



Endorsement of Raleigh Housing Bond

September 21, 2020

At Families Together, our mission is to help Wake County families with children move from homelessness to home. We provide access to safe, affordable housing; temporary rental and utilities assistance to get the family started; and then we work with families for up to a year providing one-on-one counselling, connections to community resources, and life skills workshops to empower their self-sufficiency.

Helping families find safe, affordable housing has become increasingly challenging due primarily to external factors. The cost of skyrocketing rent in Raleigh, and the hourly minimum wage in North Carolina at just \$7.25/hour, means a parent needs to work three full-time jobs to afford an average two-bedroom apartment in Raleigh. Adding to the challenge, each year approximately 1,000 affordable housing units are lost in Wake County, many in the City of Raleigh. Because of this, recent data shows a gap of nearly 22,000 units affordable needed for those at extremely low income in Raleigh (<30% AMI), and another 21,000 for those very low income (50% AMI).

At Families Together, we have moved to action by serving on the City of Raleigh's Affordable Housing Bond Advisory Committee. We worked with other community organizations, leaders, and numerous non-profit housing providers to seek community input and develop recommendations for this bond.

The Raleigh City Council accepted the recommendations from the Bond Advisory Committee, which include, an \$80 million Affordable Housing Bond (an amount that is three times higher than was being considered this time last year), and an increase in the amount allocated to public/private partnerships, which provide more flexibility to build or preserve housing for very low-income neighbors at 30% of the area median income.

Given the need for more affordable housing options in Raleigh, **Families Together strongly endorses the Raleigh Affordable Housing Bond** which will be presented to voters in the upcoming election.

At Families Together, we see firsthand, every day, the urgent need for increased housing options for the children and families we serve. A variety of strategies are needed to fully address the housing affordability issue in our region and bond funding is a critical piece of the solution.

At a time when home means more than ever, we must join as a community to address the City's housing affordability challenges. The Raleigh Housing Bond is a crucial step forward for our region which is why we encourage all Raleigh voters to vote yes during early voting (October 15-31) or on Election Day, November 3rd.

Sincerely,

Lisa Rowe, Executive Director