

HOUSING POLICY BRIEF: COMMISSION ON HOUSING AFFORDABILITY, SB 34, AND NEXT STEPS

Background:

Last interim, the Commission on Housing Authority began meeting in July and split into 7 subgroups that met to develop legislation that the Commission as a whole endorsed in November. ULCT played a key role in the subgroups and in drafting the legislation, building on our commitment to be proactive and address the housing problem by delineating the tools that are within cities' control. To that end, the ULCT Board recommended a comprehensive resolution that was endorsed by LPC at our Annual Convention, [Resolution 2018-004](#).

SB 34 (Affordable Housing Modifications):

The draft legislation, which would become SB 34, was presented to the Economic Development and Workforce Services Interim Committee on November 14th and unanimously endorsed. As originally proposed, SB 34 not only addressed planning elements, it also provided for a \$20 million one-time and \$4 million ongoing appropriation to the Olene Walker Low Income Housing Fund. Unfortunately, the appropriation was stripped during the last week of the session.

Between November and the General Session, SB 34 went through several drafts and substitutes. You can see a thorough summary of the [final bill here](#), but key elements are:

- A "menu of options" generated by LPC that cities will choose from when updating the Moderate Income Housing element of their general plans.
- Annual reporting on progress implementing the MIH plan by all cities of the 1st-4th class, and cities over 5,000 in counties of the 1st-3rd class.
- Eligibility for accessing the Transportation Investment Fund (TIF) and Transit Transportation Investment Fund (TTIF) is dependent on whether a city has an MIH plan and a current report.
- Ensuring that the transportation element of the general plan plans for residential and commercial development around "major transportation investment corridors" to improve connections between housing, education, employment, recreation, and commerce.
- Ensuring that the transportation element of the general plan considers the location and extent of active transportation facilities, freeways, arterial and collector streets, and public transit.

Next steps:

First, there is some possibility that SB 34 will be funded (or that money will be otherwise appropriated to Olene Walker) during the interim as budget and tax reform discussions take place.

Second, the Commission on Housing Affordability, which has a 5-year mandate, will reconvene. ULCT and other stakeholders are already working on potential direction of this year's Commission work. Our desire is threefold: (1) define the current state of the housing situation in Utah. What is the problem we are trying to solve? Where (geographically and economically) is the need the greatest?; (2) examine the strategies used both in and outside of the state that have been employed to address housing needs, and determine which are most effective; and (3) identify long-term funding sources to address the real needs.

Questions to consider

- In addition to SB 34, what else, if anything, can cities do to improve housing affordability?
- What do you want to see ULCT pursue through the Commission on housing policy?