



SAPPHIRE NEIGHBORHOODS

What is a sapphire neighborhood? “Sapphire” neighborhoods are areas which have an older housing stock, with affordable rents and home prices.

What are the HousingNOLA plan’s recommendations for preventing displacement, improving fair housing, increasing sustainable design, improving neighborhood quality of life, and increasing accessibility for special needs populations in sapphire neighborhoods?

Preventing Displacement:

1. Make better use of publicly owned property (HANO, OPSB, and tax adjudicated) and require that some properties be offered to market for affordable housing only, coordinate release with other funding rounds (LIHTC, HOME, Private), create more homeownership opportunities
2. Freeze tax increases for low income homeowners and property rented to low income families
3. Practice Inclusionary Zoning
4. Create a loan fund for rehabs (homeownership and rentals w/income restrictions)
5. Prioritize resources (NHIF, CDBG, NOLA Housing Trust Fund)
6. Increase density by building small secondary units on properties with single family homes (i.e. mother-in-law units.
7. Remove barriers for affordable housing, such as parking restrictions, zoning changes, permits, inconsistent tax assessments, inconsistent reviews by boards and commissions. (HDLC, BZA, NCDAC)
8. Attract diverse funding sources
9. Implement basic health and safety standards for occupied housing
10. Encourage anchor institution incentives, such as workforce housing.
11. Create first-time homeownership opportunities.

Fair Housing:

1. Create a Housing Mobility Program for vouchers
2. HANO implements revisions to Criminal Background policy consistently at all properties (policy currently show all arrests, and it should show only convictions, and factor in time lapsed since and type of crime)
3. Increase access for voucher holders, pass legislation prohibiting denial based on source of rental payments.
4. Prioritize investment in new affordable housing
5. Update the City's Analysis of Impediments
6. Educate citizens about discrimination against the seven classes:
 - a. Race
 - b. Color
 - c. Religion
 - d. National Origin
 - e. Sex
 - f. Families with children
 - g. People with disabilities
7. Provide education for landlords, realtors and homebuyer counseling agencies on tenants' rights



8. Increase awareness of tenants' rights to receive information about denials, encourage automatic disclosure (current policy will disclose only if requested and within a month)
9. Improve Tenants' Rights by standardizing leases, implementing a Rental Registry, preventing landlord retaliation, and making housing documents available in multiple languages.

Sustainable Design:

1. Advocate for stabilizing insurance rates
2. Implement improved building standards to reduce insurance costs
3. Create a feasible plan for living with water
4. Work with public entities who manage vouchers (LHC and HANO) to provide incentives to developers for increased energy efficiency improvements.
5. Require energy audits
6. Reduce costs of implementing green building techniques with builders coordinating to share those costs
7. Remove barriers to individuals effecting change to create energy efficiency in their own homes
 - a. Develop a one stop center/ website with all information on energy efficiency.
 - b. Create a list of all existing energy programs
8. Stabilize and increase various tax credit programs
 - a. Retain Historic Tax Credits
 - b. Re-implement solar credits
9. Incentivize developers to build green, historic
10. Collect Utility Data to provide additional data to craft policy recommendations that foster energy efficiency.
 - a. Advocate for increased energy efficiency and sustainable utility rates.

Improving Quality of Life:

1. Focus on transit-oriented development overlay in area with high investments like Canal Street @ Bio District, Lafitte Greenway, St. Claude Corridor-
2. Promote alternative land use:
 - a. Encourage land banking
 - b. Reduce blight
 - c. Reduce vacancies
3. Improve health outcomes by zip codes and neighborhood

Access for Special Needs Populations:

1. Homeless
 - a. Create more deeply affordable units in any new developments by offering developer incentives.
 - b. Provide homeless preferences for tax credit buildings and senior housing-- every 5th unit or 10th unit.
2. Veterans:
 - a. Implement project based housing and encourage properties to attach vouchers to units
 - b. Encourage landlords to house veterans.
 - c. Increase voucher payment to match market rates.



3. Latino/Vietnamese populations:
 - a. Require landlords to produce multi-language documents
 - b. Create a rental registry
 - c. Target resources into changing neighborhoods.
4. LGBTQ population:
 - a. Facilitate a point-in-time count for transgender community
 - b. Penalize discrimination
5. Determine action items for the following groups:
 - a. Persons with disabilities (mental & physical)
 - b. Formerly Incarcerated Individuals:
 - c. Individuals living with HIV/AIDS
 - d. Domestic Violence Victims
 - e. At Risk Youth (16-24 years)
 - f. Elderly
6. Require more data to be collected on special needs populations.

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