



CADRe's Guiding Principles for Affordable Housing in the Charlottesville Region

INTRODUCTION

CADRe believes that safe, decent affordable housing is a basic human right and that each of our neighbors should have a variety of options available to them (ranging from deeply affordable rental housing, to affordable homeownership, work force housing and sufficient market rate housing) in order to create a ladder of opportunity for citizens at every income level.

We recognize the market has failed to adequately meet this need in our community and we are extremely concerned about the conditions too many of our low-wealth neighbors are facing.

CADRe also recognizes that various development patterns and projects have contributed to this crisis, that the development community has played a role in this and that we have a responsibility to be part of the solution.

We have all operated in a system that rewards construction of housing that is unattainable to local low-wealth neighbors and fails to provide adequate incentive or opportunity to provide for options at all income levels.

We want to build affordable housing.

KEY VALUES

LISTENING

Any solutions to meeting the challenge must begin by listening and hearing from those in our community who have been inadequately served. As members of the development community, we need to stand in solidarity with them and be prepared to build to meet the need and work together to create the conditions by which housing can be produced more affordably.

INCENTIVES

Incentives are generally better tools for stimulating the provision of affordable housing than regulation. As such, CADRe supports a framework of incentives which will leverage the resources of the public and private sector to provide a more robust supply of affordable housing.

HOLISTIC APPROACH

Success will require a comprehensive, multi-sectoral, regional, public private strategy for aligning needs and supply. Plans in a vacuum will not work. CADRe supports the development of clear community priorities to provide affordable housing for all segments of our population.



A SHARED COMMITMENT

Improving the local housing system in order to provide abundant opportunity and equity will require a shared commitment. As a community, we must prioritize policy, funding choices and programming that advantage the provision of sufficient affordable housing to meet the need. This shared commitment will necessitate broad acceptance that change will happen.

REMOVAL OF IMPEDIMENTS

There are multiple elements of the zoning code, underlying policy documents and current standard operating practice that likely create significant impediments to construction and preservation of affordable housing. Although we assume good faith among all who participate, we believe many of these impediments are a product of an attitude that privileges “the way it’s always been done or has been” over honest dialogue, a shared commitment and a desire to welcome innovation. We believe that we need to collectively and honestly examine many of these “sacred cows” in order to understand the choices and sacrifices that may need to be made to provide safe and decent housing opportunities for all.

NEXT STEPS

CADRe will establish an affordable housing committee to participate in, contribute to and provide leadership where appropriate for the ongoing community conversation surrounding affordable housing. We will participate in coalition with other groups similarly committed to increasing the quantity and quality of affordable housing

CADRe will advocate for changes within the funding, zoning, design and entitlement framework in our community which will provide a catalyst for private sector supply of affordable housing.

CADRe will explore alternative means of financing and building affordable housing, including community-based labor pools, volunteer organizations, non-profits and other innovative approaches that have been successful elsewhere.

CADRe will demonstrate to elected and appointed officials that solutions to vexing community problems can be found and facilitated from the grass roots up and that the development community and grass roots organizations – often pitted against each other – have common interests in creating outstanding development and providing opportunity.