



Carmel Mayor's Housing Task Force

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

Last Revised: 09-10-2024

Acknowledgements

Mayor Sue Finkam

Speakers and Panelists

Marchelle Berry, VP of Affordable Housing Development, Volunteers of America, Ohio & Indiana
Andrea Davis, Executive Director, HAND Inc.
Mark Juleen, Chief Operating Officer, J.C. Hart
Kelli Lawrence, CEO, Onyx+East
Andrea Miller, Indianapolis MPO
Clint Mitchell, Owner & CEO, Estridge Homes
Justin Moffett, CEO, Old Town Companies
Chris Pryor, MIBOR Realtor Association
Kryn Sausedo, ECONorthwest
Mike Thibideau, President & CEO, Invest Hamilton County
Jim Thomas, Co-Founder and Principal, Cityscape Residential
George Tikijian, Vice President, CBRE

Task Force Members

Adam Aasen, Carmel City Council
Dave Bowers, Carmel Redevelopment Commission
Barbara Eden, Carmel resident
Todd Fenoglio, Carmel Clay Schools
Matt Kaercher, Merchants Capital
Chris Pryor, MIBOR, Task Force Vice Chair
Jack Russell, OneZone Chamber of Commerce
Aletta Sanders, HAND, Incorporated
Christine Zoccola, Carmel Plan Commission, Task Force Chair

City of Carmel

Bric Butler, Meeting Coordinator, Department of Community Services
Mike Hollibaugh, Director, Department of Community Services
Jeremy Kashman, Chief Infrastructure Officer
Adrienne Keeling, Planner, Department of Community Services
Henry Mestetsky, Director, Carmel Redevelopment Commission

Members of the community who have been participating in this process, including 29 speakers during meetings and those who have contributed more than 50 letters to the task force.



TASK FORCE PROCESS SUMMARY



Mayor Sue Finkam’s Housing Task Force was established to act on one of the key building blocks of her Elevate Carmel Vision Plan, specifically in the Smart Development and Strong Neighborhoods platform to *complete a comprehensive review of housing inventory and needs in our community*. This Task Force views their role in this initial effort as a launching pad to gather and measure meaningful information and provide guidance to future task forces, commissions, and boards for further consideration and study.

A team of local leaders and Carmel citizens was appointed by the Mayor to study the state of housing in the city and to ensure the housing needs of all Carmel residents and support workforce needs of the business community. The nine-member Task Force was launched at a public meeting in February 2024 and has since met monthly to discuss, listen, and learn about issues, trends and sentiments related to housing, current conditions for housing, and potential future growth in Carmel. The meeting topics were sequential in a way to help the Task Force and public build a shared understanding of our community’s housing situation, through connected layers of information provided by subject matter experts in housing, multi-family housing, economics, city planning. An important part of each task force meeting from February through July was open input from residents of Carmel.

February	Carmel’s economy and position in the Indianapolis Region
March	Central Indiana housing study, Consumer Housing Preferences
April	Single Family residential market and construction trends
May	Multi-family residential market and construction trends
June	Carmel economic and labor market forecast; affordable housing
July	Carmel resident hearing on housing issues and sentiments
August 8	Task Force working session discussion on housing challenges and problems
August 29	Task Force working session discussion on findings and recommendations
September 12	Presentation of the report to the Task Force and Mayor Finkam

All meetings to the Task Force were publicly noticed, live streamed and recorded. The Task Force meetings can be reviewed and all documentation related to information gathering, expert testimony and public input can be found on the Housing Task Force page on the city’s website:

<https://www.carmel.in.gov/government/departments-services/community-services/housing-task-force>



TASK FORCE MEETINGS OVERVIEW & KEY FINDINGS



The Mayor's Housing Task Force held a series of meetings from February through September 2024. The meeting topics were sequential in a way to help the Task Force and public build a shared understanding of our community's housing situation, through connected layers of information provided by subject matter experts in housing, multi-family housing, affordable housing, economics, city planning. An important part of each task force meeting from February through July was open input from residents of Carmel. The series of meetings concluded with working sessions to allow the task force to identify and refine the challenges and to discuss recommendations.

Meeting 1: Carmel's economy and position in the Indianapolis Region

February 23, 2024

Speakers:

Mayor Sue Finkam
Kryn Sausedo, ECONorthwest

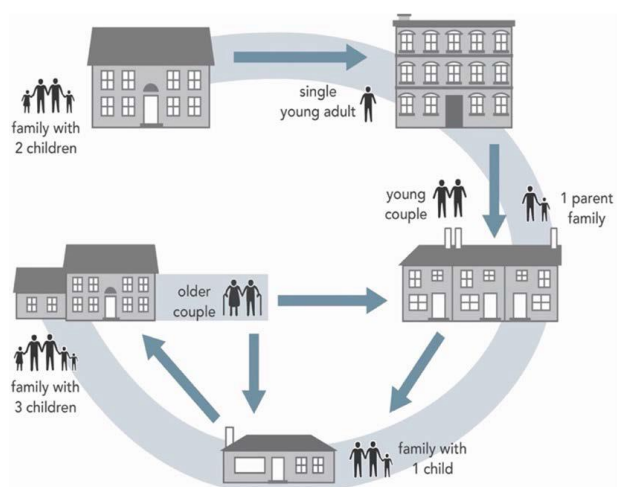
Introduction and Overview

Mayor Sue Finkam kicked off the first meeting of the Carmel Housing Task Force explaining that the task force was formed to address questions and concerns raised during her campaign about the city's growth, density, and housing needs. The mayor emphasized the challenges the city is facing, including the increasing mobility of the workforce, housing availability, accessibility, and affordability. She also noted the higher demand for rentals from both our younger demographic who are just starting out to those 55 and older who don't want the requirements of mowing or keeping up a two-story home. The mayor thanked the task force members for their time and expertise and looks forward to the discussion.

Presentation:

Kryn Sausedo from ECONorthwest presents data on Carmel's demographics, housing stock, and housing costs which were included in a recent City of Carmel Positioning Strategy Report conducted in 2023. The presentation covers Carmel's population growth, the age distribution compared to the larger metropolitan area, the predominance of single-family detached homes, and the higher housing costs in Carmel compared to surrounding cities. The presentation also looks at rental prices and affordability, as well as the recent construction of new housing units in Carmel.

Sausedo concludes with two recommendations to keep Carmel accessible for workers to live. First that the city should explore and support office-to-residential conversion, where feasible. Also that Carmel should explore and allow for smaller homes, also known as missing middle housing. Smaller units may appeal to a variety of households and allow for more movement in the housing market as older households seek to downsize and younger households, single-person and single-parent households seek options.



SOURCE: ECONORTHWEST

"Middle housing" encompasses a range of housing types with multiple units that are more similar in scale to single-detached homes rather than apartment buildings

MISSING Middle Housing



SOURCES: ECONORTHWEST, OPTICOS DESIGN

Task Force Discussion:

The task force members and audience members engage in a discussion, raising questions and providing feedback on the information presented. Topics include the impact of interest rates on the housing market, the need for data on the effects of new housing developments on property values, the challenges of getting missing middle housing approved, and the potential for converting underutilized office spaces into residential units.

Speakers:

Andrea Miller, Indianapolis MPO
Chris Pryor, MIBOR Realtor Association

Central Indiana Housing Study Presentation

Andrea Miller from the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) presented findings from the Central Indiana Housing Study. Key points included rising housing costs outpacing wage growth, a shortage of smaller ownership units, an oversupply of larger single-family homes, and contributing factors like market forces, zoning restrictions, and public opposition. The MPO provided a toolkit of strategies for communities to address housing affordability.

Carmel Housing Market Insights

Chris Pryor from the MIBOR Realtor Association shared insights on the Carmel housing market from January 2017 to February 2024. He highlighted the latest data from February 2024 with the high median home sale price of \$584,000, low inventory with only 78 listings, and quick sales within 7 median days on the market.

Chris also shared some Hamilton County results from a 2022 central Indiana community preference survey which showed a preference for walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods despite a surplus of large-lot single-family home construction. Affordability was a major concern, with a 45% gap between respondents' rating of importance versus satisfaction.

Public Comments and Discussion

Members of the public raised concerns about the impact of new developments on existing neighborhoods, the role of corporate investors in the housing market, and suggestions for zoning changes to allow more diverse housing types like smaller homes, multi-unit properties, and conversions of underutilized commercial properties to residential use. The task force discussed strategies such as home repair programs, tax abatements, and zoning updates to address housing affordability and availability issues.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Regional Housing Market:

Housing costs rose faster than purchasing power between 2020 and 2022. The median sales prices of single-family homes increased by an average of 31.6% and rents increased by 21.2%, while wages rose by 8.8% on average.

There are **mismatches in the housing market** when comparing the current inventory to consumer preferences.

Most notably:

- Not enough smaller ownership units (up to 2 bedrooms)
- Too few affordable rental or ownership units for those with lower incomes
- Surplus of mid-and higher-cost 3 and 4+ bedroom houses

Source: Central Indiana Housing Study, Indianapolis MPO, 2024

Carmel Housing Market:

\$584,250

Median Sale Price, single-family

78

Active Inventory, single-family

7

Median Days on Market, single-family

Source: MIBOR, February 2024



Panelists:

Kelli Lawrence, CEO, Onyx+East

Clint Mitchell, Owner & CEO, Estridge Homes

Justin Moffett, CEO, Old Town Companies

National and Local Housing Challenges

The panelists outlined various national and local housing challenges, including supply-demand imbalances since 2008, rising costs of land/materials/labor, changing customer needs across generations, affordability pressures, interest rate impacts, and delays in entitlements/approvals processes. Specific challenges in Carmel included land scarcity, the need for redevelopment, and residents being 'locked in' to homes due to low interest rates.

Diverse Housing Needs and Solutions

Discussion covered the diverse housing needs of different demographics like millennials, families, and empty nesters/seniors. Potential solutions mentioned included higher-density development, missing middle housing types (duplexes, townhomes, condos), vertical/urban living, public-private partnerships, and zoning changes to allow more flexible development. Challenges included costs, approval processes, and community acceptance of density/change.

Affordability Challenges and Strategies

The high costs of land, construction, and development in Carmel make affordability very difficult for new construction, with estimates of \$500,000+ for entry-level homes/condos. Strategies discussed included adding accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in existing neighborhoods, redeveloping older areas with missing middle housing, public-private partnerships, and zoning overlays to preserve affordable areas. However, community resistance and homeowner association rules were noted as potential barriers.

Role of Local Government and Regulations

The role of local government in addressing housing issues was examined. Speakers praised Carmel's professionalism but noted approval delays and high standards as cost factors. Objective zoning allowing more housing diversity by-right, development fee reductions, and infrastructure support from the city were suggested. However, the need to balance housing goals with preserving community character was also highlighted.

Public Comments and Discussion

During the public comment period, residents raised concerns about preserving affordable existing neighborhoods from redevelopment and 'mini-mansions', as well as the importance of sustainability in new construction. Other comments highlighted the regional nature of housing affordability challenges. The task force discussed the need for actionable recommendations beyond information-gathering.

Panelists:

George Tikijian, Vice President, CBRE

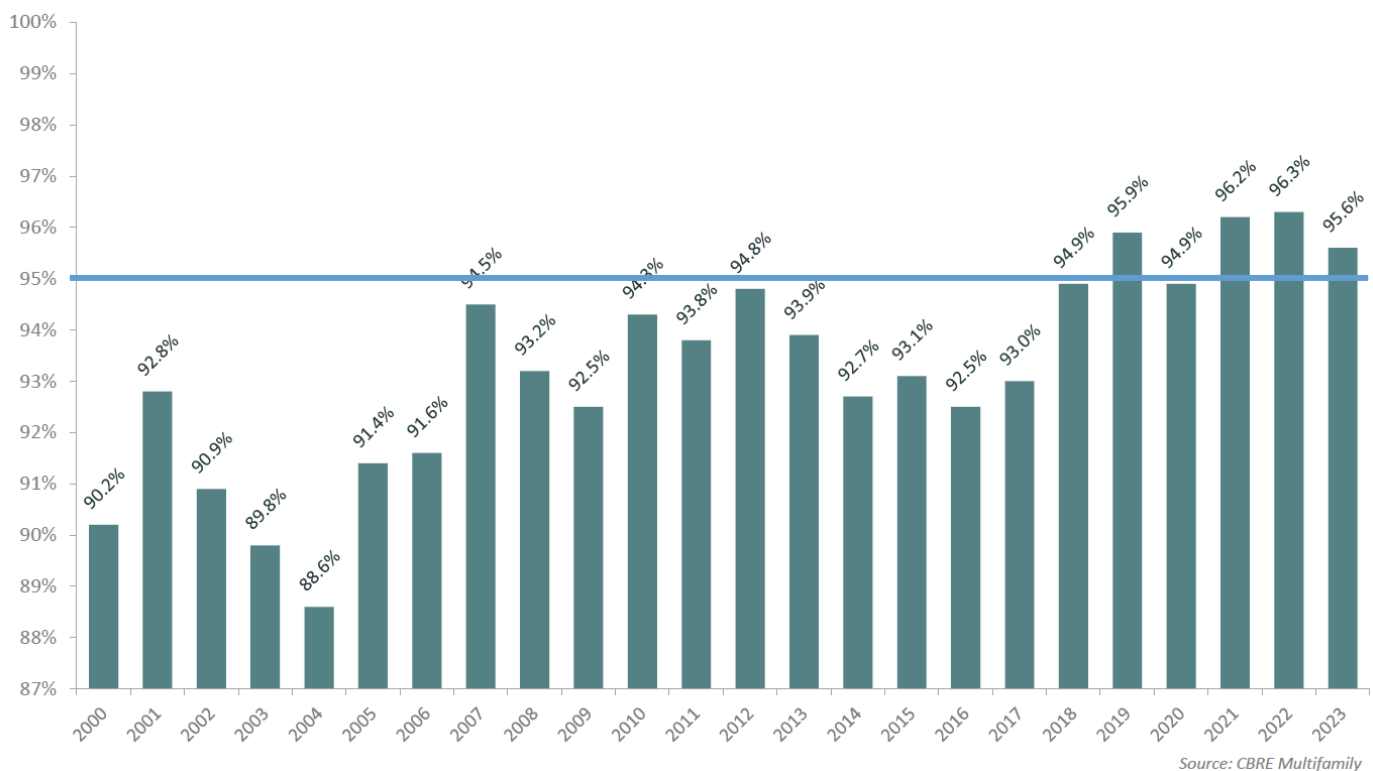
Mark Juleen, Chief Operating Officer, J.C. Hart

Jim Thomas, Co-Founder and Principal, Cityscape Residential

Market Overview and Trends

George Tikijian presented an overview of the Carmel apartment market, including historical data on building permits, deliveries, absorption rates, occupancy rates, rent growth, and comparisons between single-family and multi-family housing. The data showed steady growth in the apartment market, with occupancy rates around 95% and consistent absorption of new units. Rent growth has accelerated in recent years, with newer properties commanding higher rents.

Carmel Historical Average Occupancy Rate



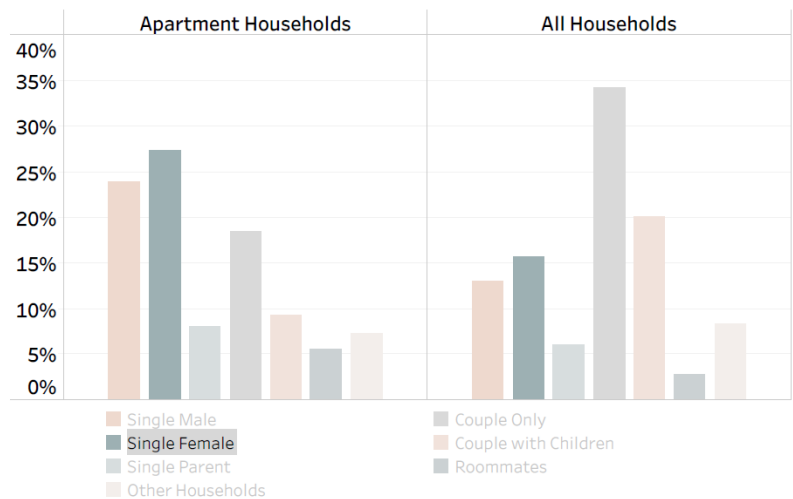
— 95% = Full Occupancy



Demographics and Lifestyle Choices

The panel discussed the demographics of renters in Carmel, which span various age groups, including young professionals, couples, families, and empty nesters. Mark Juleen shared data from JC Hart's Carmel properties, with 51% of residents aged 18-35, with around 23% in the 36-55 age group. The discussion highlighted that renting is often a lifestyle choice driven by factors such as amenities, walkability, and financial considerations, rather than just a temporary solution before homeownership.

Living Arrangement



Source: NMHC tabulations of 2022 American Community Survey microdata, US Census Bureau. Updated 11/2023.

Amenities and Community Integration

The importance of amenities in multi-family housing developments was discussed, with panelists noting trends like co-working spaces, dog parks, and fitness centers. However, the panelists also emphasized the role of shared community amenities, such as the Monon Trail and walkable neighborhoods, in attracting renters. The integration of renters into the community was also addressed, with panelists arguing that renters are often invested in the community and contribute to its vibrancy.

Traffic Impact and Development Process

The panel addressed concerns about the impact of multi-family housing developments on traffic. Developers typically conduct traffic studies and work closely with the city's engineering department to assess and mitigate potential issues. The development process, including zoning, permitting, and infrastructure improvements, was also discussed, with panelists highlighting the involvement of various stakeholders and the importance of adhering to technical standards and regulations.

Affordability and Workforce Housing

The challenge of providing affordable and workforce housing in Carmel was a topic of discussion. Panelists acknowledged the difficulty of delivering units at lower price points due to rising construction costs and land availability. Subsidies, incentives, and creative financing solutions were mentioned as potential avenues to address affordability, but the panelists emphasized the complexity of the issue and the need for a balanced approach.

Housing Mix and Future Development

The panel discussed the importance of finding the right mix of housing types in Carmel, balancing the preservation of traditional single-family neighborhoods with the need for growth and density in the urban core. The challenges of accommodating future growth while maintaining the character of the city were addressed, with panelists suggesting a focus on infill development, redevelopment, and higher-density projects in appropriate locations.

Panelists:

Marchelle Berry, VP of Affordable Housing Development,
Volunteers of America, Ohio & Indiana

Andrea Davis, Executive Director, HAND Inc.

Mike Thibideau, President & CEO, Invest Hamilton County

Affordable Housing Development Strategies

Marchelle Berry, Vice President of Affordable Housing Development at Volunteers of America, shared insights into the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC), which incentivizes private investment in affordable rental housing. She showcased examples of high-quality, attractive affordable housing projects across Indiana, dispelling misconceptions about their appearance and impact on communities. Berry explained the program's financing structure, involving tax credit equity, soft loans, and city support, and highlighted the importance of intentionality and collaboration with communities to meet their specific housing needs.

Housing Attainability and the Hamilton County Housing Collaborative

Andrea Davis, Executive Director of HAND Inc., a non-profit housing developer, emphasized the need for diverse housing options to accommodate various income levels and life stages in Hamilton County and Carmel. She presented data from the Indiana United Way's ALICE report, which showed that around 7,500 households in Clay Township (20%) cannot afford the basic cost of living. Davis introduced the Hamilton County Housing Collaborative, a group working to address housing affordability issues and promote a continuum of housing options, from emergency shelters to homeownership. The collaborative's efforts include a community awareness campaign and exploring concepts like community land trusts to preserve long-term affordability.

Labor Market Forecasts and Housing Implications

Mike Thibideau presented findings from the Hamilton County Talent Insight 2030 report, a comprehensive labor market forecast. The report projects continued job growth in Carmel, outpacing population growth and creating a need for more workers to commute into the city. Thibideau highlighted the mismatch between Carmel's highly educated workforce and the educational requirements for many open positions, particularly in sectors like food service, sales, and healthcare. He emphasized the need for

KEY TAKEAWAYS

2024 Housing Sentiment Survey

86% think having diverse housing options is important, very important or extremely important

72% have struggled with or know someone who has struggled to afford housing in Hamilton County

88% do NOT think there is enough affordable housing for older adults

89% do NOT think there is enough affordable housing for young adults and recent graduates

Source: Hamilton County Housing Collaborative

2030 Labor Market Forecast

Carmel has more jobs than employed residents, and the gap will only continue to increase as Carmel's jobs sector is projected to grow +10% by 2030, faster than central Indiana, the Midwest and the US.

Hamilton County will have **15,700 more jobs than employed residents** in occupations related to **food preparation and serving, sales, personal care services, building maintenance, office administration, and education**.

Source: Talent InSight 2030, Invest Hamilton County 2023



housing options to attract and retain workers across various occupations, including those in high-demand fields like childcare and home health aides. Thibideau also discussed the potential for public-private partnerships between employers and housing developers to create targeted housing solutions for specific industries or occupations.

Preserving Existing Housing Stock and Neighborhood Vibrancy

The discussion touched on strategies for preserving existing reasonably-priced housing stock and maintaining neighborhood vibrancy. Suggestions included rehabilitation programs, facade improvement grants, and exploring concepts like community land trusts to maintain long-term affordability for homeowners. The importance of intentional planning and collaboration with communities was emphasized to avoid repeating historical challenges faced by other cities.

Meeting 6: Carmel resident input meeting on housing issues and sentiments

July 25, 2024

Resident Concerns and Comments

Numerous residents took the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions on various housing-related topics. Some expressed concerns about the recent increase in apartment development, the potential loss of Carmel's suburban character, and the impact on infrastructure and the environment. Others advocated for more diverse and affordable housing options to accommodate different income levels, young professionals, and the growing workforce. Residents also discussed the preservation of existing affordable neighborhoods, the role of incentives and public-private partnerships in housing projects, and the need for a balanced approach to development.

Task Force and City Responses

Task force members and city staff provided insights and clarifications in response to residents' comments and concerns. They discussed the challenges of creating affordable housing, the occupancy rates of existing apartments, the role of redevelopment in specific areas, and the city's efforts to plan for future housing needs. The City also addressed concerns about the impact of development on infrastructure and the environment, and the importance of preserving traditional single-family neighborhoods.

Discussion on Specific Housing Strategies

The meeting included discussions on specific housing strategies, such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), build-to-rent developments, and the potential for redevelopment along corridors like Meridian Street and U.S. 31. Residents shared their perspectives on these strategies, with some expressing support and others voicing concerns about potential impacts on existing neighborhoods.

Closing Remarks

In the closing remarks, task force members acknowledged the diverse perspectives and priorities among Carmel residents regarding housing development. They emphasized the complexity of the issue and the need to consider various factors, including economic development, affordability, infrastructure, and the character of existing neighborhoods.

Meetings 7 & 8: Task Force working sessions:

Discussion on housing challenges, problem statements, and recommendations

August 8 and 29, 2024

Speakers:

Henry Mestetsky, Director of the Carmel Redevelopment Commission

Jeremy Kashman, Chief Infrastructure Officer

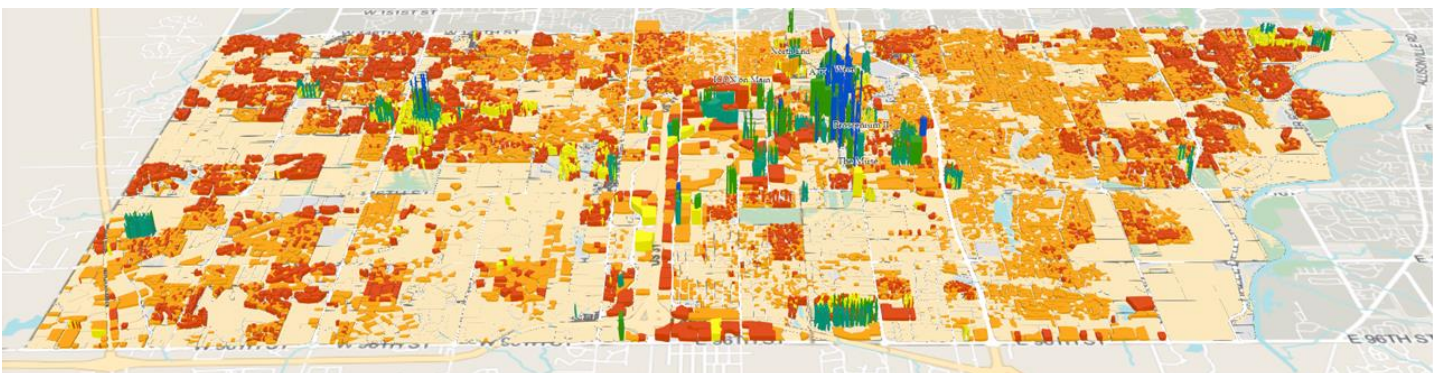
Discussion Overview

The primary focus of these meetings was for the Housing Task Force members to discuss the challenges identified throughout the process and start talking about potential recommendations; however, two speakers have been added to the agenda to address ongoing public comments about dense developments and their effects on traffic. The chair acknowledged that the task force might need an additional meeting to complete the discussions, but the goal was to have a meaningful conversation and make progress towards the final report due in September.

Presentation on Density and Assessed Property Values

Henry Mestetsky, Director of the Carmel Redevelopment Commission, presented a 3D map of assessed property values in Carmel, highlighting the financial benefits of density. He explained that denser developments, particularly in the central core, generate higher assessed values per acre, providing a "piggy bank" for future infrastructure maintenance and city services. The presentation aimed to address concerns about density by showcasing its positive financial impact on the city.

Assessed Value Per Acre



SOURCE: CITY OF CARMEL

Traffic Management Strategies

Jeremy Kashman, the Chief Infrastructure Officer, discussed traffic management strategies in Carmel. He provided historical data on traffic volumes and explained how improvements to road networks, mixed-use developments, and parallel corridors have helped mitigate traffic congestion. Kashman addressed concerns about increased density leading to gridlock, emphasizing that the city works closely with developers to incorporate appropriate road connections and adjustments for each project.

THE CHALLENGES



The Task Force members submitted draft language serving to define the primary problems and challenges to serve as the basis of potential solution recommendations. Member input from analysis and evaluation of the expert testimony, relevant housing article and information, market data and public input were coalesced into six main Challenge /Problems Statement categories, as follows:

1. Lack of Supply
2. Increased and Shifting Demand
3. Density and Growth
4. Affordability
5. Economic Development
6. Other Considerations

The Task Force refined the six Challenge/Problem Statement categories at a public meeting on August 8, 2024, that are intended to create a framework for recommendations moving forward:



Lack of Supply

- We are experiencing a nationwide long-term housing supply shortage.
- We have a scarcity of land available in Carmel for additional housing development.
- We lack a sufficient supply of diverse housing types for all in Carmel to meet the changing needs of current and future residents – there is interest in some missing middle housing.
- There is a desire for Carmel to be accessible for younger “legacy” residents, while also providing options for residents to age and remain in Carmel.
- A low inventory of homes for sale in the market and low vacancy rates in apartments are stifling the ability for residents to move into or to upsize or downsize within the Carmel market.



Increased and Shifting Demand

- There is tremendous demand for housing (both owned and rented) in Carmel due to the high quality of life, schools and job growth.
- We are seeing an increase in the desire to live in walkable urban neighborhoods that offer amenities, as well as suburban neighborhoods with sidewalks and a connected pedestrian and bicycling network.

KEY CARMEL DATA

PEOPLE:

40.3: Median age

24.3% age under 18 years

15.7% age 65 years and over (up from 9.7% in 2010)

HOUSEHOLDS:

2.61 average household size (down from 2.72 in 2010)

35.4% households with one or more people under 18 years (down from 43.9% in 2010)

39.3% households with one or more people 60 years and over (up from 27.7% in 2010)

8.5% 65 years and over living alone (up from 6.2% in 2010)

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS:

41,456 Total housing units

73.1% Ownership rate

75.6% Single-family detached

50.2 % of housing units contain 4 or more bedrooms

INCOME:

\$130,332 median household income

Source: 2022 ACS 1-year estimates



- Businesses and employees are increasingly seeking locations in walkable areas that offer amenities over traditional office parks.
- There is increasing demand to purchase smaller 1- or 2-bedroom homes or townhomes.
- There is increasing demand to purchase homes with the primary bedroom on the main level or ground floor.
- Multifamily units in Carmel are attracting a wide range of demographics such as retirees and empty nesters, in addition to the traditional single-person or newly formed households who are saving to purchase a home.



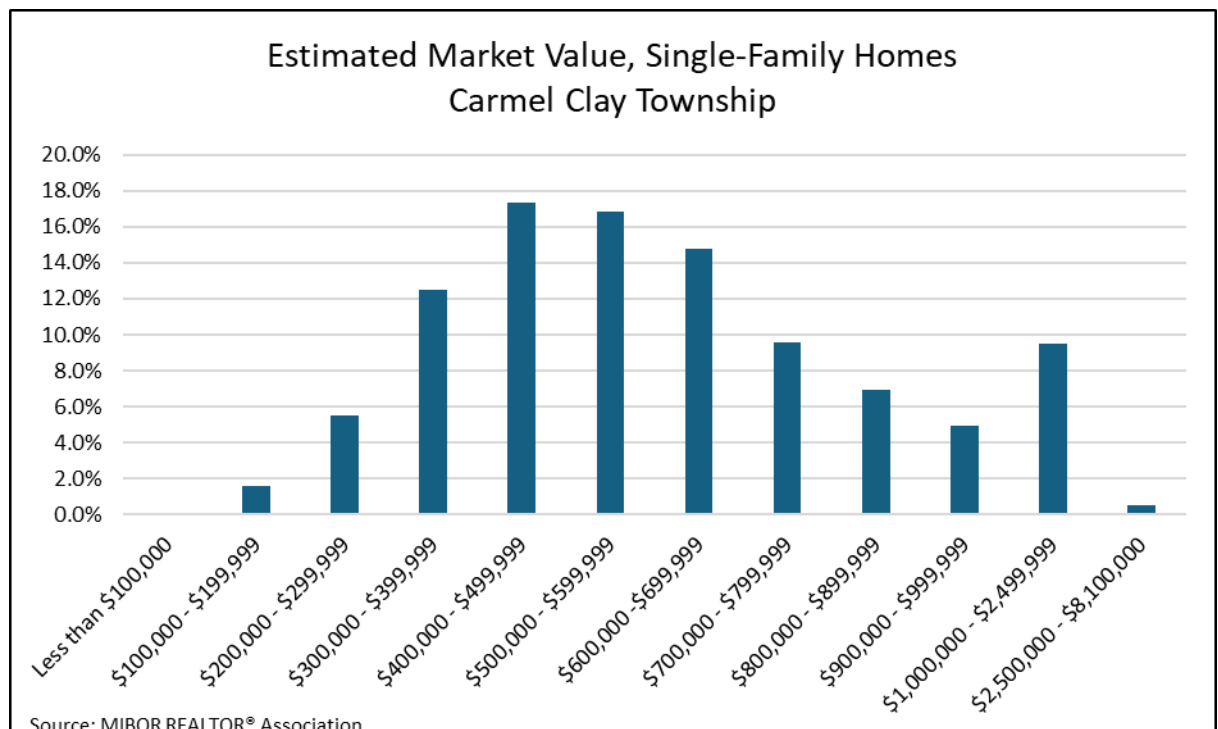
Density and Growth

- Population growth for Hamilton County is expected to continue to outpace central Indiana, the state and U.S. growth rates, with Carmel forecast to exceed 110,000 by 2030.
- Residents are concerned about density and growth, especially large apartments, loss of quality of life, traffic, and loss of natural areas, greenspace, and trees.
- Residents are concerned about protecting the character and vitality of existing neighborhoods.



Affordability

- Housing prices and rents have increased substantially, and affordability is a real concern for households earning less than the median income, but also for households with earnings at or slightly above the median income.
- Diminishing supply and increased demand for land available for development have driven land costs significantly higher.



- There are market forces on existing affordable housing/neighborhoods (e.g. increasing values, interest rates) which are pricing out senior citizens and younger residents, gradually limiting the housing choices to investors or buyers with higher incomes.

- There are market forces (e.g. higher land and construction costs, interest rates) limiting the construction of new affordable housing, particularly to households earning at or below the median income.
- For purposes of this report, affordable is identified as mortgage or rent payments that do not exceed 30 percent of a household's income. This approach addresses affordability across a wide spectrum of income levels.



Economic Development

- Housing is an Economic Development issue. Carmel has more jobs than employed residents, and the gap will only continue to increase as Carmel's jobs sector is projected to grow +10% by 2030, faster than central Indiana, the Midwest and the US. Without new housing options, the competition for existing housing will only get fiercer.
- By 2030 it is forecasted that Hamilton County will have 15,700 more jobs than employed residents in occupations related to food preparation and serving, sales, personal care services, building maintenance, office administration, and education.
- The lack of housing options is one of several challenges for employers and employees in Carmel and across the central Indiana region. A lack of housing near jobs increases commute times and transportation costs, which can be particularly difficult for the retail, service, and portions of the health care industries.

Other Considerations

- The development standards and approval process affects development outcomes.
- Capital market constraints and financing tools have an influence on what is being developed.
- Neighboring communities have or are developing housing supply in the region. However, for this supply to relieve some of Carmel's needs requires existing residents to leave the Carmel community (e.g. senior housing), and employees to rely on individual automobiles for commutes.

Section 4

RECOMMENDATIONS



The Task Force recommendations listed below are the initial result of bringing an informed housing conversation to the forefront in Carmel, including voices from industry leaders, practitioners, and Carmel residents. The Task Force acknowledges that housing is a complicated and multi-faceted issue which will require a variety of solutions and a long-term strategy and vision to keep moving forward.

1. **Continue the Carmel Housing Task Force Effort.** Establish a Carmel Housing Commission as a permanent committee to advise the Mayor, Plan Commission and City Council. The Housing Commission would serve to evaluate specific housing policies, assess the implementation of Housing Task Force recommendations, evaluate housing needs in response to the changing housing market, and other matters related to housing. Some of the initial tasks assigned to the Carmel Housing Commission include researching options regarding incentives and funding strategies for new affordable housing units and developing a plan for the City's naturally occurring affordable housing.

Responsible Party: Mayors' office
Timeline: 3 months

Challenges Addressed:



2. **Develop a Housing Strategy and Vision Plan.** Prepare a Housing Strategy and Vision Plan which builds upon the Task Force problems and recommendations for apartment and owner-occupied housing supply. Plan will further identify lifecycle of housing need (e.g., starter home, growing family, downsizing for seniors). Within this Plan, include housing goals and measurable metrics and policies for the City's Comprehensive Plan. The effort will involve the new Housing Commission and will include community outreach to provide Carmel residents with the opportunity to participate in the development of this Plan. Educational materials related to the strategies of this Plan, or other housing-related topics, should be developed to provide information and training to a variety of audiences, including elected officials, members of appointed commissions and boards, and the general public.

Responsible Party: Department of Community Services
Timeline: initiate in 2025

Challenges Addressed:



3. **Protect Existing Single-Family Neighborhoods.** Protection of existing single-family neighborhoods should be a priority. Develop and adopt residential infill guidelines to guide new construction helping ensure design of new houses and the character of new neighborhoods is compatible with their surroundings.

Responsible Party: Department of Community Services
Timeline: completion by January 2026

Challenges Addressed:



4. **Build upon the Comprehensive Plan.** The Comprehensive Plan has several policies related to housing and protection of existing neighborhoods which should be highlighted, evaluated, and measured. New, housing and neighborhood specific policies based on these recommendations should be drafted, evaluated, and adopted.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Department of Community Services
Timeline: initiate January 2025



5. **Facilitate Development of Missing Middle Housing.** Currently, Carmel and the region does not have enough of the smaller ownership units that are desired by both seniors looking to downsize and young, first-time home buyers. The City will encourage the development of these “missing middle” housing options, where appropriate, prioritizing walkability in the central core. This effort will be supported by the assessment of zoning regulations.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Parties: Department of Community Services and
Redevelopment Commission
Timeline: Immediate



6. **Adopt a Development Strategy for new Apartment Construction.** To ensure that the right mix of housing is achieved and no one aspect of housing is overbuilt, the City will adopt a clear and mindful approach to evaluate the amount, location and design of future multifamily housing. This development strategy for apartment development will emphasize that new apartment buildings should serve primarily as a complimentary part of mixed-use development projects whenever possible. Further, the City should carefully consider financial incentives offered for development of single-use apartment projects.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Carmel Redevelopment Commission
Timeline: Immediate



7. **Acquisition of Green Space.** A consistent request from residents is the desire for more open gathering space in the central core. The City should identify parcels of land for green space acquisition in the urban core with an additional emphasis on preserving existing trees and planting more trees.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Mayor and City Council
Timeline: Ongoing



8. **Assess Current Zoning Regulations.** Perform an assessment of current zoning regulations to determine whether revisions should be recommended to address gaps in the Carmel housing market, as well as to support open space creation and tree preservation efforts.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Department of Community Services, Plan Commission and City Council

Timeline: initiate in 2025



9. **Establish a committee to explore approaches related to Accessory Dwelling Units.** Appoint a committee to reevaluate and make recommendations on the approval process and appropriate standards, conditions and locations for ADUs.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Plan Commission

Timeline: initiate in 2025



10. **Create and publish a series of maps and data to communicate and quantify existing inventory and desired outcomes.** Some examples include: (1) existing areas of different housing types, (2) areas where new housing types would be appropriate, (3) inventory of vacant or unplatted land, (4) information about cost burdened households.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Department of Community Services

Timeline: initiate immediately, completion within 9 mos.



11. **Establish a Housing Repair Program.** Home repair programs can play an important role in ensuring that people can stay in their home safely and comfortably. Therefore, the City should create a program designed to assist constrained homeowners with funding for essential repairs, home and yard maintenance. In creating this program, issues to consider are: (1) funding sources (e.g., grant funds, City contributions, private donations, (2) types of repairs and maintenance covered; (3) application and qualification process; and (4) collaboration with other non-profit or service organizations.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Code Enforcement (Department of Law)

Timeline: One year



12. **Prioritize the infill, conversion or redevelopment of underutilized commercial property and parking areas.** Work with property owners, particularly along the US 31 corridor, to explore options for new housing, public spaces, and amenities to complement existing employment and hospitality offerings.

Challenges Addressed:

Responsible Party: Economic Development

Timeline: Ongoing



13. **Actively seek new collaboration opportunities locally, regionally, and statewide.** The City should participate in broad and ongoing dialogue with a variety of committees, commissions, agencies, neighboring communities, etc. These collaborations should strive to share information, create strategies, seek grant or funding opportunities to work together to develop new or maintain existing affordable housing. Collaborations should also be considered for issues indirectly related to housing, such as transportation and mobility, labor market, and basic needs such as hunger assistance.

Types of collaboration could include but are not limited to: Mayor’s Advisory Commission on Senior Living, Team Bounceback, Carmel Youth Assistance Program, neighboring communities, Hamilton County Housing Collaborative, HAND, elected officials (local, county, state, federal), Central Indiana Regional Development Authority (CIRDA) and agencies such as the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA).

Responsible Parties: Mayor, Department of Community Services, Economic Development, Redevelopment

Timeline: Ongoing

Challenges Addressed:



THANK YOU

