Affordable Housing Strategy Working Group

Summary of Working Group Meeting #3
Wednesday, July 19, 2017

The meeting was an opportunity for the Working Group to confirm direction on the key components of a future Housing Trust Fund (HTF) organization. In preparation for the meeting, the Group was split into small teams and asked to determine the following:

- A value statement for the HTF
- Top three activities for the HTF to focus on
- The geographic area(s) the HTF should serve (city, county, specific municipalities)
- Necessary expertise for the eventual HTF board

The groups shared their proposals with the larger Group to inform their discussion of where and how the HTF should focus its efforts and what type of capabilities and leadership it may require. The Group came to a preliminary consensus about the key points and czb will build on that to craft a proposal for the HTF organization, to be presented in September.

Value Statements: czb will blend the proposed value statements into a single statement and share it as part of a proposal in September.

Activities: The Group largely agreed that the organization should play three main roles:

1. Equity Investor and Lender. Initially, with finite funds the HTF organization will not likely be able to grant funds. With a potential mandate to participate in creative mixed-income projects with significant market rate components, it also may not need to. As an equity investor, the HTF will be able take risks that balance patience with longer-term upside. As a lender, the HTF will seek to be the "last money in" with short-term repayments (no more than 5-7 years) in order to keep any loan funds replenished and liquid as quickly as possible.

2. Housing Thought Leader and Champion. The development and coordination of housing policy aimed at maintaining a full housing ladder is a complex undertaking. There are multiple stakeholders in housing work, but no one can achieve policy goals unilaterally. A convener and think tank of sorts is needed at the intersection of multiple local governments, the private sector, and philanthropy. The HTF can fill this role.

3. Land Bank. Acquisition and disposition of property in service of short-term objectives and longer-term policy goals is a responsibility that few organizations, whether in the public, private, or non-profit sectors, are both able and willing to take on. But achieving the Greenville community's housing goals will require that an entity be able to do exactly that.

Geography: The Group agreed that the HTF should work countywide, especially if county government becomes a formal partner, but that early opportunities are likely to be inside the city or just on its outskirts.

Board Composition: The following categories of organizations were offered by members of the Group as either desirable or potentially required:

- Foundations
- City & County Council
- Major industry and small/mid-size employers
- Faith-based leadership
- Community/neighborhood advocates
- Greenville Housing Authority
- Greenville Transit Authority/GreenLink
- Non-Profit and For-Profit Developers
- Lenders
- Real Estate Professionals – attorney, accountant, finance/banking, realtor
- Beneficiaries/clients
- Marketing/Media
- School District
- Social services
- Public policy/advocacy
- CRA banking
- Nonprofit lending

The Working Group briefly discussed the organizational entity that may serve as the vehicle for initial HTF activities. czb will prepare a list of key organizational elements that a HTF should possess and compare the benefits and challenges of using an existing entity or creating a new entity.

For the next meeting in September, czb will craft a proposal for the HTF organization for review, feedback and refinement by the Working Group. czb expects to deliver a proposal to the Working Group on Friday, August 25. Small groups (assignments via email) will meet between that date and the September meeting (tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 6) to review the proposal and develop feedback and critiques.