



August 25, 2021

Members of the Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee and the City Clerk's Office,

As you may know our organization, the Urban Neighborhood Initiative, serves as the convener of a coalition called Promoting Equitable Neighborhoods (PEN). In 2018 we convened a task force which made recommendations to the KCMO task force that produced the document “*A Housing Policy for Kansas City: (2019-2023)*” We are very pleased to see that some of the recommendations both in the city’s and in PEN’s report have been put in place. At the same time, we know if we are to truly have a comprehensive housing policy that addresses historic inequities as well as improves the quality of our city overall, there is much more to be done. Today I am urging passage of ordinance Resolution 210688 calling for a Nexus study for the following reasons.

The city’s task force in policy area 2.2 recommended **exploring** the use of inclusionary zoning with an in lieu or linkage fee. Similarly, PEN recommended that if we want a comprehensive housing policy that is equitable, it should include either an inclusionary zoning or a linkage fee policy. An Inclusionary Zoning policy requires that developers of new multifamily for-sale and rental housing set aside a certain percentage of units for occupancy by low and/or moderate-income households. The first step in instituting either policy is a Nexus Study.

As you are aware, a linkage fee, also sometimes referred to as an impact fee, is a fee charged for new residential development, office, retail, hotel, and industrial development. The rationale underlying a linkage fee is that new development has an impact on the need for affordable housing by new employees, who come from a spectrum of income levels, in the area to be developed. Developers are required to pay a modest fee to help fund affordable housing for these new workers. A Nexus study is required to institute this in a fair a feasible way.

A Nexus Study, performed by experts, evaluates a variety of local demographic and economic data to help determine what sort of requirement is both fair and feasible in each jurisdiction. The nexus study helps to answer developer concerns about such ordinances, as well as to provide a solid legal basis for the ordinance.

We applaud the city’s progress in making quality housing accessible for all. We know that the next step in a fair, equitable and comprehensive policy is commissioning of a Nexus Study. We urge you to support Resolution 210688 directing the City Manager to issue an RFP for a Nexus Study.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dianne Cleaver
President & CEO
Urban Neighborhood Initiative

