are considered in changes. This can include public meetings, surveys, and partnerships with local organizations.

Anti-Displacement Strategies: Implement policies to prevent displacement of existing residents in gentrifying areas. This could include affordable housing preservation strategies and support for existing residents facing rising rents. **Support for Local Businesses:** Encourage the preservation and support of local businesses owned by community members, which can help maintain economic stability in these neighborhoods.

Expanding Housing Choice

Diverse Housing Options: By broadening the types of housing allowed and increasing density in various areas, the city can provide more housing choices for all residents, including those with protected class status. This aligns with AFFH by ensuring that individuals have more opportunities to live in neighborhoods of their choice.

Targeted Incentives: Creating overlay districts that offer incentives for including affordable housing ensures that affordable options are available in well-resourced neighborhoods. This helps meet the AFFH requirement to ensure access to neighborhoods with high-quality amenities and resources.

Mixed-Income Projects: Promote mixed-income developments that combine affordable units with market-rate units. This can help integrate affordable housing into a variety of neighborhoods and provide residents with more housing choices.

Flexible UDO: Permit higher-density development in a broader range of neighborhoods to accommodate affordable housing. This can include allowing multifamily housing or ADUs in areas previously restricted to single-family homes. Encourage the development of ADUs in a wider range of neighborhoods, providing additional affordable housing options.

Supporting Families with Children

Multi-Bedroom Units: Promote the development of larger, multi-bedroom units suitable for families. This includes zoning for apartments or townhomes with multiple bedrooms and larger living spaces.

Family-Oriented Amenities: Encourage or require amenities that support families, such as playgrounds, community centers, and safe outdoor spaces.

Anti-Discrimination Provisions: Include provisions in the UDO or related housing policies that explicitly prohibit discrimination against families with children in housing practices and development.

Ensuring Compliance with Fair Housing Laws

ADA and Fair Housing Act Compliance: Incorporating universal design standards and ensuring that new developments meet ADA and Fair Housing Act requirements ensures that housing is accessible to individuals with disabilities. This aligns with AFFH by promoting equitable access and preventing discrimination based on disability.

Universal Design Standards: Incorporate universal design principles into the UDO to ensure new housing is accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes requirements for features such as ramps, wide doorways, and accessible bathrooms.

Accessibility Requirements: Ensure that the UDO requires a certain percentage of new residential units to meet accessibility standards. This includes compliance with both ADA and Fair Housing Act accessibility guidelines.

Accessible Housing Incentives: Provide incentives for developers to include accessible units in their projects, such as reduced fees or expedited permitting for developments that meet specific accessibility standards.

Flexibility: Ensure the UDO allows for reasonable accommodations to zoning requirements for individuals with disabilities. This could include adjustments to setbacks, parking requirements, or use regulations to facilitate accessible housing.

Proximity to Services: Ensure that the UDO encourages the development of affordable housing near essential services such as healthcare facilities, social services, and support centers. This helps residents with disabilities access the services they need.

Accessible Transportation Planning: Incorporate requirements for accessible transportation options in the UDO, such as proximity to public transit stops and features that accommodate individuals with disabilities.

TOD: Promote the development of affordable and accessible housing near public transportation hubs to ensure residents with disabilities have easy access to transit options.

Promoting Economic Opportunity and Stability

Anti-Displacement Measures: Implementing anti-displacement measures such as right-of-first refusal and relocation assistance helps prevent the involuntary displacement of low-income and minority residents due to redevelopment. This supports fair housing goals by ensuring that existing residents can remain in their communities. Creating a new UDO to include measures to protect existing affordable housing from being redeveloped into higher-end properties in well-resourced areas helps preserve affordable units and prevents displacement, ensuring continued access for current and future residents. Supporting minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses in the housing production process contributes to economic equity and stability in underserved communities. This aligns with AFFH by fostering economic opportunities and reducing disparities.

Community Engagement and Involvement

Inclusive Stakeholder Input: Engaging with community members, particularly those from protected classes, in the UDO creation process ensures that their needs and concerns are addressed. This participatory approach aligns with AFFH by involving those most affected by housing policies in decision-making.

Public Reporting for Transparency & Accountability: Regularly reporting on the outcomes of ordinance changes and their impact on housing equity helps maintain transparency and accountability. Providing transparent reporting on how changes affect various demographic groups, including persons with disabilities, families with children, and communities of color helps maintain accountability and public trust. This supports AFFH by ensuring that the city's efforts to promote fair housing are effective and aligned with the needs of diverse populations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Impact Assessment: Monitoring the effects of the new UDO on housing affordability, accessibility, and integration helps assess whether the city's actions are effectively furthering fair housing. This includes evaluating changes in housing patterns, displacement rates, and the availability of affordable units. These regular reviews of the UDO's should also monitor the impact on protected class groups and underserved communities.

Adjustments and Improvements: Based on evaluation results, making necessary adjustments to the UDO ensures that the city continues to meet AFFH requirements and addresses any emerging issues related to housing equity.

In summary, rewriting North Charleston's zoning code to promote affordable housing supports the requirement to affirmatively further fair housing by reducing barriers to affordable housing, expanding housing choices, ensuring compliance with fair housing laws, promoting economic opportunity, engaging the community, and maintaining accountability. These actions help create a more equitable housing environment and advance the goals of fair housing for all residents.

Engaging and supporting minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses during the housing production process is essential for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the economic benefits of housing development. The City of North Charleston, SC, can implement several strategies to ensure these businesses are actively involved and supported:

1. Inclusion in Procurement and Contracting
 - a. **Contracting Goals:** Establish specific goals for awarding contracts to minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses (MWVBes) in the housing production process. This can include setting aside a percentage of contracts for these businesses.
 - b. **Bid Preferences:** Implement bid preferences for MWVBes to ensure they have competitive opportunities to win contracts.
 - c. **Vendor Lists:** Maintain and actively promote a list of certified MWVBes to developers and contractors involved in housing projects. This can help increase the visibility and opportunities for these businesses.
 - d. **Outreach Programs:** Conduct outreach programs and workshops to inform MWVBes about upcoming projects, bidding processes, and certification requirements.

2. Promoting Collaboration and Networking: Collaborate with local organizations that support MWVBES, such as chambers of commerce or business associations, to promote and integrate these businesses into the housing production process.
3. Monitoring and Accountability
 - a. Diversity Metrics: Implement a system for tracking and reporting the participation of MWVBES in housing projects. Publish regular reports to ensure transparency and accountability.
 - b. Performance Reviews: Conduct performance reviews of contractors and developers to assess their commitment to engaging MWVBES and meeting diversity goals.
4. Feedback Mechanism: Establish a feedback mechanism for MWVBES to voice their concerns, share experiences, and suggest improvements to the city's policies and support programs.
5. Policy and Legislative Support
 - a. Equitable Policies: Develop and implement policies that promote equitable participation of MWVBES in the housing production process, ensuring that these businesses have a fair opportunity to compete and succeed.
 - b. Certification Support: Aid with the certification process for MWVBES to ensure they can access opportunities in the housing production process.
 - c. Recognition Programs: Establish recognition programs that highlight and celebrate the contributions of MWVBES in housing development, encouraging their continued participation and success.

By implementing these strategies, North Charleston can effectively engage and support minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses in the housing production process, fostering a more inclusive and diverse economy while contributing to the success and sustainability of housing projects.

More broadly, the City does not currently have a diversity and equity plan in place, but it will develop one using Executive Order 14091 and HUD's Equity Action Plan as guiding frameworks. This is needed as there are specific and unique equity concerns to be addressed by the UDO. For example, the historical context of communities like Liberty Hill can inform a more equitable UDO.

Liberty Hill, a historically Black community established in the 1800s, has faced systemic segregation and discrimination that have limited economic growth and access to resources. This history contributes to current socio-economic disparities, which gentrification can worsen by displacing long-standing residents as property values rise. To protect these communities, a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) should include policies like affordable housing preservation, incentives for developers to include affordable units, and zoning overlays to guard against rapid redevelopment.

Community involvement in the planning process is critical. The insights of those from historically impacted areas are essential for crafting policies that address their specific needs, preserve cultural heritage, and prevent displacement. Infrastructure investments—such as improved public transportation, parks, and community facilities—should be equitably distributed to enhance the quality of life without displacing residents.

North Charleston’s affordable housing efforts have faced challenges due to past industrial development, particularly the impact of highways and rail infrastructure. These developments often lead to zoning restrictions that limit where affordable housing projects can be built, making it harder for such projects to qualify for tax incentives. Industrial areas can also raise environmental and health concerns, making nearby housing less attractive or eligible for incentives.

To support affordable housing and ensure access to tax incentives, the UDO must integrate planning efforts, address environmental concerns, and adapt incentive programs. This approach will help local governments and planning agencies promote affordable housing in historically underserved areas while mitigating the effects of industrial development. The City will track progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the UDO reforms to advance racial equity with long-term, committed targeted affordable housing unit tracking and incorporating deed restrictions for low to moderate income (LMI) households.

What is the budget and timeline proposals?

Total budget allocation to complete is anticipated to be between \$1 million and \$1.5 million. The proposed scope of work involves reasonable staff allocation for a two-to-three-year period to manage a consultant that will assist with draft and final work product. Based on the staff’s experience drafting policy documents and one form-code, which this work will be like, this is appropriate to ensure that the task is completed on budget and on time.

Roles and responsibilities will be clearly identified between staff and consultants. Staff will manage the grant, including reporting and fiscal and project management. The consultant will lead public engagements with assistance from staff. Staff will conduct all public hearings, and City staff will oversee and direct the work product based on the community and decision maker input.



Consultants will be hired to assist with engagement. Particular attention will be provided to engaging our BIPOC community. We anticipate using similar equity engagement strategies in this work as we used in the Prime North Charleston engagement. Consultants will also lead the drafting of the revised code language, developing the form codes, and the ordinance.

The City of North Charleston based its cost estimates for the work on recent contracts for similar work in the region, specifically the neighboring City of Charleston’s current effort to rewrite their zoning ordinance. The two cities have similar population size, demographics, and land area. We believe the costs to be reasonable to complete the scope of work. In addition, estimated hours were projected based on time spent on similar projects, expressed as a portion of 2,080 hours, which represents the total available hours for all full-time employees. The hourly rates were obtained from the City’s human resources department.

- Planning & Zoning Consultant to Draft UDO - \$1,000,000
- Staff Costs - \$ 333,077
- Local match (100% - Staff Costs) - \$333,077

While some funding has already been allocated for a new UDO, the City would be forced to rescope the initiative to reduce the focus on affordable housing without sufficient HUD funding. If HUD was only able to fund a portion of our request, the City will either continue to seek other

City of North Charleston, SC
FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Exhibit D Soundness of Approach
September 25, 2024

grant sources to complete the work or prioritize the activities which have the most impact on removing barriers to affordable housing.

The City has allocated two to three years to complete the work. See the preliminary project timetable below:



What capacity do you and your partners have? What is your staffing plan?

Planning & Zoning Department

The lead agency for implementing the proposed activities would be the City of North Charleston's Planning & Zoning Department (the Department). The Department is responsible for land use planning, zoning regulations, housing development, and planning permits. The Department will be supported by the Mayor's Office for grant management. The Department has in-depth knowledge of its community's needs, demographics, and local dynamics. They have established relationships with community stakeholders and can engage with residents to ensure their voices are heard in the decision-making process. The city has a long track record of success meeting the objectives of federal and state grants, especially CDBG grants. This experience includes financial management, reporting, and compliance with federal guidelines. A sizable portion of this work will be contracted with consultant(s) in partnership with the Department. The City's Procurement Office is proficient at producing and completing solicitations.

Application Writers

City of North Charleston staff wrote this proposal. Contributing staff include:

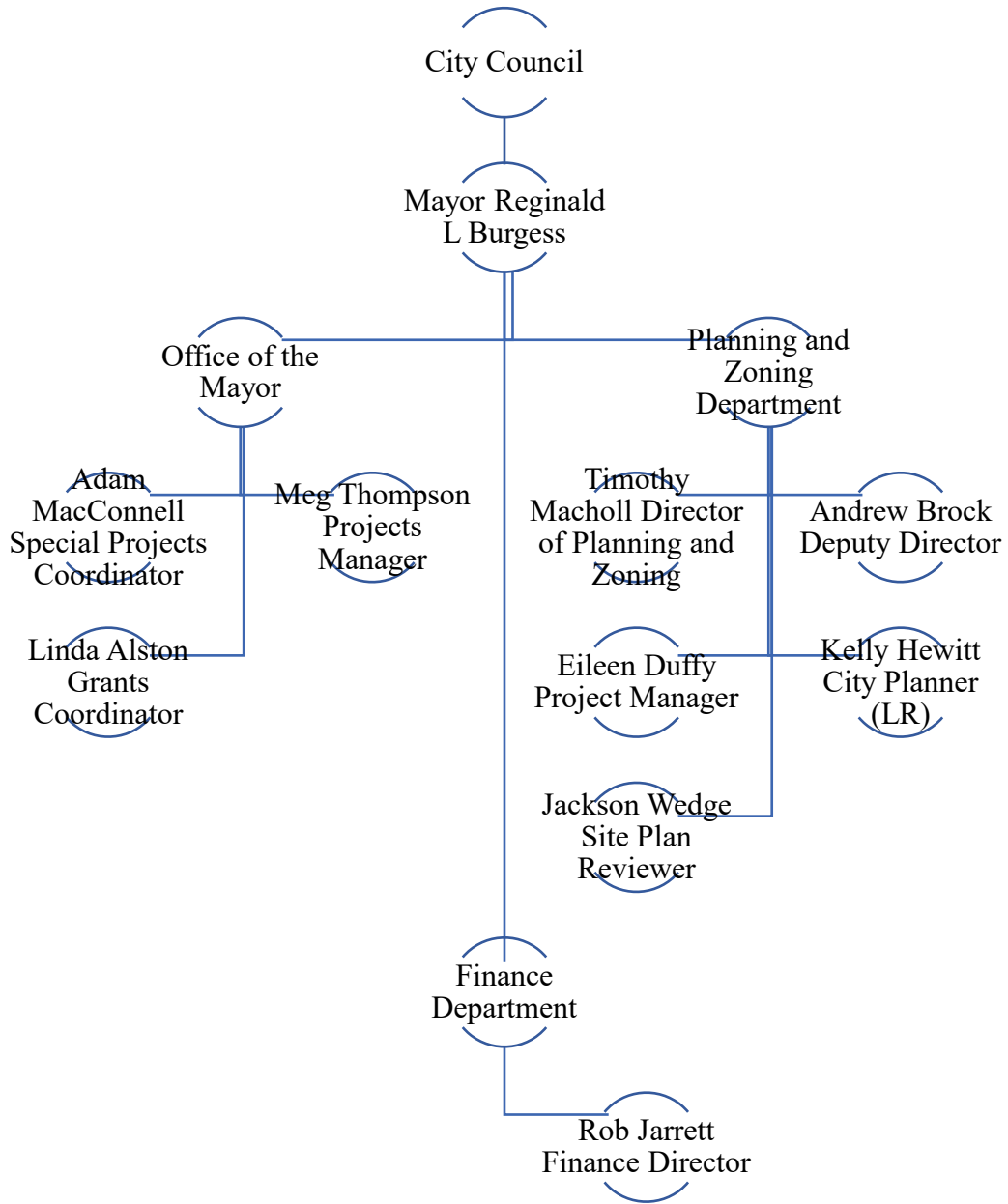
- Meg Thompson, Special Projects Manager
- Linda Alston, Grants Coordinator
- Eileen Duffy, Planning & Zoning Project Manager
- Tim Macholl, Planning & Zoning Director
- Adam MacConnell, Special Projects Coordinator

If awarded, all staff will be involved in implementing activities in the proposal. Technical assistance was provided by HUD's Thriving Communities Technical Assistance (TCTA) program, which helps local governments ensure housing needs are considered as part of larger infrastructure investment plans while also supporting equitable development in disadvantaged communities.

City Staffing

While a significant percentage of the work will be done by consultant(s), city staffing for this proposal will include six full-time staff: Grant Writer, Finance Director, Planning & Zoning Project Manager, Special Projects Manager, Director of Special Projects, and Director of Planning & Zoning. The Planning Project Manager reports to the Planning Director. The Special Projects Manager reports to the Special Projects Director. The Planning Director, Special Projects Director, and Finance Director report directly to the mayor. There are currently no vacancies, and no positions will be contingent on the award. However, the city may consider additional staffing to implement the grant product.

City of North Charleston, SC
 FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Exhibit E Capacity
 September 25, 2024



City of North Charleston, SC
FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Exhibit F Leverage
September 25, 2024

In consideration of our unique circumstances, the City of North Charleston can commit up to 50% matching funding for this proposal. While some general funding has already been allocated for a new UDO, the City would be forced to rescope the initiative to reduce the focus on affordable housing without sufficient HUD funding. See attached letter of support from Mayor Burgess.

What permanent, long-term effects will your proposal have? What outcome do you expect?

Writing North Charleston, SC's new UDO to address the barriers to producing and preserving affordable housing involves several strategic changes and reforms. These adjustments aim to create a more supportive environment for affordable housing development and preservation. Specifically, the consultant(s) will propose standards and regulations that reflect the unique character and place types that make up the city and its diverse neighborhoods, districts, communities, and civic and commercial corridors and campuses. The zoning ordinance should reflect current practices and innovative approaches that will deliver an easily understood and practicable code for future development and redevelopment in North Charleston. By addressing key barriers and aiming for measurable outcomes, North Charleston's UDO can significantly enhance the production and preservation of affordable housing, leading to more inclusive and equitable housing opportunities for its residents. Below are the expected outcomes:

Increased Housing Production:

- Increased Number of New Affordable Units, with set targets for annual increases in affordable housing production.
- More Active Development Pipeline, assessing whether changes have led to more affordable housing proposals.
- Reduction in Processing Times & Costs, resulting in faster, more efficient projects
- Enhanced Housing Variety and Accessibility:
- Increased Diversity of Housing Types: Measure the increase in the variety of housing types, indicating greater housing choice and affordability.
- Diversified Neighborhoods, leading to more integrated communities.
- Balanced Distribution facilitating a more equitable distribution of affordable housing throughout the city.
- Increased Proximity to Services, creating better access to quality amenities, including schools, healthcare, and recreational facilities.

Community and Economic Impact:

- Improved Economic Mobility, reducing income inequality.
- Broader Economic Participation, creating a more vibrant and diverse economy.
- Stable Communities, contributing to better educational outcomes, health improvements, and reduced crime rates.
- Enhanced Community Interactions, leading to stronger, more cohesive communities.

Updating the City of North Charleston, SC's UDO to remove barriers to affordable housing production can have profound long-term effects on the community, particularly in terms of reducing segregation, increasing access to well-resourced neighborhoods, and expanding housing opportunities for protected class groups and vulnerable populations.

City of North Charleston, SC
FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Exhibit F Long-term Effect
September 25, 2024

In summary, the long-term effects of creating a Unified Development Code for the City of North Charleston to address barriers to affordable housing are likely to be transformative. The city will experience reduced segregation, increased access to well-resourced neighborhoods, and expanded housing opportunities for protected class groups and vulnerable populations. These changes will contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and economically vibrant community, fostering long-term social and economic benefits for all residents.

City of North Charleston, SC
FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Advancing Racial Equity Narrative
September 24, 2024

In North Charleston, the racial composition of individuals or households likely to benefit from such a new UDO includes:

- **African American and Black Residents:** Historically, African American, and Black communities in North Charleston have been disproportionately affected by housing inequities and lower access to high-opportunity areas. Affordable housing initiatives can help address these disparities.
- **Hispanic and Latino Residents:** Hispanic and Latino populations may also benefit from increased access to affordable housing in well-resourced areas, improving access to opportunities and resources.
- **Other Minority Groups:** Other racial and ethnic minority groups, including Asian American and Indigenous populations, who are underrepresented in high-opportunity areas, will also benefit from increased affordable housing options.

By addressing barriers and ensuring that affordable housing is integrated into high-opportunity areas, North Charleston can promote greater equity and inclusion, providing underserved groups with better access to the resources and opportunities that these areas offer.

In summary, rewriting North Charleston’s zoning code to promote affordable housing supports the requirement to affirmatively further fair housing by reducing barriers to affordable housing, expanding housing choices, ensuring compliance with fair housing laws, promoting economic opportunity, engaging the community, and maintaining accountability. These actions help create a more equitable housing environment and advance the goals of fair housing for all residents.

A well-designed UDO can include provisions that ensure development benefits are equitably distributed across different neighborhoods, addressing issues of segregation and inequality. This can help ensure that affordable housing is not concentrated in only certain areas but is integrated into a variety of neighborhoods. Integrating equity-focused planning into UDOs ensures that development benefits are distributed fairly across different communities. This includes actively engaging with underserved communities in the planning process to address their specific needs and priorities.

The city has the following measures in place to progress and evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts to advance equity in our award activities. In the planning stage, the city will conduct equity impact assessments to evaluate how changes might affect different communities and adjust plans to address any potential negative impacts. After the UDO is implemented, the city will conduct regular reviews and adjust by:

- **Tracking Outcomes:** Implement a system to track the distribution of affordable housing and evaluate whether it is being spread equitably across neighborhoods. Adjust policies as needed based on these evaluations.
- **Transparency:** Ensure that data on affordable housing development and its distribution is publicly available to maintain accountability and transparency

The City of North Charleston can leverage the Prime North Charleston Comprehensive Plan and various outreach tools to effectively promote the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) while fostering community engagement.

Prime North Charleston Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a foundational document that outlines the city's vision for development and growth. It can be used to contextualize the UDO, demonstrating how it aligns with long-term goals such as sustainability, community well-being, and economic development. By referencing specific sections of the plan, the city can illustrate the UDO's relevance and importance, making it easier for residents to understand its implications.

Community Meetings

Attending scheduled community meetings is essential for gathering input and fostering dialogue about the UDO. These meetings will allow residents to voice concerns and ask questions. Informing attendees about how the UDO affects their neighborhoods will help demystify the ordinance and make the planning process more inclusive.

Official Social Media

Utilizing social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube can significantly enhance outreach efforts. The city can create engaging content that highlights key aspects of the UDO, including infographics, and success stories from similar communities. Social media can also serve as a platform for live Q&A sessions, allowing residents to engage with city staff directly.

Flyers at Public Events:

Distributing flyers at public events—such as festivals, farmers' markets, and local fairs—will increase visibility for the UDO. These flyers will be informative, yet easy to read, summarizing the ordinance's key benefits and inviting residents to learn more.

Mailing Lists:

Utilizing the mailing lists of several City Council Members is a powerful way to keep residents informed about the UDO. Regular newsletters can provide updates on the UDO, upcoming meetings, and other relevant information, ensuring that the community remains engaged throughout the process.

The Post and Courier:

Partnering with local media outlets like the Post and Courier will also be utilized in our outreach efforts. The city can submit press releases, or feature articles that explain the UDO, its importance, and its benefits to the community. Coverage in a respected publication can help

City of North Charleston, SC
FY24 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing
Affirmative Marketing and Outreach Narrative
September 24, 2024

validate the city's efforts and reach a broader audience, particularly those who may not engage with digital platforms.

By strategically utilizing these resources, the City of North Charleston will create a robust marketing and outreach campaign that informs, engages, and empowers the community regarding the Unified Development Ordinance. This multifaceted approach will not only enhance understanding but also foster a sense of ownership among residents in shaping their City of North Charleston's future.

The City of North Charleston has historically faced challenges in addressing the needs of its underserved communities, often lacking explicit resources and targeted programs to meet these unique demands. However, with the recent election of Mayor Reginald Burgess in early 2024—the city’s first Black mayor—there is renewed hope and commitment to fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment for all residents.

Mayor Burgess’s election marks a significant milestone in North Charleston’s history, symbolizing a shift towards greater representation and understanding of the diverse needs within the community. His leadership brings with it a fresh perspective and a genuine dedication to improving the lives of all residents, particularly those who have been historically marginalized.

Under Mayor Burgess, the city is poised to enhance its community outreach efforts, focusing on building stronger connections with underserved populations. This includes engaging directly with residents to understand their challenges and aspirations, ensuring that their voices are heard in the decision-making process. The mayor’s commitment to community involvement is vital in identifying gaps in services and resources, which will help tailor initiatives to address specific needs.

Furthermore, the city is exploring partnerships with local organizations and nonprofits that specialize in serving underserved communities. By collaborating with these entities, North Charleston can leverage existing expertise and resources, creating a more comprehensive support network for residents in need. This approach not only amplifies the city’s outreach efforts but also fosters a sense of community ownership and participation.

In addition to these strategies, Mayor Burgess is committed to enhancing communication with residents to provide a channel for residents to voice their concerns, share ideas, and actively participate in shaping city policies. The emphasis on transparent communication is crucial in building trust between the city government and the community it serves. With a strong commitment to community engagement and collaboration, the city is on the right path to developing effective strategies that will uplift all residents, especially those who have been overlooked in the past.

As the City of North Charleston moves forward, the community can expect meaningful changes that reflect the diverse needs of its population. The collective efforts of the city, alongside active community participation, will play a vital role in shaping a brighter, more equitable future for all residents.

City of North Charleston

- City Boundary
- NORTH CHARLESTON
- Jurisdiction
- UNINCORPORATED
- Zoning
- R-1, SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-1A, LOW TO MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- R-2, MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- R-3, MOBILE HOME RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- M-1, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
- M-2, HEAVY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
- B-1, LIMITED BUSINESS DISTRICT
- B-2, GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
- ON, OFFICE NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICT
- PDD, PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
- CRD, COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
- AG, AGRICULTURAL
- NBRD, Navy Base Redevelopment District

