

WANTED: Homes to buy or rent GIC trying to address shortage

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Friday, 14 June 2013 13:08 -



Houses in Gothenburg these days are selling quickly.

And for good prices, if you're the seller.

But the number of homes, particularly those with three bedrooms, two baths, a two-car garage and unfinished basement, are in short supply.

"We don't have the inventory we need," said Rick Zarek, chair of Gothenburg Improvement Company's housing committee.

GIC, the economic development driver of the community, is all about new jobs and growth.

"We need houses now," said Rick Zarek. "If we want people to come to town, we need to make more good housing available."

Zarek and other committee members have had conversations with business owners who have brought people to town.

"But those people can't find housing," he said, noting he's been told by local realtors that 20 to 30 homes are on the market in Gothenburg.

"But some of those are maybe not in shape to sell easily," he said. "They need major updating."

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As a result, the GIC is trying to boost housing stock.

One way is encouraging contractors to build spec homes.

For the most part, spec homes are built using standard construction products and plans.

Although buyers forgo many choices they would have in a custom-built home, spec houses are less expensive.

Zarek said there are 15 to 16 lots available in GIC's Third Addition in the northeast part of town upon which spec homes could be built.

Some GIC members also feel that the building of condominiums, where owners don't have to mow lawns or remove snow, could help alleviate the housing shortage.

Although some contractors don't think condos sell well in small, rural towns, Zarek said he'd like to hear from the community.

"If we build and market condos, it could free up more expensive homes and if we build spec homes, those in starter homes may move in," he said. "If we have more inventory, the market will adjust."

At the moment, Zarek said many local contractors are busy building custom homes or remodeling existing ones.

Two outside contractors have expressed interest in building spec homes in Gothenburg and

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GIC seeks others, either local or outside contractors, that are interested, he said.

Zarek can be contacted at

529-2387 or at Gothenburg Discount Pharmacy at 537-7155.

Nationwide, including Nebraska, the number of available homes are down, according to the National Association of Realtors.

Realtors say listings usually increase in the spring but that hasn't happened this year.

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