

FINAL DELIVERABLE

Title	Waterloo Housing Policy Briefs - Part 2
Completed By	Bridget Wright, Sophie Stover, Ellie Chen, Natalie Miller, Alec Bell, Minela Ikanovic, Kathryn Shumaker, Cole Adesso, Aaron Villarreal, Gabriel Bautista, Payton Colbert, Olivia Galyon, Alia Mnayer, Haley Russell, Eddie Forsythe, Chris Nichols, Emily Heinrich, Ben Gradert, Andy Picchietti, Claire Kelly, Hiatt Holman, Kadel Coakley, Jane Holish, Oscar Rodriguez, Annie Crooks, Kevin Kim Larson, Sophia Shubatt, Miranda Vermeer, Samantha Stucky, Sierra Wicks, Sophie Janicki, Ethan Gosden, Husein El-Zein, Seneca Nelson, Deanna Robinson, Araya Blakely, Tommy Tallman, and Katie Kustes
Date Completed	May 2021
UI Department	Department of Rhetoric
Course Name	Public Policy and Persuasion: SJUS:3560:0001 RHET:3560:0001 POLI:3560:0001
Instructor	Carrie Schuettepelz
Community Partners	City of Waterloo

This project was supported by the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC), a community engagement program at the University of Iowa. IISC partners with rural and urban communities across the state to develop projects that university students and IISC pursues a dual mission of enhancing quality of life in Iowa while transforming teaching and learning at the University of Iowa.

Research conducted by faculty, staff, and students of The University of Iowa exists in the public domain. When referencing, implementing, or otherwise making use of the contents in this report, the following citation style is recommended:

[Student names], led by [Professor's name]. [Year]. [Title of report]. Research report produced through the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities at the University of Iowa.

This publication may be available in alternative formats upon request.

Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities
The University of Iowa
347 Jessup Hall
Iowa City, IA, 52241
Phone: 319.335.0032
Email: iisc@uiowa.edu
Website: <http://iisc.uiowa.edu/>

The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. The University also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to University facilities. For additional information contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, (319) 335-0705.

SUMMARY OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

As part of the 2020-21 partnership between the City of Waterloo and the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities, students in the course Policy & Persuasion worked to advance housing policy recommendations and action steps in Waterloo.

II. HOUSING POLICY MEMOS- PART I

Students taking the class in the Fall 2020 semester worked with Waterloo representatives to first identify some of the most pressing issues related to home ownership and affordability, and then to develop policy recommendations for the City moving forward. The class focused on four main issues:

- Increasing homeownership opportunities
- Supporting low-income homeowners
- Creating sustainable housing rehab
- Improving landlord practices

In very concise terms, the groups recommended 1) appropriate staffing for the soon-to-be-formed Housing Task Force; 2) a data-driven analysis to better understand impediments to homeownership, housing affordability, and housing rehab; 3) a more accessible database of housing resources available to residents; and 4) redesigning landlord policies.

The final presentations outlining the Fall 2020 recommendations and action steps can be found here: <https://iisc.uiowa.edu/housing-policy-briefs>.

III. HOUSING POLICY MEMOS – PART II

In the Spring 2021 semester, new groups of students both delved deeper into housing policy best practices in Waterloo and began the work of creating resources to complement the policy recommendations. The following table includes a summary of policy recommendations and actions from these 8 student policy teams.

Each policy memo/report includes an analysis of key stakeholders, case studies and best practices from other cities, and next steps for implementation.

- Project #1 –**
Creating a Waterloo Housing Website
- › **Maintain a “One-Stop Shop” Housing Website.**
A website [mock-up](#) was created by the UI Policy Team and can be transferred to a Waterloo community group.
- Project #2 –**
City of Waterloo Website Improvements
- › **Make improvements to the City website to make it more user-friendly**
Specific recommendations include a) “people-based” and “action-based” menu headings; b) a portal for submitting documents and forms; and c) an FAQ section.
- Project #3 –**
Establishing the Housing Task Force
- › **Set clear goals, action steps, and evaluation metrics for the new Waterloo Housing Task Force.**
 - › **Ensure an inclusive and representative organizational structure for the Housing Task Force.**
 - › **Maintain robust outreach efforts with Waterloo citizens and stakeholders to understand needs and priorities.**
- Project #4 –**
Rethinking Rental Inspections
- › **Digitize On-Site Data Collection**
 - › **Implement Self-Inspection Policies**
 - › **Increase Rental Registration Fee**
 - › **Standardize landlord punitive measures**
- Project #5 –**
Creating a Landlord Manual
- › **Maintain and Distribute a Landlord Manual**
A landlord manual was created by the UI Policy Team and includes landlord guidance, tenant guidance, sample documents, and innovative practices.
 - › **Offer landlord training and classes**
- Project #6 –**
Addressing Homelessness in Waterloo
- › **Revitalize and expand the Homeless Coordinating Board**
 - › **Focus resources on housing solutions, in addition to emergency solutions**
 - › **Increase accessibility of information for those needing assistance**
- Project #7 –**
Housing Policy Database and Communication
- › **Maintain a comprehensive and accessible database of local housing-related policy**
 - › **Design and distribute digital and physical infographics to clearly and effectively communicate housing policies**
- Project #8 –**
COVID Response
- › **Conduct a public outreach campaign to increase awareness of assistance available to renters through the CARES Act.**
 - › **Enact a Temporary City requiring landlords to give notice of any actions taken toward the eviction process**
 - › **Provide mediation services to help resolve landlord-tenant disputes**
 - › **Establish a “Housing Court Clinic” to support at-risk and vulnerable renters**