

COMMISSION ON HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

September 23, 2020

A. Housing Production and Preservation

Sub-group members

Dave Spatafore

Ashley Spatafore

Dillion Hase – SLC HAND

Corrine Piazza – SLC RDA

Michelle Flynn - The Road Home

Danny Harris - AARP

Mike Gallegos - SLCo & Commission member

Valerie Walton - SLCo

Grant Whitaker - Utah Housing Corporation & Commission member

Francisca Blanc - Utah Housing Coalition

Tara Rollins - Utah Housing Coalition

Janice Kimball - Utah Housing Connect & Commission member

Suggested Proposals and timeline

1. *(Notice/ Update, short term - 2021 session & long term)*: UHC modified their Tax credit allocation plan (applications due October). One major change is that 10% of tax credits will be reserved for preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing. Follow this years progress and assess outcome
2. *(Short term - 2021 session & long term)*: Increase annual state funding into the OWHLF
3. *(Short term - 2021 session & long term)*: Develop a vacant land/ building database; potentially statutorily require a right of first refusal of the above stated (suitable) land to develop and/ or retrofit properties into affordable housing
 - a) Coordinate with UDOT, DFCM, and other state agencies to create the databases
 - b) School districts
 - c) Local governments
4. *(Short term - 2021 session & long term)*: Connect with and coordinate legislative development and strategies with the Utah Housing Preservation Fund (Ivory, Zions, IHC)
5. *(Short term - CARES ACT)*: Utilize CARES Act funding to purchase hotels/ motels for emergency shelter usage (and eventually convert into alternative living solutions)
 - a) If Congress does not modify the CARES act timing, this may not be possible
 - b) Gauge leadership's interest
 - c) Research for funding possibilities for renovating/ rehabbing and continued support and operational costs.
 - i. Tax credits for rehab costs
 - ii. Commitments from local governments
 - iii. Medicaid
 - iv. Specifically for seniors in these types of units: used as transitional housing while they wait for permanent subsidized housing. If a hotel is purchased for that purpose there could at least be a revenue source for maintenance where seniors typically continue to have steady income through Social Security. Any dollars used for this type of purpose could be stretched further.

- d) Can eminent domain be used in hotel/ motel situations if used for emergency shelter and /or affordable housing (and under certain and very specific circumstances). If not, this will need to be modified statutorily.
- 6. *(Short term - 2021 session)* Look into potential zoning modifications to allow SROs/ Shared living spaces/ alternative housing in areas designated for hotels/ motels
 - a) Shared housing / SROs/ Alternative housing - Definitions, terminology & typologies still in development
- 7. *(Short term - 2021 session & long term)* Work force housing:
 - a) Add a statutory definition of work force housing
 - b) Through education and/ or policies, increase the scope of what 'affordable housing' is by focusing on the need of workforce housing
 - c) Continue to discuss specific solutions for workforce house preservation and development
- 8. *(Long term)* Coordinate with WFRC, ULCT, Zions and others to enhance the conversation around smart, long term planning: overlaying smart development, economic growth, access to opportunities and transportation as a means to lowering the cost of housing. Look at all possible solutions to further incentivize smart development

B. Financial Assistance

Sub-group members

Dave Spatafore
 Ashley Spatafore
 Becky Pickle - The Road Home
 Danny Harris - AARP
 Tony Milner – SLC HAND
 Angela Price – SLC HAND
 Francisca Blanc - Utah Housing Coalition
 Tara Rollins - Utah Housing Coalition

Suggested Proposals and timeline

- 1. *(Short term - CARES Act)* Monitor and follow up on **S.B. 6009** - Cares Act and Covid-19 Assistance and Recovery Amendments
 - a) Quantify the success and failures of this bill and the landlord/ tenant rental assistance program. Monitor eviction numbers; are only certain landlords accessing the funds? Are the funds getting to the intended residents? Are there appropriate checks and balances in the process?
 - b) Use the landlord/ tenant program as a springboard to help change the narrative of rental assistance. Emphasize that the program equally benefits both the landlord and tenant. Connect with and build relationships with landlords and other stake holders to help build a coalition; discuss rental assistance as bridge, or a transitional step to self-sufficiency
- 2. *(Long term)* Discuss a rental assistance program for targeted groups
 - a) Senior citizens
 - b) McKinney Vento program (the program we discussed last year for SB 39)
 - c) Medicaid population (can funds be used for rent in certain circumstances)

C. Landlord/ tenant reform & eviction law modifications

Sub-group members

Dave Spatafore
Ashley Spatafore
Kimberly Chytraus – SLC Attorney’s Office
Jennifer Gnagey - Weber State University
Heather Lester - Utah Community Action
Melia Dayley - The Road Home
Tony Milner - SLC HAND
Harvey Day - Renter, Ogden area
Francisca Blanc - Utah Housing Coalition
Tara Rollins - Utah Housing Coalition
Angela McGuire - People's Legal Aid

Suggested Proposals and timeline

1. (*Short term - CARES Act*) Monitor and follow up on **S.B. 6009** - Cares Act and Covid-19 Assistance and Recovery Amendments. See B1 above
2. (*Short term - 2021 session & long term*): Mediation:
 - a) The statute doesn’t prohibit mediation, but does not mandate it. Potentially look at expanding the requirement for mediation. Highlight the benefits of and expand the access for both landlords and tenants
 - b) Seek funds dedicated for mediation – e.g., expand the UCA program and framework in SLCo statewide
 - i. Coordinate with the Governor’s Task Force (Mark Bouchard & Darin Mellott) and re-assess the draft proposal addressing mediation that was developed
 - ii. Expand mediation (or similar resources) to renters prior to being evicted
 - Peoples Legal Aid recently received a grant through SLCo to do this.
3. (*Short term - 2021 session & long term*): Expand education for tenants on their rights, protections and process of eviction (or how to prevent); Expand education for landlords: what an eviction does to a residents' record, alternatives to eviction, access to mediation, and other resources (financial or educational)
4. (*Long term*) Landlord / tenant/ eviction education and guide: Peoples Legal Aid is partnering with the University of Utah Law school to develop a plan for reforming housing laws in Utah. This work includes studying Utah’s housing laws, particularly those related to eviction, collecting local and national data, consulting with experts, stakeholders, and community members, synthesizing this learning, and translating it into substantive recommendations and a reform strategy. The CHA could coordinate with and incorporate some of the data collected and policies suggested. The first step could be a shared ‘layman’s guide’ of landlord/ tenant/ evictions, including definitions, terms and other basics to aid in developing and advocating for legislation.