



*A Synopsis of
Affordable Housing
Issues in
Riverside County*

*Prepared by:
Riverside County Advisory Council on Aging
and
No Wrong Door Team*

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A. Introduction

The Advisory Council on Aging, as the policy, planning and advocacy voluntary leadership group of the Office on Aging, identified affordable housing as a major issue in Riverside County, especially in light of the anticipated impact of the recent Supreme Court Olmstead ruling and the new California State Plan addressing that ruling.

Sessions were held from November 2002 through March 2003 at several monthly public meetings of the Advisory Council Aging. This summary of proceedings captures highlights from the forums and future short-term action steps the Advisory Council on Aging will be taking based on the issues raised.

B. Purpose of the Forums

The purpose of the forum on housing was to identify the barriers to development of affordable housing for seniors, and identify strategies to raise awareness on this issue and promote the development and construction of housing for seniors and persons with disabilities. The sessions focused on the past experience of the presenters and addressed the barriers and obstacles they had encountered, unique challenges they perceive in developing affordable housing for seniors, and specific recommendations or actions they had for Advisory Council attention.

C. Major findings

1. Affordable housing is a *serious problem* for seniors and adults with disabilities at this time in Riverside County and will increase in importance as efforts are made to reduce institutionalization and provide support to individuals living in community settings. There are currently 28,000 on the waiting list for housing vouchers in Riverside County, and in addition it is projected that Riverside County will need 39,000 units of affordable housing in the next 20 years based on revised SCAG projections.

2. *Innovative financing, design, and development approaches and partnerships* will be essential to meet the growing need for affordable housing. Following are some of the innovative ideas presented for consideration;

Vouchers for at home personal support and health care services based on need to make it possible to live at home

Grants to retrofit/convert older homes

Adjustments in zoning, planning, density requirements for new affordable developments including incentives for granny flats, smaller 6-8 unit developments, mixed population and intergenerational housing development projects

Property tax credits for low-income homeowners

Funding pools to promote home ownership opportunities for older adults with disabilities

Waivers related to the enforcement of prevailing wage in affordable housing development

Mainstreaming Universal Design standards in model building codes and awarding Easy Living Home Insignia/status

A countywide plan on relocating individuals from institutions to independent living settings

Supportive technology and devices

Build local community support through broad based planning initiatives

Use of local Community Development Block Program funds for maintenance and upkeep coupled with grass root volunteers and donations toward home repair

Partnerships among funders, developers and local government

Align tax credit allocations based on Regional Needs Allocation

Utilize discretionary funds and unspent resources across jurisdictions to bring supply into line with demand

Redesigning city ordinances to target affordable housing for seniors

On site support services in congregate housing developments

Use of value engineering to achieve maximum cost efficiencies/benefits in development design

Good pedestrian access to community services and opportunities

Leverage multiple goals such as preservation of historical buildings to provide affordable housing

Sweat equity construction model to promote ownership

Educational programs to promote consumer self-reliance, financial management and informed choice

Local safety programs/patrols to promote neighborhood security

Push implementation of the State Olmstead plan

Update housing elements, building codes and incentive programs to promote universal design

Incorporate universal design into professional education curriculum

3. Local governments, financiers, and developers must ***work together to address the multiple political, planning and funding barriers*** to affordable senior housing that exist, and to advance both traditional and non-traditional options and models to meet the need for affordable housing for seniors. Barriers identified include:

Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) phenomena

School fees taxes

Parking discounts

Density bonuses and tax credits

Limits in tax credit and other funding

Increased land values

Limited available sites

Lack of qualified developers

Lack of reasonable profitability for developers

Lack of fixed route and para-transit options

Proportionality rule in cities does not project accelerated growth needs

Excessive fees and permit costs

Conflicting requirements across multiple jurisdictions

Unrealistic density requirements/limits

Developer resistance to universal design

Existing constraints on local government ability to negotiate

D. Recommendations for Action

A. The Advisory Council on Aging should sponsor and *host an Affordable Housing Summit in Riverside County in the Fall of 2003*. This summit would convene key stakeholders including; developers, funders, planners, policy makers, local government officials, consumers, service providers, media, and other interested leaders to raise awareness about the barriers to affordable housing, to identify strategies for increasing affordable housing., and explore new community partnerships.

B. The Advisory Council on Aging should *seek sponsors for the Affordable Housing Summit* to generate funds for the new Empowerment and Dignity Foundation on Aging.

C. The No Wrong Door Team should *expand the community partnership* to include non-institutionally based housing developers and managers to gain additional perspective into housing issues and innovation.

E. Contributors/presenters

Ace Atkinson, Executive Director, Area Board #12
Focus on affordable housing advocacy for the developmentally disabled


Erin Comstock, City of Riverside County
Focus on housing project coordination for the City of Riverside

Robert Field, Riverside County EDA
Focus on development for the Riverside County Housing Authority

Steve Brown, City of Coachella
Focus on housing and seniors in the city of Coachella

James Collins, Include Me, Inc.
Focus of advocacy for accessible and affordable housing for the disability community

Mary Roche, Mayor Pro Tem
Corrie Kates, City of Indian Wells
Focus on new project development underway



David Petritx, City of Blythe
Focus on housing and homeless in rural area of the county

Ed Kibbey, Building Industry Association, Palm Desert
Focus on housing development

John Mealy, Coachella Valley Housing Coalition
Focus on non-profit housing development

Craig Thralls, Wildomar Senior Leisure Community
Focus on complexity, length of time, and cost to complete the development process

Patricia Wilkison, Advocates for Senior Housing
Focus on education of the general public on housing issues of 55+ population

Mary Michlovich, Heritage Community Housing
Focus on consultation to multiple projects/developments

Susan Mack, Homes for Easy Living
Focus on universal design

Beverly Copeland, Sun City Concern
Focus on senior consumer needs and issues



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