

A REGIONAL ACTION AGENDA FOR HOUSING

Developed from presentations and input at the Regional Housing Conference: “Finding Common Ground” held March 13, 2008 at Covenant Church in Charlottesville

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Both public and private resources need to be mobilized, coordinated and sustained to effectively address housing needs.

New Approaches: Remove public and private barriers (zoning restrictions, difficulty in securing financing, lack of organizational structure) to facilitate creative approaches to housing in our region. Some of the ideas presented or coming out of this conference include:

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- Co-housing
- Homesharing
- Community Land Trust
- Mixed Use/Mixed Income Developments

Build public/private coalitions to promote better and more flexible ordinances and to enable partnerships with the faith community and non-profit organizations.

Use/develop/redevelop public land

Target public funds toward strategic solutions to leverage private investment

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

A recurring theme from the breakout sessions was the need for greater coordination and cooperation among jurisdictions, agencies, and non-profit organizations.

Establish a clearinghouse/referral system for all services

Improve coordination and cooperation between existing programs (tax relief, mortgage programs, counseling)

Develop consistent definitions and rules regarding affordable housing and services across the region, to help agencies and citizens understand and access available programs.

Bring health care funding and resources together with housing resources to support long-term aging in place

POLICY CHANGES

Participants supported public policies facilitating affordable housing development.

Streamline the rezoning and site plan approval process for projects including affordable housing and/or sustainability.

Adopt local standards for affordability, walkability, green design, and visitability

Consider changes to reduce required parking spaces and revise placement of parking lots and setback requirements to create more pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.

Work with VDOT to modify road standards to fit development.

Improve the proffer system and/or adopt impact fees, to create greater certainty in the development process.

Enhance rural transportation and services, including infrastructure, to enable people in rural areas to access jobs and services.

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

Participants strongly agreed that education and advocacy are essential, to reach elected and appointed officials, developers, non-profit organizations, and consumers.

Reframe the affordable housing message to identify benefits to preserving rural character and creating communities that are family-friendly, efficient, and “livable for a lifetime.”

Develop and promote prototypes and education on housing choice and availability and financial literacy for students and the public.

Broaden Realtor and Seller knowledge of Special Programs

Use Public Service Announcements and other marketing approaches to alter perceptions of affordable housing, educate the public on housing needs in our community, and increase awareness of existing programs.