



Memorandum

To: Amanda Chiancola, Planner, City of Salem

From: Alex Koppelman, Housing and Land Use
Planner II, MAPC

On: March 20, 2019

Re: Salem Inclusionary Zoning + Engagement
Housing Forum, 03-05-2019

On March 5, 2019, the MAPC project team (Karina Milchman, Alexis Smith, and Alex Koppelman) and City staff facilitated a housing forum to inform the public about inclusionary zoning along with a variety of other tools that can be used to expand and diversify housing in the city. Participants were able to provide their thoughts on these tools, and which ones they'd like City staff to move forward with. This memo summarizes the event, the main themes discussed by the community, and next steps in the Salem Inclusionary Zoning + Engagement project.

A total of 88 members of the Salem community signed in at the event, although it is estimated that there were between 100-150 attendees based poll response rates. Those that registered indicated they were from several different areas of the city: Downtown, North Salem, South Salem, Salem Willows, Salem Mack Park, The Point, Bridge Street Neck, Collins Cove, Witchcraft Heights, Gallows Hill, the McIntire District, The Historic Derby Street Neighborhood, and several wards and streets. Some participants also came from Boston, Watertown, Hamilton, Peabody, Lynn, and Swampscott.

OPEN HOUSE AND MAYOR DRISCOLL'S WELCOME

The event started with an open house for attendees to learn about housing need in Salem from information provided in handouts, posters, and interactive maps. Then Mayor Driscoll welcomed the crowd and spoke about Salem's housing goals and initiatives.

PRESENTATION + SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Following the Mayor's address, MAPC gave a presentation on the state of housing in the region, housing affordability in Salem, the challenges of developing housing that's affordable to Salem residents, and a summary of Salem's recent housing initiatives.

Then City staff presented four tools that could be used to address housing need in Salem:

- An accessory dwelling unit ordinance update
- Leveraging publicly-owned land for housing development
- A condominium conversion ordinance
- Rental subsidies

After each brief overview, MAPC staff, City staff, and members of the project’s Advisory Committee helped facilitate small group discussions with participants about the pros and cons of each tool. Each group recorded their thoughts on flip charts and posted them on the back wall of the room for everyone to see. This feedback is summarized into the main themes below; the numbers indicate how many times this theme was mentioned if more than once.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Pros	Cons
Meets housing needs and increases housing stock x 14	Difficult to regulate or requires new regulations x 9
Supports Salem residents: Seniors + people with disabilities x 13 Families and relatives x 8 Students and young professionals x 2 Service industry workers	Insufficient parking x 6
Allows for Airbnb and additional income x 6	Affects character of single-family areas x 5
Cost effective Increases property values x 4 No cost to City to implement x 2	Could increase taxes and rent x 3
Public and political support x 4	Opposition to zoning changes + variances x 3
Allowed in several communities x 3	Potentially too much density or perception of too much density x 2
	Loss of green space

Questions/Comments

- How would use, quality, and privacy be regulated? x 7
- Is there enough parking? x 3
- What’s the impact on property values?

Leveraging Public-owned Land

Pros	Cons
Efficient use of underutilized land and buildings x 14	Loss of other opportunities, limited land and open space x 11

Cost effective and appealing to developers x 10	Incompatible land or land restrictions x 5
Increases or preserves housing stock x 6	Increased traffic and parking issues x 3
Gives City more control over housing Local preference x 6 Micro housing x 2 Senior housing	Displacement/gentrification x 2
Can accommodate homeless residents	Increases density x 2
	Local preference
	Don't sell this land to developers of market-rate housing

Questions/Comments

- Is there enough land for it/what exists now? x 2
- Will this help with environmental clean-up?
- Will historic buildings be preserved?
- Would it continue to be under public ownership?
- Would it be just for Affordable Housing? What's considered "affordable"?

Condo Conversion Ordinance

Pros	Cons
Maintains rental housing and keeps rents down x 14	Limits condos for new homebuyers or increases their cost x 8
Protects tenant rights and prevents displacement x 8 Of seniors specifically x 2	Hard to pass legislation and regulate x 7 Historic preservation
Helps people build equity to purchase a home x 7	Restricts value of someone's property x 3
Public support and policy control x 3	Limited opportunity for the tool
	Not family-friendly
	Encourages Airbnb by companies

Questions/Comments

- This tool is difficult to understand x 4

Rental Subsidies

Pros	Cons
Can help meet the housing gap and needs of cost burdened households x 14	Costly, and takes funding from other resources x 10
Immediate needs, not permanent x 7	Not a long-term solution x 5
Helps Salem residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless x 2 • Cost burdened x 2 • Kids out of school • Families • At risk of displacement • Single-parent households 	Could inadvertently increase housing prices x 5
Disperses Affordable Housing throughout the city x 2	Creates dependency on the government x 2
Incentive for landlords	Discriminatory landlord practices

Questions

- Where does the money come from?
- What happens if funds run out?
- Who would manage it?
- How do you keep the money local for families/people who want to stay?

A final presentation about inclusionary zoning (IZ) and the incentives that could be used in an IZ ordinance was given by MAPC staff. Small groups discussed the pros and cons of each incentive, summarized below.

Inclusionary Zoning

Density Bonus	
Pros	Cons
General support x 8	Increases density Could change the character of an area
No cost to the City x 2	Increases traffic + reduces parking
Helps Salem residents Renters	Could change the character Less green space
	Doesn't meet the needs of families

Parking Reduction	
Pros	Cons
General support x 4	Not enough parking for cars/not enough transportation options x 10 South Salem Bring back streetcars Shuttles Bikes
Reduces cars on the road/encourages public transit x 4 Better for the environment Fewer seniors driving x 3	Public opposition x 2
Site specific	

Streamlined Permitting	
Pros	Cons
Makes it easier to develop Affordable Housing x 9	Less local input x 2
	Legal challenges

Overall	
Pros	Cons
General support/increases housing supply x 8	The affordability requirement isn't great enough Strengthen incentives to increase affordability requirement
	Focus on a range of Salem residents, not just low-income
	Potential abuse by developers
	Environmental burdens

Questions/Comments

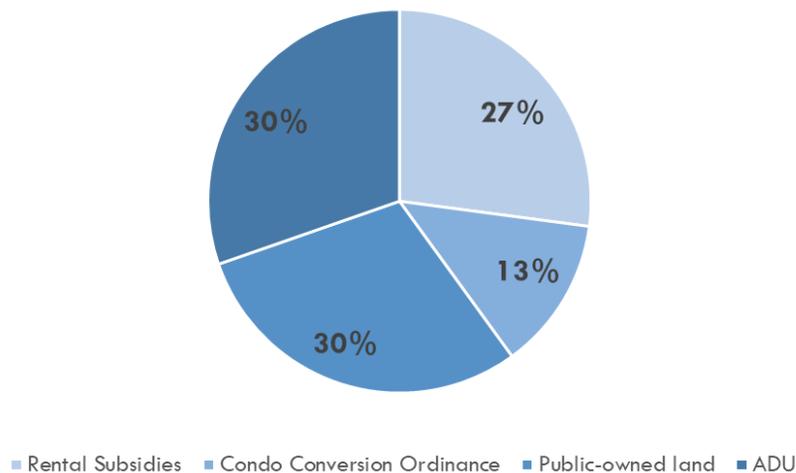
- No parking incentives outside of downtown
- What parking incentives are already being offered?
- Create more apartments within existing buildings
- People with older homes need to downsize

- Need to educate board members and elected officials
- Can city services and transportation infrastructure meet demand created by additional housing? x 2
- How will this affect school capacity?

POLL

After the presentations and discussions concluded, the audience was polled to see which tools the City should pursue in addition to inclusionary zoning. Results from the poll showed public support for an accessory dwelling unit ordinance update, leveraging publicly-owned land, and rental subsidies. An accessory dwelling unit ordinance update received 47 responses (30%), public-owned land received 46 responses (29%), rental subsidies received 42 responses (27%), and a condo conversion ordinance received 20 responses (12%).

Poll results



QUESTIONNAIRE

The City also gathered feedback from participants through a housing forum questionnaire that was distributed at the event. 131 questionnaires were filled out and turned in. The results are summarized below and can also [be viewed in detail at this link](#).

Representation

- There was a diverse range of attendees in terms of age, time living in Salem, neighborhood lived in, and income.
- There weren't many family households in attendance. The majority of participants live in either a two-person household (42%) or alone (26%).
- 70% of those that attended own their home, while 30% rent.

Affordability

- A significant portion of attendees do not feel their housing is affordable (44%).
- A clear majority of attendees (89%) indicated they know someone who has struggled to find housing they could afford in Salem.
- The majority of attendees (65%) said they came to the forum to show support for creating new Affordable Housing.
- 88% of attendees responded there either isn't enough housing for low- and moderate-income families (58%) or there isn't enough housing for low- and moderate-income seniors (30%).

Concerns about new housing

- Attendees' top fears about additional housing in Salem were: I'll get priced out of Salem (33%), traffic will be worse (29%), there's not enough on-street parking (25%), taxes will go up (12%), and Salem's identity will be lost (12%).

NEXT STEPS

1. MAPC staff will prepare a document with draft language for the inclusionary zoning ordinance.
2. MAPC staff will facilitate an Advisory Committee meeting on April 10th to provide an update on the project's progress, present the draft inclusionary zoning ordinance, and prepare for an upcoming workshop.
3. The remaining Salem Housing Stories interviews will be filmed on March 23rd and April 10th (if needed) and combined with existing footage to create the final video.
4. A workshop will be held on April 23rd to help increase public awareness and understanding of the inclusionary zoning ordinance and an accessory dwelling unit ordinance update.