

## Town Council-Appointed Ad Hoc Housing Task Force

### RECOMMENDED NEAR TERM ACTIONS TO INCREASE SUPPLY OF AVAILABLE HOUSING UNITS IN FREEPORT

April 23, 2024

*GOAL: To increase the supply for all types of housing units through intentional use of all available planning strategies, policy updates, zoning improvements, and funding and incentives to elevate housing as a public good in Freeport.*

#### Task Force Priority Action Items

1. ENABLE GREATER DENSITY IN VILLAGE COMMERCIAL 1 ZONE.

**Goal:** Remove impediments to multi-family and mixed-use development in the Downtown Core.

**Strategy:** Expand design flexibility for qualified projects to allow greater density, allow for pedestal parking beneath new developments to protect downtown parking supply, and improve the economics and investment climate for new projects by allowing for greater density in Freeport's Downtown.

**Action Item.** Eliminate the three story in limit in the VC1 zone.

2. USE DATA TO INFORM LOCAL HOUSING PRODUCTIONS GOALS BY TYPOLOGY.

**Goal:** Understand the optimal number of new units by type and size to meet critical housing demand, advance community goals, and support a vibrant local economy.

**Strategy:** Quantify & categorize existing housing supply in Freeport.

**Action Item:** Create inventory of all multi-family housing units to capture count, sizes, size of bldg., # of school age children and any STR.

3. ADVANCE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING.

**Goal:** Designate a primary growth area focused on Downtown Freeport and the Route 1 corridor south, approximately to Maine Beer Company (*The Dog-Bone*) and marry land use and appropriate financing tools for desirable housing development.

**Strategy:**

1. Upzone areas within 1,000 feet of Route 1 South to enable dense housing development, particularly in the proposed transit-oriented development area of Downtown south to the southernmost Breeze stop, consistent with VC1 standards for housing.
2. Update Town Tax Increment Financing Policy to prioritize commercial housing development.

**Action Items:**

1. Building on the planning level analysis of infrastructure and related capital improvement cost estimates prepared by Woodard & Curran, establish the *Dog Bone Working Group* to prepare a series of zoning and ordinance considerations and recommendations to the Planning Board to adopt Village Commercial 1 housing standards or similar within the Dog Bone; and to gather input from Regional School Unit 5 and other community stakeholders, and to prepare a list of capital improvement priorities within this priority growth area for integration with the Town's capital budget for the coming decade. Work Group membership to include a Planning Department staff member, Planning Board member, Complete Streets Committee member, Freeport Sustainability Advisory Member, a Town Councilor, and up to four members of Town Staff (as designated by the Town Manager).
2. Create a *TIF Policy Work Group* to draft a list of proposed updates to the 2010 Town Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Policy that will define qualified commercial housing developments for example such as workforce housing for teachers, police, and fire staff, for TIF funding eligibility. Work Group membership to include up to three members of Town staff (as designated by the Town Manager), Freeport Economic Development Corporation Board member, Freeport Housing Trust Executive Director and Board member, Freeport Community Services Board member, and a Town Councilor.