

Advisory Council Small Group Discussions: Economic Development and Housing Policy Ideas

Date: January 9, 2019, 4 P.M.
Location: Main Library, Basement
101 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23219



At the Advisory Council's (AC) monthly meeting on January 9, 2018, the AC was provided with a summary of the big ideas shared by the public at the open houses and through the online survey related to Economic Development, Employment & Income, Culture & Tourism, and Housing. The AC was split into two groups to have two small group discussions related to Economic Development and Housing using the big ideas as a starting point. The AC members discussed these questions:

- 1. What would a successful Master Plan include related to the topic?*
- 2. What policies/elements must the Master Plan include related to the topic when it is adopted in 2020?*

Below is a summary of the ideas discussed. Please note that this is just the beginning of the conversation about policies for the Master Plan which will continue in the Working Groups and during Community Consultation #2 and future public meetings.

Economic Development

Group 1:

- Vocational/job training focused on young people and in each high school.
- Redefine what a "job" is.
 - Quality jobs that benefit people with adequate wages and benefits.
- Livable wage and/or support programs.
- Schools to teach job skills and provide help in getting a job.
- Targeted areas for job and business creation
 - A comprehensive approach
 - Different for different areas
- Incentives based on business size
 - Small business help/assistance/liaison
 - Fee abatement
- More incentives for projects that increase access and equity
 - Economic justice
- More retail
- More entertainment uses in other areas, not just downtown.
- Green incentives and green industry
- Vacant building redevelopment - incentives or force
- Temporary programming of vacant buildings
- Additional tax for vacant buildings
- Increase the PILOT

- Locate industry along I-95 further south
- Strategies for redeveloping defunct, large commercial parcels.
 - Create smaller blocks

Group 2:

- Create a small business strategy to encourage small and local businesses
 - Develop programs to create an educated work force
 - Develop technology skill in students from a young age
 - More resources for tech development in the city
 - Menu of incentives to redeploy city assets
 - Encourage reinvestment in designated corridors
 - Link Council process of identifying surplus property to incentives (define what is meant by incentives)
 - Determine what goals we have for City properties - may not all be surplus as we may have future needs (may need schools in the future, etc.)
 - Identify industrial nodes that should be protected
 - Support the Port!
 - Equity in economic development
 - Revitalization Overlay/Nodes
 - Develop priority list of where investment needs to occur and provide incentives
 - Revisit Conservation District boundaries
 - Continue tax abatement programs - incentive to help property owners
 - Different incentives for different types of corridors
 - Incentives like tax abatement for uses we want to see
 - Look to Buffalo for incentives for tech startups - companies leave when they scale up
 - Incentives biotech industries.
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Housing

Group 1:

- Tax break or abatement for long-time residents (i.e. 10 years to mitigate rising property values and taxes, income dependent?)
- Redefine affordable housing. City median income?
 - Not all affordable housing is the same
 - Education about what programs are available and the economics of building housing.
- Defined criteria for locating affordable housing. (i.e. transit proximity, other services, i.e. libraries)
- Housing options that allow for ability to walk to work
- Clear and predictable criteria so developers know what to expect
- Incentivize tree planting for new development
 - Stormwater program? Matching program?

- Walkability and universal access as a criteria/focus
- Explore creative and new temporary housing options
 - Homeless, families in crisis, etc.
 - Deconcentrate
- Density as opportunity and with green space
- Range of housing options
- Demolition review
- Plan long term for housing and density.

Group 2:

- Incentivize affordable housing
 - Housing Trust Fund
 - Land Bank - Maintains affordability
- Tax delinquent parcels should go to the Land Bank, not sold to the highest bidder
- Expand where the Land Bank/Trust invests to operate in more neighborhoods
- Connect transportation and housing
 - Transportation may change in the next 20 years
- More permissive Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations
- Public housing should be mixed income neighborhoods.
- More public housing units
- Dispersed housing for low income units
 - Could be complicated as it will break up existing neighborhoods
- Build nodes with access to what all people want - grocery stores, schools, housing, jobs
- Incentivize developments accessible by all citizens
- Encourage diverse housing types
- Infrastructure improvements for accessibility - tax improvement district
- Incentivize mix of housing options and affordability
 - Redevelop neighborhoods as retirement communities
- More ADA accessibility to the parks and the River
- Amenities located near housing