

You've Heard of NIMBY ("Not in My Backyard"). You'll Be Hearing About YIMBY in 2021.

One of the many bills passed by the Democratic House which Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has not allowed to be acted on in the Senate is the YIMBY Act. If, as may well happen, the Democrats take control of the U.S. Senate in this year's election, that act could become law next year.

The YIMBY Act (HR 4351) was bi-partisan, co-sponsored by Democrat Denny Heck of Washington and Republican Trey Hollingsworth of Indiana. It was passed on a voice vote by the House of Representatives on Mar. 2, 2020. I will post a link to the full text of HR 4351 at www.GoldenREblog.com.

Here's how the act is described and promoted at www.UpForGrowth.org:

The Yes in My Backyard (YIMBY) Act encourages localities to eliminate discriminatory land use policies and remove barriers that prevent needed housing from being built around the country.

The YIMBY Act achieves these goals by requiring Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) recipients to report periodically on the extent to which they are removing discriminatory land use policies and implementing inclusive and affordable housing policies detailed by the bill.

The YIMBY Act increases transparency in land use, zoning, and housing decisions; sheds light on exclusionary policies; and ultimately encourages localities to eliminate barriers to much-needed housing.

Background:

According to Up for Growth's "Housing Underproduction in the U.S." report, the United States has underproduced housing by 7.3 million homes from 2000 to 2015.

Exclusionary land use policies — including zoning and density restrictions, onerous parking requirements, and other burdensome development regulations — drive a severe housing shortage and affordability crisis.

The "Missing Millions of Homes" report from the New Dems coalition shows that the cost of shelter has been the single largest increase in household budgets in the last 15 years and that the median U.S. family now spends 42% of its income on housing.

Housing underproduction also increases cost of living for families, inhibits geographic mobility, burdens both renters and buyers, and stifles economic productivity. By one estimate, from 1964 to 2009, our national housing shortage lowered aggregate economic growth by 36 percent.

Many of these land use policies are rooted in racism and classism. Their continued existence perpetuates housing discrimination and contributes to the housing affordability crisis affecting large parts of the United States.

Legislative Solution:

The YIMBY Act increases transparency and encourages more thoughtful & inclusive development practices by requiring localities to fully examine and disclose their housing policy decisions.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By JIM SMITH, Realtor®

The bill provides localities a framework for smart policymaking and regulatory practices, thus promoting more inclusive development principles.

The YIMBY Act is an important first step in decreasing the barriers to smart, inclusive growth and reducing the negative and cumulative impact of exclusionary housing policies. It is also a way to clearly demonstrate that the federal government takes seriously the challenges created by exclusionary zoning.

This proposal has not escaped the attention of conservatives, who consider it an attack on suburbia, primarily by eliminating single-family zoning. Allowing greater density and making housing more affordable means to them the introduction of lower-income and therefore racially diverse populations into communities which are historically white and upper-middle or upper income neighborhoods. It's worth noting that it's an argument that does indeed divide conservatives from liberals and, because of how it is being promoted, will be a factor in this year's election.

However, we should remember that zoning laws are matters of local debate and enactment and cannot be forced upon localities by the federal government. That's why the YIMBY Act only

asks localities to *consider the implications* of their zoning decisions. Single-family zoning will only be modified or eliminated gradually if at all over time and only by a vote of locally elected representatives on city councils and county boards of commissioners. Voters would be wise to recognize fear mongering on the subject for what it is and to consider the underlying motives.

Moreover, it is inconceivable that an established and fully built out subdivision, especially one with a healthy housing stock under 30 or 40 years old, would see any effects from zoning changes. Instead you might see the legalizing of ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units), which are already popular in many jurisdictions. These units can be in walk-out basements or above detached garages, and provide a great solution for modestly increasing a neighborhood's and city's density.

What we are already seeing in the older communities with pre-1970 bungalows is the scraping of isolated homes, making way for attached townhomes. Again, this is only done by the enactment of zoning changes by your elected officials who are not going to act in opposition to their constituents' loudly expressed viewpoints.

Realtor Association Takes Fair Housing Seriously

While it might be popular to think of Realtors as privileged conservatives (mostly Republicans) who put up with but are not fans of federal civil rights laws, quite the opposite appears to be true now. Liberal thinking Realtors are in ascendance.

An August 22 article from Realtor Magazine, the official magazine of the National Association of Realtors, makes this abundantly clear. A link to it is posted at www.GoldenREblog.com.

In 2018, NAR leadership laid bare at its legislative meetings in Washington, D.C., the organization's "immutable past support of discriminatory

and racist practices," vowing to deepen its commitment to industry inclusivity and equal opportunity in housing.

The Chicago Association of Realtors, headed by an African-American woman, apologized last year for its "historically racist policies that persisted for decades."

Please go to my blog and click on that link. Unless you miss the "good old days," you'll be heartened by what you read. It makes me proud to be a Realtor. The commitment to equality and justice is rock solid.

Support Habitat for Humanity — Buy a Pumpkin



Golden Real Estate is happy once again to support the pumpkin patches at Garrison & Alameda in Lakewood and at 78th Avenue & Wadsworth in Arvada. Operated each year by **Jeffco Interfaith Partners**, a coalition of a dozen local faith groups, the profits from these two volunteer-manned patches have funded 15+ Habitat for Humanity homes over the past two decades. The pumpkins are grown on a Navajo reservation in the Four Corners area, so the sales also benefit that community.

Yes, the pumpkins sold at our two patches may be more expensive than at your local supermarket, but you have the satisfaction of making a difference with every purchase, and 40% of your purchase is tax-deductible. Our thanks go out to Mile Hi Church and to Trinity Presbyterian Church for providing these two great venues each October.

Jim Smith

Broker/Owner, 303-525-1851
Jim@GoldenRealEstate.com

Broker Associates:

- JIM SWANSON — 303-929-2727
- CHUCK BROWN — 303-885-7855
- DAVID DLUGASCH — 303-908-4835
- CAROL MILAN — 720-982-4941
- TYLER SCRABLE — 720-281-6783

