



CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF CHICAGO

COUNCIL CHAMBER
SECOND FLOOR, CITY HALL
TELEPHONE: 312-744-6800

Commissioner Marisa Novara
Department of Housing
Chicago City Hall
121 N. LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60608

October 14, 2019

Dear Commissioner Novara,

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for the Development for All Ordinance and to request its serious and timely consideration by the Department of Housing.

We feel strongly that the Development for All Ordinance's approach to improving the Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) is the right one. The legislation offers a comprehensive, elegant, and well-thought out framework for tackling several of the City's most pressing problems at the same time.

We believe the Development for All legislation has much to offer to help us achieve three interconnected benefits for our city:

(1) The Development for All Ordinance will make a meaningful dent against the persistent segregation that has marred our city for generations. By leveraging the market development occurring in more affluent areas and using that development to automatically and reliably produce affordable housing within these otherwise segregated and affluent spaces, we will finally enable people of modest means, including people of color and people with disabilities, to be able to reliably access neighborhoods they have historically been excluded from.

(2) The Development for All Ordinance will tamp down against the spikes of gentrification afflicting many Chicago neighborhoods, reducing displacement and offering communities greater stability. Over the last census cycle, we saw over 40,000 Latinx residents displaced from Pilsen and Logan Square alone. We have an obligation to move away from forms of development that produce luxury enclaves and to ensure we don't allow predatory forms of investment to shift market dynamics so thoroughly that historic communities are priced out of their own neighborhoods by corporate investors and real estate interests. This points to the need for us as a City to develop a real-time, responsive policy framework that prevents market dynamics from spiraling out of balance. Communities deserve stability and predictability. Our revised ARO should mitigate the forces that will otherwise undermine this legitimate human need.



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(3) The Development for All Ordinance will help promote revitalization and resource flow to impoverished areas still struggling to recover from the dynamics of disinvestment created by Chicago's appalling history of redlining and legal apartheid. Chicago's history of racial segregation created racialized "zones of investment" and racialized "zones of disinvestment." Private capital developers have replicated and retrenched these "zones" for the past 50 years, despite the overturn of government-enforced segregation. We can and should use this moment as a turning point.

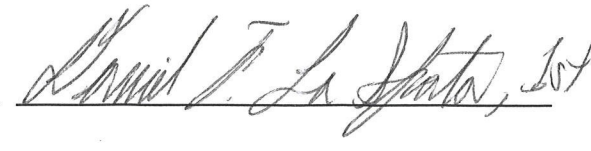
Chicago's inclusionary zoning policy can be a unique and incredibly powerful tool we can use to legally intervene in these unjust and harmful market dynamics. Through our zoning authority, it is within our constitutionally-protected powers as Chicago's City Council to transform predatory and inequitable market investment patterns to instead produce the kind of equity and balance in development that all of our neighborhoods cry out for. We have a duty as a Public Body to make repair to neighborhoods harmed by racial apartheid both through the choices we make about our direct public investments, but also through the incentives and framework we create around market dynamics through our City policies. We can take action together through our policy choices today to intervene in harmful, inequitable market dynamics and ensure private investors and developers no longer replicate and perpetuate the same injustices of 50 years ago.

We understand that the Department of Housing is convening a task force to deliberate about reforms to the Affordable Requirements Ordinance.

For all the reasons we share above, we ask that the Task Force take the Development for All Ordinance as the official starting point for its deliberations. We ask that the DOH use a methodical and sincere process to evaluate each provision of the Development for All Ordinance and employ an evidence-based process in making any revisions to this legislation. We understand that amendments may be needed but the framework is sound, and the legislation has been deeply and thoughtfully vetted over a period of two years by the precise and diverse constituencies from all across the City who are personally affected by housing struggle, whom the ARO and any legitimate successor policy is supposed to serve.

We very respectfully ask for your written response to this request by November 6th, 2019.

Sincerely,



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