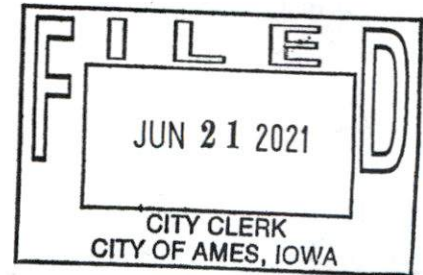


PKTs. 6-25-2021



formerly The Emergency Residence Project  
225 South Kellogg Ave., Ames, Iowa 50010  
515-232-8075 | tbh@thebridgehome.org

Mayor John Haila and  
City Council Members  
PO Box 811  
515 Clark Ave  
Ames, IA 50010



Wednesday, June 16, 2021

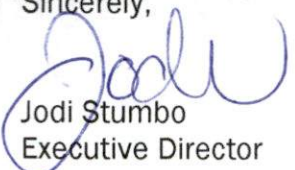
Dear Mayor Haila and Council Members,

I attended the June 25 council meeting for the duration of the meeting. It was my full intention to address PLANNING & HOUSING item number 41. 2021-22 CDBG Proposed Annual Action Plan Follow-Up. This plan does not address the most vulnerable in our community and I wanted to share some data with you highlighting the demographics of families we serve at The Bridge Home. It is imperative that the city's planning and housing action plan include this group of community members, the families who are most vulnerable, in its future plans.

I did attend the Public Input forum and shared my concerns with Vanessa. When there was no request for public comment at the council meeting, I was disappointed that I did not get an opportunity to share this data with you. I also had two questions for the council and a request that I feel is vital to our clients and our community as a whole. I sincerely hope I can have an opportunity in the future to share this information with you in a discussion format or at a future city council meeting.

Enclosed you will find the information I had intended to share. I would love an opportunity to discuss this in more detail and answer questions you have.

Sincerely,

  
Jodi Stumbo  
Executive Director  
jodi@thebridgehome.org  
515.232.8075 ext. 201

cc: Vanessa Baker-Latimer



## Our Clients in the City of Ames

Data taken from National Low Income Housing Coalition – 2020  
Volume 3 of the Iowa – State Profile, City of Ames – Housing and Urban  
Development CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy)

### Setting Parameters

The federal government typically defines housing as affordable when it consumes no more than 30 percent of a household's income – severely cost burdened means they pay half or more of their income on housing.

### Who are the Families in Ames that Fall Under These Guidelines

Ames is the **fourth most expense place** to live in Iowa to rent a **two-bedroom** apartment. Families in our community must earn **\$16.48 an hour to live** in a two-bedroom apartment.

- Estimated hourly mean renter wage in the **city of Ames is \$11.89**
  - \$475 – 40 hour week
  - Approximately \$1,900 monthly
  - Approximately \$24,730 annually
- Monthly rent affordable for a two bedroom rental for a family making the mean hourly range in the **City of Ames is \$618 a month - \$7,416 annually**
- The Average Market Rate to rent a two-bedroom unit in **Ames is more than \$900.**

### Most Common Housing Problem in the City of Ames

The most common housing problem the City of Ames has is **housing cost burdens.**

- Some **2,750 renter households** are impacted by cost burdens – more than **30 percent** of a households income
- **5,190** are impacted by severe cost burdens - more than **50 percent** of a households income
- Nearly **50 percent of renters in the City of Ames** are overburdened or severely overburdened.
  - Total renters 14,725
    - Overburdened or severely overburdened 7,940

## Housing forecast

In 2050, there are projected to be **19,435 renter households**,

- 8,354 overburdened
- 3,394 severely overburdened
- **11,748 — 60 % of renters**

## Two Questions

1. What do you consider affordable housing? The information I received for the 21-22 plan is to buy single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes and either rebuild or renovate them and then sell them to families – this does not help the population I have described – our clients. They cannot afford to rent a home, much less own one and may never be able to own their own home.
2. There is also funding allocated for Slum/Blight removal, including demolition – where is this demolition taking place, what is being demolished and what is going back in its place? – I am concerned this is going to take away some of the few affordable units we do have available and not replace them, putting even more families on the streets.

## In Closing

The 36 rental units being built in the Baker Subdivision are barely a drop in the bucket of what we need now, much less by 2050. I realize that we may never be able to fully meet this need. However, adding 36 affordable rental units every now and then doesn't even seem like an attempt to help our community members – the people who fix your car, serve you at restaurants, mow your yard, your doctor's nurse - who are struggling to live in the community they call their hometown.

The City of Ames is a great community, supportive, inclusive, great amenities – but all of our community members – including the 53 percent of community members who make less than \$50,000 a year— deserve access to not only the amenities, but most importantly to sustainable affordable housing.

I encourage you to pull together a committee to further research the population I have described to you – the clients we serve. At The Bridge Home, we want to be part of the solution – to end the cycle of homelessness and homeless vulnerability for all our community members – it is time to stop putting band-aids on the homeless crisis we have in our community. We cannot end the cycle alone. We need help from the community and the city - we want to be at the table to discuss solutions that allow ALL of our community members access to affordable and sustainable homes.

Thank you for your consideration.