Memorandum

DATE April 3, 2020

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Housing Performance Report Questions**

This memo addresses questions raised during the Housing and Homelessness Solutions Committee Briefing on March 23, 2020 regarding the Introduction to the Department of Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization Performance Reports.

<u>Summary</u>

1. **Does Neighborly have an open database that can be used with the Open Data portal?**

    Neighborly Software does have an Open Application Programming Interface (API) to their Report Builder, which can be used to automate downloading of reports into 3rd party Business Intelligence tools. Due to the amount of work involved, Neighborly charges additional fees that were not included in the contract or Department budget. Further research will be required to determine compatibility with and ability to publish data to the Open Data portal and future budget feasibility.

2. **Can the performance reports be updated more often/automatically?**

    In addition to the comments in Question 1, two challenges need to be addressed for more frequent reporting.

    - Data storage/sourcing: The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization currently receives information on its programs at different times during a week, month or quarter. The Department is in the process of establishing all programs in Neighborly for tracking purposes.
    - Data visualization tools: Currently the City has no enterprise solution readily available for employees to generate data visualizations like the ones requested. As the lead agency for data analytics, the Office of Innovation is directing a citywide effort to evaluate several data visualization and business intelligence tools, including Tableau, for recommendation across the city, given the increasing demand for these products and deliverables. The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization intends to follow these recommendations if the budget allows.

    Should the Department also pursue the Open API (see Question 1), the dashboards would be able to access the databases behind Neighborly and update automatically. It will require both programs to develop "live" dashboards. Further research into budget feasibility will be necessary.

3. **Can the performance reports include an overlay of market construction?**

    Staff is working with the Department of Sustainable Development and Construction to receive monthly reports of newly issued and newly completed build permits. This data will be added to the next monthly Development summary report.   More research and coordination will be required on including this data in "live" dashboards should they be developed.

4. **Can the reports be used to identify gentrification?**

    The existing reports are intended to monitor the performance and pipeline of current Housing programs and will not be able to monitor gentrification risk or progress.

5. **The Development and DHAP reports show limited affordable development in high opportunity areas. What can we do about that?**

    The department has identified a number of challenges to supporting construction in high opportunity areas among our traditional programs.
    - Federal restrictions prevent programs like DHAP from helping families purchase houses with a high sales price. For Dallas, households taking part in the DHAP program cannot purchase a new home costing greater than $246,000 or an existing home costing more than $228,000. The current market makes it difficult to find a move-in-ready home in high opportunity areas for below this cost.
    - State law sets the qualifications for land bank properties. Due to the current market conditions, most lots that meet the qualifications to be brought into land bank inventory are not in high opportunity areas.
    - Due to the extreme cost of land and high demand, affordable housing in high opportunity areas requires greater subsidies and produces fewer units.

    The Mixed-Income Housing Development Bonus (MIHDB), which provides zoning incentives for the inclusion of affordable housing, has seen success in creating affordable housing in high opportunity areas. Currently there are 1,322 units in process for MIHDB in high opportunity areas, 86 of which will be affordable to families earning below 80% AMI. This evidence shows that alternative incentives for mixed income development may be a solution to this issue.

Should you have questions or concerns, please contact David Noguera, Director at 214-670-3619 or David.noguera@dallascityhall.com.

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