

Honorable Mayor and Council,

Thank you for this update on Richmond's affordability

(Item 9)

In this report (plan Page 12, dated June 6<sup>th</sup> 2019), the city says it has "secured" 2000 new affordable housing units since 2017. It is data we need to examine <sup>carefully</sup> and <sup>understand</sup> better ~~to fully~~ make sense of this number.

Some of my questions/comments after seeing this data :

1. What does secured mean? <sup>It likely means</sup> Does it mean that the city has approved that these units will be build soon? Any idea how many in this tally are already built or how many years till these are built?
2. Also built may not mean rented out. For the 726 market rental units in this tally does the city have any mechanism to ensure that these are not rented out short term and intermittently or lie empty? The city's current short term bylaw allows boarding and lodging part of a home without being a B&B and the city has had limited success so far in patrolling this. You should consider removing the boarding and lodging for short term unless the home is a principal residence. Otherwise, I believe the market rental units will end up playing a very limited role in helping affordable rental options.
3. The tally (on page 12 makes no mention of **what size units are there in these various categories**. It may be very useful to account for size of the units I request that in the tally the size of the unit be listed under each category. So it would be clearer whether what is being built is a good fit for the needs in the community or not. It will also help identify what sized units are in shortfall.
4. Why are market rental units listed under a separate category than secondary suites? I assume that both will be rented at prevailing market rates. <sup>Also</sup> Secondary suites are accepted as affordability housing contribution when re-developing single family homes, so if I understand correctly there is no cash in lieu contribution. Does the city ask that the suite be rented out at affordable ratest rates. What if the suite stays EMPTY? Then this contribution would amount to nothing in providing an affordable choice.
5. It may be good alongside this affordable report of what is being built, a report of what was demolished over the same period of time :Its size, neighborhood and whether it was rented. This should include data from both legal and illegal suites . Adding this dimension will help the public see what is the **net effect over the same time frame**. Without adding this dimension the data from demolitions and its effect on the lack of affordability is obscured from the picture. Also, according to the affordability report from 2017, 80% of the city's renters find their rental in this secondary market of older homes.
6. A neighborhood based housing stock for each year will help. This data could include: How many homes of what kind exist, how many (of what kind were demolished in that year in that neighborhood). What was build and how much was affordable (under various categories: Low market, market rental, below

market rental or any other kind). If this data was in an excel spread sheet the city and its residents would have a complete picture at their finger tips and as you know: transparent and trustworthy data is a sound beginning for making effective policies that account for what is really happening in the housing sector in the city. This will help the city set overall city goals as well as neighborhood based goals for affordability that better match school capacity and maybe plan for new schools when they are needed.

7. How much prior (upto 2017) shortfall (in terms of various sized units) do we have in terms of affordability needs in the city?

I hope answers to these questions will make it easier to understand the city's affordability goals for the community and help us plan better and make this city more affordable for many who are struggling with housing issues currently.

.I would like to request that some part of the 2.9 million dollar surplus that the city has be diverted into building affordable non-market housing and housing that utilizes other forms of ownership such as coops and the city help the developer to seek funding to build these from other levels of government.

Thanks for listening.

Niti Sharma