Addressing the Housing Gap in Placer County

Placer County communities today struggle with numerous obstacles – from fiscal disincentives and lengthy approval processes to community opposition that makes it difficult to say yes to new housing. It becomes increasingly important to advance an “all of the above” solution to increase affordability as we expand our supply of housing in the coming years.

Many potential options that begin to address housing challenges fall into one of three broad categories:

✓ Reform land use policies to advance affordability, sustainability, and feasibility.
✓ Address housing and access needs for vulnerable populations through greater interagency coordination, program design and evaluation.
✓ Invest in affordable home development and rehabilitation, rental and homeownership assistance.

Additional Considerations for Closing the Housing Gap

Require industrial, commercial, and office developments to aid in the development of work force housing to offset the demand for housing created by the new work force. This could be a policy similar to the requirements of Eastern Placer County (greater Tahoe communities) that new developments provide employee housing equal to 50 percent of the housing demand generated by the project.

Other major elements of an “all of the above” housing policy may include;

a) Program investments that promote affordability,
b) Regulatory incentives that reduce housing costs and accelerate responsible development,
c) Require replacement of unregulated low-cost housing demolished in private market-rate development projects with new, good quality affordable housing with long-term affordability controls, and
d) Improve approval and permitting rules – enforce and strengthen to approve or permit adequate affordable and market-rate housing.

As needed, reach out to and work with a coalition of builders, housing advocates, equity groups, environmentalists, and local government leaders to address this housing situation in our county.
A look at possible solutions to close Placer County's housing gap

TOOLS TO CLOSE THE GAP

IDENTIFY “HOUSING HOT SPOTS”

- Build on available vacant land already zoned for multifamily development
- Intensify housing around transit hubs
- Add units to existing single-family homes
- Add units to underutilized land zoned for multifamily development
- Do more to link the production of affordable housing to the production of market-rate housing

- Encourage mixed-use development
- Explore means to encourage building more smaller houses
- Identify government-owned surplus land
- Moratorium on single-family homes on sites zoned for multifamily residential

REMOVE BARRIERS TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Production incentives for eligible projects, RHNA progress
- Accelerate land-use approvals
- Prioritize funding for affordable housing
- Attract new investors in affordable housing
- Design regulations to boost affordable housing while maintaining investment attractiveness

ENSURE HOUSING ACCESS

- Raise construction productivity
- Deploy modular construction
- Accelerate construction permitting
- Reduce housing operating costs
- Align development impact fees with housing objectives

- Consider statewide initiatives
- Attract grant funding to subsidize building costs
- Ideas to reduce land/construction costs
- Increase coordination of municipalities and county govs

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Vital Steps Needed to Address the Housing Gap

Most of our Placer County communities today struggle with numerous obstacles—from fiscal disincentives and lengthy approval processes to community opposition—that makes it difficult to say yes to new housing.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Communities can support the development of housing for people and families at a variety of income levels. By doing so, we pave the way for greater economic growth in our community. The availability of decent housing that is close to work and affordable for the jobholders upon which the proper functioning of the local economy depends is essential to the community’s economic health.

It should also be noted that when considering Western vs. Eastern Placer County, there are unique challenges that may require different approaches in each region.

Now more than ever we need to take action to meet the housing needs of our community.

**IDENTIFY AND SET OBJECTIVES WHICH ARE ACHIEVABLE AND MEASURABLE**

**OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION**

54,000 new homes are projected in the next 20 years. Goal = 10-20% of units are attainable for working families to afford

**IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE THE STEPS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS**

1. Staff for Success
   - We need strong, creative leadership that champions and is accountable for achieving the housing goals of the community.

2. Offer a Range of housing options
   - The goal must include developing a full range of affordable and market-rate housing options; Rental and for-purchase units that accommodate a variety of income levels.

3. Nurture Partnerships
   - We need to create partnerships (from CDRA to developers to special districts, etc). A public sector partnership with the private sector produces outcomes that reflect both the community vision and the market reality.