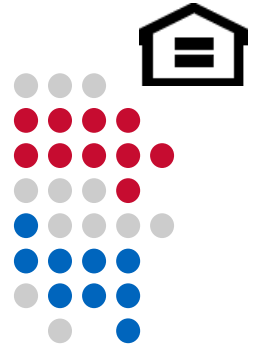




National Call to Action Alert



April 2008 Issue

Dear National Call to Action Participants,

Forty years ago, the Fair Housing Act became law. In recognition of this landmark legislation, we celebrate April as Fair Housing Month as we continue, with great energy, to pursue our continuing commitment to reduce barriers to affordable housing for Americans from every walk of life. All of us at HUD continue to be energized and excited in hearing from our National Call to Action (NCA) participants. In this addition we have summarized some of the reports we have received from around the country. In honoring your commitment, please continue to send us reports on your progress.

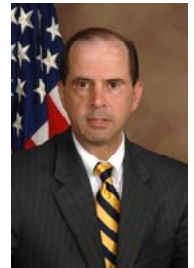
As the NCA continues to be a Departmental priority, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Secretary Alphonso Jackson for his leadership of and support for the *America's Affordable Communities Initiative* to reduce and eliminate artificial barriers strangling the production of affordable housing in America. Secretary Jackson has always been a forceful voice in support of our growing national movement and for that, we are most thankful.

As always, thank you for your commitment to public service.

A. Bryant Applegate
Co-Director

Krista Mills
Co-Director

April 2008



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Co-Director



Krista Mills
Co-Director

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Participant Updates

Pocatello, Idaho: Moving Forward

Pocatello, Idaho's Mayor has advised the city's CDBG Advisory Committee to review barriers to affordable housing. The committee conducted a survey of local public officials to obtain preliminary information for the committee, and it will continue to meet and address the issues that are identified.

If your community needs a speaker to address regulatory barriers at a conference or forum, please contact us at:

nca@newportpartnersllc.com

Broward County, Florida

Since the Broward County Board of Commissioners authorized participation in the *National Call to Action for Affordable Housing through Regulatory Reform* in April 2007, it has steadily been fulfilling its commitment to increase affordable housing by reducing regulatory barriers. Here are a few of the forward steps Broward County has taken either prior to or since making its commitment:

- Established a fee waiver process for affordable housing projects;
- Adopted mixed land use categories in the Broward County Land Use Plan (BCLUP);
- Adopted density bonus provisions in the Administrative Rules Document of the BCLUP for incorporation of affordable housing units in market rate housing projects;
- Adopted a policy in the BCLUP requiring applicants to address affordable housing as a part of the land use plan amendment process for proposals of more than a 100 net units;
- Approved joint city/county preparation of two Transit/Housing Oriented Redevelopment plans to spur redevelopment of affordable housing along major commercial corridors;
- Provided a plat exemption for two adjacent single-family or duplex units; and
- Modified development regulations to reduce the cost of redevelopment in urban areas.

Savannah, Georgia

After joining HUD's National Call to Action for Affordable Housing Through Regulatory Reform in June 2007, the City of Savannah appointed an Affordable Housing & Regulatory Reform Task Force that has met regularly since September 2007. The Task Force is looking into local, state and federal regulatory and non-regulatory barriers that impact the development and maintenance of affordable housing and quality neighborhoods.

To help identify barriers and possible solutions, the Task Force formed several focus groups that have provided valuable input. The focus groups included consumer organizations (representing renters, homeowners, home buyers, special needs populations), housing and community organizations, building professionals, and financial institutions. The Task Force partnered with the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government to help identify existing locations of and determine the demand for affordable housing. This information will be used to project future locations and demand for workforce housing.

The Task Force is currently drafting a report documenting its findings and recommendations to be presented to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah in May, 2008.

Pierce County, Washington

In Pierce County, Washington, The Housing Affordability Task Force completed phase one of their work last year, resulting in 22 recommendations towards increasing affordable housing. The final report and recommendations, recently received a VISION 2020 award from the Puget Sound Regional Council.

Two Pierce County Departments, Community Services, and Planning and Land Services are addressing the needed regulatory changes to the county's comprehensive land use plan. This includes creating a package of developer incentives that will encourage affordable housing and using county surplus land as a revenue source for affordable housing.



Savannah's Renters Focus Group

Johnson City, Tennessee

In 2002, the Johnson City Board of Commissioners established the Building for Johnson City's Future Taskforce. The fifteen-member task force was overseen by the city's Community Development Office and included city commissioners, representatives from the local planning commission, and members of the local housing development industry (builders, lenders, and realtors). The task force met for a year and in December 2003 submitted a report with recommendations for the Board of Commissioners to consider for adoption.

The recommendations included:

- Adding a new residential zone (MX-1 Neighborhood) to the zoning code which reduces development restrictions to produce quality housing in the low- to moderate-price range (\$75,000 - \$132,000).
- Partial or total discounting of city-owned property qualifying as affordable housing in the MX-1 Neighborhood zone.
- Expanding the use of the HUD CDBG and HOME Grants to assist housing developers and individual households qualifying for low- and moderate-income housing.
- Expanding city efforts to partner with for-profit and non-profit developers and local mortgage lenders to create affordable housing opportunities.
- Revising and simplifying current subdivision regulations to promote affordable housing developments in the community.
- Providing financial incentives for developers using the MX-1 Neighborhood Zone including; waiving or reducing water/sewer tap, building permit, inspection, site plan review and/or approval fees.

Johnson City's Board of Commissioners approved the MX-1 zoning code change, discounting of city-owned property for affordable housing developments, expanding efforts to create affordable housing partnerships and using HUD CDBG and HOME funding for affordable housing developments. Additionally, the Planning Commission is currently reviewing subdivision regulations in an effort to promote the development of affordable housing.

As part of the 2005 General Plan for the city, the city's Board of Commissioners approved a provision to support the development and preservation of affordable housing in the city.

Since the approval of the MX-1 zone in December 2003, forty affordable housing units have been built with another twenty-one units scheduled for development in 2008.

Johnson City also created a seven-member task force in response to HUD's National Call To Action's Affordable Communities Initiative. The task force is composed of members from the Housing and Community Development Advisory Board, city staff and elected officials.

To read a recently submitted report by Austin, Texas visit: www.huduser.org/rbc/nca/index.html

Springfield, Oregon

The City of Springfield is in the process of conducting a comprehensive Residential Lands Study. A key component of this study is an assessment of local regulatory measures and how they may impact the supply and use of developable residential land. Below is a link to their recent planning document that discusses different local "efficiency measures" and how each may impact residential land resources. Many of the measures being discussed have a direct link to housing availability and affordability.

http://www.ci.springfield.or.us/dsd/Planning/IMAGES/EfficiencyMeasures_Final%20Combined_1_7_08.pdf



Johnson City Board of Commissioners

International Housing Conference

America's Affordable Communities Initiative has been invited to address a plenary session at the International Federation for Housing and Planning to be held in Puerto Rico, in October 2008. More information will follow in the coming months.



Springfield, Oregon's newest affordable housing complex, a mixed-use new construction building.

Robert L. Woodson, Jr. Award Profile: Austin, Texas

Each edition of the *National Call to Action Alert* will feature a profile on one of the Robert L. Woodson Award recipients. The Woodson Award, established in 2005 by HUD's America's Affordable Communities Initiative, honors those communities that have expanded affordable housing opportunities by reducing regulatory barriers. In this case, Austin, Texas demonstrates another example of how a community can overcome unique challenges to create affordable housing within their neighborhoods.

Austin, Texas

In 1999, a groundbreaking report entitled *Through the Roof* described the lack of affordable housing in Austin had reached crisis proportions. This analysis concluded that local regulatory barriers, cumbersome and costly review processes, and the *Not In My Backyard* phenomenon contributed to this crisis.

In response, the City of Austin created the SMART Initiative (Safe, Mixed-income, Accessible, Transit-oriented, Reasonably priced, Meets green building standards) to stimulate affordable housing production. According to the City, nearly 4,000 affordably priced homes have been completed since the initiative's inception in 2001.

Austin, Texas is a 2005 recipient of the Robert L. Woodson Award.

Specific actions taken:

- Austin is making surplus city-owned land available to non-profit housing organizations at below-market prices for the development of affordable housing;
- The city created a new process to review all proposed changes to city codes, rules, neighborhood plans, and development fees to determine if there is a negative impact on affordable housing;
- Planners created a fast-track review of proposed SMART housing developments and establishment of a new streamlined review process;
- Local housing officials are facilitating an open dialogue between housing developers and neighborhood organizations to defuse "NIMBYISM" thereby promoting early identification and resolution of concerns and issues; and,
- Austin waives certain fees based on the amount of affordably priced housing contained in a proposed SMART development

About the National Call to Action Alert

This newsletter is prepared for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The newsletter is intended to provide assistance and support to members of HUD's National Call to Action, an initiative designed to enlist states, local communities, and affordable housing advocacy groups across the nation to commit to producing affordable housing through public participation in a national network for regulatory reform. To learn more about the National Call to Action campaign visit: <http://www.huduser.org/rbc/nca/index.html>

To receive the Alert newsletter send your contact information, including email, to nca@newportpartnersllc.com.



How To Apply

Recipients of the Robert L. Woodson, Jr., Award are selected from nominated states, counties, cities, towns, townships, and other municipalities that have significantly reduced regulatory barriers to the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families.

In selecting award winners, the review team considers these five factors: Nature of the regulatory reform, Impact, Transferability, Partnership, and Innovative approaches.

To learn more about the Woodson Award or to download a nomination application at www.hud.gov/initiatives/woodson/award.cfm

