

## Sue Sgambelluri (D-District 2) Responses to Heading Home Candidate Survey for the May 2, 2023 Bloomington Council Primary Election

### 1. What do you see as the most effective strategies to strengthen housing security in our community, ensuring that everyone has a safe, stable place to live?

The city cannot *on its own* resolve our housing issues. Rather, it will take a multi-pronged approach and partnerships to see progress. Overall, we need to strengthen incentives for developers to include affordable units in residential projects. In addition, as suggested in the 2020 Housing Study, we need to explore and pursue partnerships with the local private sector (particularly major employers), the lending community, IU, private foundations, landlords (including those accepting housing vouchers) and others to craft a more comprehensive response to housing challenges. And again, we need to revisit the UDO and evaluate the degree to which it has met a core goal ... to make development more streamlined and predictable so that development cost increases are not passed on to owners and renters.

More specifically, I support the buildout of the Hopewell Neighborhood to increase housing stock and to add more affordable units in the desirable downtown. Similarly, the Trinitas Development on West Arlington includes parcels and infrastructure to be held in a land trust – another opportunity to develop more workforce housing. As a member of the Redevelopment Commission, I took part in the purchase of land parcels that have since been developed as affordable housing including B-Line Heights and the Retreat at Switchyard. I believe that strategy has served the city well and should continue when appropriate. Additional strategies, particularly related to those experiencing homelessness, are included below.

### 2. What are your top 3 council legislative priorities to address the scarcity of low-income housing in Bloomington?

**Zoning** – I believe that plexes, when placed/developed strategically, do not inherently threaten the well-being or character of a neighborhood and have the potential to increase affordability. While I do not support the city-wide elimination of single-family zoning, I believe Council must continue to monitor the actual development of plexes and ADUs, to determine if additional modifications are needed in the Unified Development Ordinance, and to identify specific areas of the City with opportunities for higher density infill.

**Programs Promoting Long-Term Affordability** – Land trusts and housing trust funds have demonstrated promise in promoting affordability, and they merit further exploration.

Most notably, the Hopewell Neighborhood and the Trinitas Project on West Arlington Road represent important opportunities to use these tools to increase the number of affordable/workforce units and to assess their potential usefulness in other developments.

**Outreach and Education Programs** – As recommended by Heading Home of South Central Indiana, I support the creation of an outreach and education program for apartment associations, landlords, and property managers on barriers to housing security and I support incentives – including tools like a Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund - to increase rental units available to housing voucher recipients.

### **3. What actions should the City of Bloomington take to reduce homelessness, and what would you do on council to implement those actions?**

**Continued Investments in Heading Home of South Central Indiana** – Though relatively new, Heading Home is proving to be a promising, comprehensive model for making homelessness rare, brief, and non-repeating. It provides a solid foundation for understanding and responding to housing insecurity by acknowledging multiple, interconnected issues including mental illness, medical emergencies, job insecurity, and substance use as contributing causes. In addition, its research-driven emphasis on Housing First is consistent with Bloomington's values as a community. The city has already played a leadership role with substantial financial investments in the launch of Heading Home, and I support the continuation of such investments.

**Increased Investments in Local Social Service Providers** – Bloomington has a formidable social services safety net, and we owe these organizations our continued support. I endorse continued *and increased* funding through Jack Hopkins Social Service Grants and CDBG Block Grants to organizations that focus on homelessness and housing insecurity (e.g. Beacon, New Hope, Middleway House), and on the related issues of physical/mental health or substance use (e.g. HealthNet), and on other poverty-related issues like food insecurity (e.g. Community Kitchen, Hoosier Hills Food Bank). Collectively, these services play a critical role in helping ensure that these financial strains on an individual or family do not lead to housing insecurity and homelessness.