



# What the Cottage Court Development Teaches Us About Our Effort to Create a New Downtown Park

# Cottage Court

- Meant to provide an affordable housing option in Decatur.
- The City has invested \$260,000 to acquire land and has retained the services of a consultant to design the space.
- A cluster of 700-1200 square foot cottages around a common courtyard.

# What is the Court?

- It is a green courtyard that meets the need of residents – like a park
- It is publicly financed – like a park
- It is publicly owned – like a park
- It is not accessible to the public – not like a park

# Why Include a Courtyard?

- You could create more affordable housing on the same amount of land if you didn't include a courtyard
- The City believes that, for the publicly funded development to be successful, it must include greenspace.
- So, there must be demand for greenspace. Why? Because it improves quality of life. People want to live next to it.
- The value of greenspace is born out by the nearly 100 peer-reviewed academic articles that show parks increase adjoining property values by an average of 20% (*The Proximity Principle*, Dr. John Crompton, Texas A&M).

# What Level of Service Is the City Providing Cottage Court Residents?

- 20% of the  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre would mean 0.1 acres or 0.0167 acres per home, assuming ten homes on the site.
- \$260,000 for overall land acquisition, \$43,333 per home assuming six homes (City's TOTAL LAND CONTRIBUTION to six homeowners).
- Public investment to buy land for private courtyard (excludes development and landscaping costs) would be \$52,000 (20% of purchase price) or \$8,667 per home.

# What Would the Same Service Level Look Like for Other New Downtown Development?

- Arlo (2016) – 210
- Alexan (2016) – 167
- Place on Ponce (2015) – 234
- Callaway (Coming Soon) – 329

**TOTAL – 940 NEW HOMES**

# Providing the Same Service Level to Downtown's Other New Neighbors Means:

$$\begin{array}{r} 940 \text{ Homes} \\ \times \underline{0.0167 \text{ Acres/Home}} \\ \hline = \mathbf{15.7 \text{ acres}} \end{array}$$

(publicly purchased land)

$$\begin{array}{r} 940 \text{ Homes} \\ \times \underline{\$8,667/\text{Home}} \\ \hline = \mathbf{\$8,146,667} \end{array}$$

Unlike the Courtyard, a Park  
Would Serve All Decatur  
Residents



Unlike the Cottages, the Other  
Downtown Developments  
Received No Subsidies and Pay  
Taxes on Their Land

If the City Pays for a Private  
Park for the Cottage Court,  
Can't It Create a Public Park  
for Downtown?