



TO: The Honorable Mayor and the City Council

FROM: Ty Livingston, Director of Planning & Community Development

DATE: February 9, 2021

SUBJECT: Adoption of Housing Needs Assessment & Community Revitalization Plan

BACKGROUND:

A few years ago, the City initiated a planning process with the team from the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA). This planning process included a community survey (to which 420 responses were received), a number of public meetings and an in-depth look at the housing stock of three challenged neighborhoods in East Peoria. We had a core planning team that included members of the City Council, along with representatives from the East Peoria Housing Authority, a local church, LISC, Phoenix Community Development and the Planning Commission.

The plan being presented (available on the City's website) for adoption is very much the same as what was presented at a working session with the City Council last year – save for some minor editing and overall updates to the appearance of the document. Key take-aways include that East Peoria, not unlike many other communities, is in need of quality, affordable housing.

The three focus neighborhoods – Richland, the Kroger area, and the area around EPCHS – all have their challenges but have potential, as well. One goal from this effort is to work on updating the zoning in the Richland neighborhood. As it exists today, the zoning here encourages conflicts between uses. Given this unique mix, staff will look to work with neighborhood representatives on a zoning that better reflects the character of the neighborhood while providing sufficient flexibility for property owners to continue to improve their properties. Another goal from the plan is to work with the City Council, and other community stakeholders, to identify opportunities to rehabilitate existing affordable housing and to attract new affordable development, as well.

As with any other plan, it can only be as effective as we allow its follow-up to be. It's a guide to move the community forward in these areas but not so restrictive that it can't be modified down the road. Completion of this plan with IHDA makes East Peoria eligible for additional consideration for pursuing potential affordable housing projects over the next few years. We would be wise to take advantage of this opportunity while we have it available. Staff looks forward to pursuing the goals in this plan and implementing those components which receive community support.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval, as presented.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-108

East Peoria, Illinois

_____, 2021

RESOLUTION BY COMMISSIONER _____

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING A COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PLAN
FOR THE CITY OF EAST PEORIA**

WHEREAS, the City of East Peoria has undertaken a review and planning process with the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) that has included a community survey, public meetings, and the development of a Housing Needs Assessment and Community Revitalization Plan (the “2020 Community Revitalization Plan”); and

WHEREAS, City Officials and IHDA have worked with City staff, community stakeholders and representatives, the City’s Planning Commission, and others throughout this planning process and in the development of the 2020 Community Revitalization Plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Community Revitalization Plan focuses on providing, maintaining, rehabilitating, and developing affordable housing in the City, while looking at three key residential areas in the City that have faced challenges in recent times in relation to housing – being the Richland neighborhood, the neighborhood adjacent to the Kroger shopping center, and the neighborhood adjacent to East Peoria Community High School; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Community Revitalization Plan provides guidance, outlines a path, and presents goals for addressing the affordable housing needs in the City, including the three identified residential neighborhoods, and the maintenance and development of housing in general within the City; and

WHEREAS, the City’s completion and adoption of the 2020 Community Revitalization Plan with IHDA will allow the City to become eligible for additional consideration for pursuing potential affordable housing projects over the next few years; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby finds that it is in the best interest of the City to adopt the 2020 Community Revitalization Plan as a means to revitalize the City’s housing options, including affordable housing, that will assist the potential controlled growth of the City in the coming years;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST PEORIA, TAZEWELL COUNTY, ILLINOIS, THAT:

Section 1. The above recitations are found to be true and correct.

Section 2. The Housing Needs Assessment and Community Revitalization Plan (the 2020 Community Revitalization Plan) is hereby approved and adopted by the City of East Peoria.

APPROVED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Illinois Housing Development Authority is the only housing finance agency serving the entire state of Illinois, administering a variety of programs to ensure the creation and preservation of affordable housing for the state's communities. Proactive planning can assist communities in engaging residents, collecting data, and developing a cohesive strategy that both addresses their needs and develops strategies to realize their hopes for the future. IHDA believes that proactive planning efforts led by community representatives and residents will help ensure that development is conducted with local perspectives and vision at its core, and will lead to the most successful outcome for the individuals, neighborhoods, and organizations that comprise Illinois' communities. Undertaking a proactive planning process in partnership with IHDA can assist communities in directly understanding and connecting to the programs and products that are available for stabilizing and expanding affordable housing as a critical part of their overall development and community revitalization plan.

The City of East Peoria and IHDA have worked in partnership over the course of more than 18 months to undertake and develop a formal Community Revitalization Plan for the city, with specific focus on three target strategy areas comprised of the Richland, Kroger, and East Peoria High School neighborhoods. A variety of efforts were taken to research past planning efforts, understand local funding sources and resources, engage community residents, and work with local stakeholders and representatives to develop a plan that is relevant to the local community and driven by its residents' vision. The following Housing Needs Assessment and Community Revitalization Plan includes historical background planning efforts; demographic, economic, and housing data profiles of the plan's three strategy areas; community engagement efforts; a Housing Stock Survey; and a primary market analysis. These components draw out many current realities regarding both the City of East Peoria's housing stock condition and availability as well as overall community life throughout its neighborhoods.

A section containing goals and recommendations follows the plan's analyses, developed by the core planning team from the City of East Peoria and IHDA in response to primary themes, needs, and visions for development that were derived from the plan's various components. The following goals are presented as this plan's recommendations for primary tenets and principles to guide the City of East Peoria's future development decisions, specifically those undertaken among the plan's three strategy areas:

- Prioritize housing opportunities and community resources that meet the needs of current residents
- Work with major commercial and anchor institutions to align goals and coordinate a development vision
- Employ a community-driven coordinated plan for future land use and development
- Encourage mixed-use and variable housing development that allows for density
- Understand community needs surrounding critical services and amenities
- Support and create permanent residence for service providing agencies
- Increase accessibility and walkability within the strategy areas
- Increase pedestrian and bicycle transit opportunities while improving safety on major corridors

The final section of this plan provides guidance on a variety of funding sources and implementation tools that may be utilized to carry out components and goals of this Community Revitalization Plan. Various local, state, and federal incentive programs and resources are featured, along with an extensive list of programming and resources offered through IHDA. As a result of this partnership and planning effort, the City of East Peoria has become a member of a statewide technical assistance network that aims to connect municipalities, service providers, and housing and development experts throughout Illinois. IHDA is optimistic about the revitalization and future of the City of East Peoria and hopes that the city will see IHDA as a partner in its development and preservation of affordable housing.

Community Revitalization Team
Strategic Planning and Reporting Department
Illinois Housing Development Authority