



Sumter City-County Planning Department

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December 19, 2023

Tax Credit and Bond Manager
South Carolina State Housing Finance and Development Authority
300-C Outlet Pointe Blvd.
Columbia, SC 29210

RE: Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Application Local Government Efforts

To Whom It May Concern:

The City of Sumter has prided itself on a history of efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing and develop a resilient and equitable community. As documented in a 2019 report titled “City of Sumter Affordable Housing study” there continues to be an acute need for new affordable housing options for all populations in the Sumter community. This report estimated the need for additional affordable housing units as our community has changed and experiences continued development with rising housing costs.

In taking action on this report’s findings, the City of Sumter has taken several steps, including use of the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP), which funded acquisition of 100 lots in the City’s historic core, which are currently being leveraged to support various affordable infill housing efforts. Furthermore, the City’s *Zoning & Development Standards Ordinance* includes key provisions that further fair housing, including permitting accessory dwelling units (referred to in the Ordinance as “accessory apartments” by right. There are no restrictions on who may live within an ADU, making them available for rental. Finally, via a 2015 Ordinance amendment, the City relaxed minimum development standards for multi-family apartment developments in the urban core of the City, including eliminating minimum site development area requirements, significantly reduce building setbacks, increase maximum building height, eliminating building separation standards, increasing unit density maximums per acre, and reducing parking requirements.

Furthermore, in November of 2023, the City clarified and relaxed elements of the existing residential development standards, including eliminating minimum site development area requirements for some townhome and triplex/quadruplex housing types, as well as updating minimum lot area and width requirements to better reflect the development pattern in the City’s historic core and incentivize infill housing.

Recognizing that fulfilling the goal of providing adequate affordable housing to Sumter’s community is not achievable through municipal efforts alone, the City has partnered with a range

of local and regional entities, including Sumter County, the Sumter Housing Authority, Sumter United Ministries, the Sumter County Regional HOME Consortium, Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments, and both non-profit and private developers. These relationships extend from new construction to fair housing counseling services, awareness events, and homelessness assistance shelters and diversion programs.

The City of Sumter welcomes the opportunity to increase the affordable housing supply for our community. The City will continue our efforts and planning toward a resilient and equitable community doing everything within our power to assist in making affordable developments a long-term success. If you have any questions about our efforts and our commitment to assist in making affordable housing developments a reality, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Helen M. Roodman, AICP, CFM
Planning Director