



City of Bloomington Common Council

Packet of Materials – Addendum

Posted on Tuesday, September 10, 2024

Wednesday, 11 September 2024
Consensus Building Activity at 6:30pm



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON COMMON COUNCIL

NOTICE

Common Council Consensus Building Activity (CBA)

Date: Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Time: 6:30 pm (projected end time 8:30 pm)

Location: City Council Chambers, #115, Showers, 401 N. Morton

The public may also access this CBA at the following link:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/87029231969?pwd=adFyOZuNvIbNckdQh7726QgTCLRVHn.1>

Focus on Street Homelessness: Part 2

Focus Question:

“What actions should the City Council take to address street homelessness and support the work of others addressing street homelessness?”

AGENDA

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Recap of August 14 CBA session on street homelessness**
3. **Presentation: Proposals for City action**
 - A. Short-term – Greater availability of public restrooms for unhoused individuals
 - B. Long-term – Revisions to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to allow for more affordable housing options
 - Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) buildings
 - Revising the definition of “family” to address the housing distribution problem
4. **Guidelines for discussion and group agreements**
5. **Breakout Groups: Focused discussion of 2 proposed areas for UDO revisions**
6. **Large group debriefing**
7. **Next Steps**

As a quorum of the Council or its committees may be present, this gathering constitutes a meeting under the Indiana Open Door Law (I.C. § 5-14-1.5). For that reason, this statement provides notice that this meeting will occur and is open for the public to attend, observe, and record what transpires.

Auxiliary aids are available upon request with adequate notice. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please call (812) 349-3409 or e-mail council@bloomington.in.gov.

Posted: 06 Sept 2024
Amended: 10 Sept 2024

Last month's session began with the focus question: "What actions should the City Council take to address street homelessness and support the work of others addressing street homelessness?"

After listening to public dialogue and reading through the detailed notes from the first session, the Council chose two possible courses of action to explore further, one short-term and one long-term. Tonight, we will give you an update on the short-term item and then deliberate two long-term solutions in small groups facilitated by Councilmembers.

Proposed short term action: Expand public restroom hours to be 24/7.

Proposed long term actions: Revise the Unified Development Ordinance to (1) add Single Room Occupancy buildings as an allowed use, (2) Change the definition of 'family' in the ordinance

Long-Term Action: Revising the Unified Development Ordinance

1. Add Single Room Occupancy (SRO) buildings as an allowed use

- a. An SRO is a building where individuals rent rooms but share bathrooms and a kitchen. Rooms can be single or double-occupancy.
- b. We could either revise the Residential Rooming House definition (see below) and allow this use in more areas, or we could add a new use "Single-Room Occupancy Building" and make new rules as to where it's allowed and whether there should be other restrictions
- c. Bloomington currently has a similar use in the UDO, called **Residential Rooming House**, which is a building in which lodging, with or without meals, is provided for compensation, including but not limited to a building designed as a single-family dwelling, that is occupied by a group of persons, usually for periods of 30 days or longer.
 - Currently allowed in certain residential districts and mixed use districts.
 - In multi-family residential districts: a) the owner of the property must occupy the rooming house as their primary residence. b) no residential rooming house shall contain more than four bedrooms, not including the living space occupied by the residential rooming house owner.
 - No bedroom occupied by a person other than the residential rooming house owner shall be rented for a period of less than 30 consecutive days.

Potential Benefits: Low-cost option for individuals or couples either being diverted from homelessness or moving out of homelessness. Could include support staff or not.

Potential Drawbacks: Depending on size and zoning district, such buildings could fail to blend into existing neighborhoods.

2. Change the definition of Family

Issue: In most zoning districts, only up to three "unrelated" individuals under the age of 55 can live in the same dwelling unit.

UDO Definition of Family: An individual or group of persons that meets at least one of the following definitions:

- a. An individual or a group of people all of whom are related to each other by blood, marriage, or legal adoption, foster parent responsibility, or other legal status making the person a dependent of one or more persons legally residing in the household under federal or state law.
- b. A group of no more than five adults aged 55 years of age or older living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit.

- c. A group of people whose right to live together is protected by the federal Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1988, and/or the Bloomington Human Rights Ordinance, as amended and interpreted by the courts, including but not limited to persons that are pregnant.
- d. In single-family residential districts, a group of no more than three adults, and their dependent children, living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit.
- e. In all other zoning districts, "family" also includes a group of no more than five adults and their dependent children, living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit.
- f. A group of people who are shareholders in the same cooperative corporation that owns a facility meeting the definition of cooperative housing in which no more than two adults per bedroom occupy the facility.

Options to address the issue:

1. Delete the age 55+ exception.
2. Increase the number of unrelated individuals in (d) to either 4 or 5.
3. Limit the number of individuals according to the number of bedrooms in the house (1 or 2 per bedroom) instead of per house
4. Make one or more of the above changes while at the same time increasing enforcement of noise and parking regulations

Potential benefits:

- Higher number of affordable bedrooms in a single house
- Greater possibility for filling vacant bedrooms with people who need a place to live
- Allows chosen families to live together (those not tied by blood or marriage)

Potential drawbacks:

- More parking space needed to accommodate additional drivers
- More noise from more people living in one house
- Messy home exteriors/yards

Group Deliberation Questions

Asking about each action separately:

What is important, from your perspective, as we consider these options?

What actions would best meet our needs and community values? What might we need to give up in order to do that? How could we meet the challenges that would arise?

Group agreements

(voluntary, if you choose to participate in a group)

To support the spirit of constructive conversation so everyone feels supported to share their experiences and thoughts:

1. **Speak from your own experience, using “I” statements, being honest and respectful** [everyone is an expert on their own perspective]
2. **Listen to understand** [Stay engaged as much as you can.]
3. **It’s okay to disagree -- do so with curiosity, not hostility.** [You might want to ask others for clarification, like “*Would you please say more about ---*”]
4. **Be concise so everyone has a chance to speak**

If you do not choose to practice with us this evening but want to stay, feel free to sit in the “Open Space” area.