NORTH CAROLINA

HOUSING
COALITION

EDUCATING *and* ADVOCATING *for* CHANGE

HOUSING CAROLINA RESOURCE MANUAL

A guide for creating effective communications in support of affordable housing in North Carolina

A Message from the
NCHC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In North Carolina, whether rented or owned, a home has become increasingly elusive for many because of an inadequate supply of quality affordable housing. If we are to protect our communities and provide for long-term economic success we must address the issues and find solutions to the affordable housing dilemma. As the need for affordable housing continues to grow, collaboration between housing advocates remains one of the most effective tools in ensuring that the housing issues are addressed.

The North Carolina Housing Coalition is pleased to present this *Housing Carolina Resource Manual.*

This Resource Manual is a strategy and message reference guide designed to help you coordinate and execute a successful public education initiative in support of affordable housing as part of the Campaign for Housing Carolina. It offers information on generating more positive attitudes toward affordable housing in North Carolina and on increasing understanding, engagement and support of affordable housing through media, community and public relations.

Included in this manual are:

• An overview of the North Carolina Housing Coalition, its mission and initiatives as well as its legislative agenda, and staff; An overview of the Campaign for Housing Carolina, a statewide public awareness and education campaign working to increase the state's investment in the North Carolina Housing Trust Fund.

• An overview of North Carolina's housing picture, including key issues, fact sheets and statistics you can use to persuade others of the need for and benefit of affordable housing.

• The latest information on messaging and communications to use when talking about affordable housing.   This information comes from polling and focus groups in North Carolina. We also utilized direct assistance from Demos, a Washington DC communications organization that specializes in helping advocacy groups talk about the need to increase public investment in public structures and funding. An overview of research-derived insights on attitudes toward affordable housing in North Carolina, commnication strategies and key messages for success.

• A NIMBY guide that defines NIMBYism, provides solutions and offers guidelines for bringing an affordable housing effort through the local development process.

• A media toolkit that provides a practical field guide with sample documents to assist in communicating housing and NIMBY issues.

The goal of this Resource Manual is to provide affordable housing advocates and concerned community leaders the tools to conduct a meaningful and successful public education initiative about affordable housing. We hope you find this information useful and provocative, and encourage you to let us know what aspects of this material have been most and least helpful.

Chris Estes
Executive Director
The North Carolina Housing Coalition

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The North Carolina
HOUSING COALITION

"It's nice to know there are groups like the Coalition out there trying to make a difference for families like ours."

Tina and LeRoy Robinson

First-time homeowners, Wilmington, NC

More than 2.5 million North Carolina low-income households lack safe, decent or affordable housing. The dream of owning a home remains just that for these families.

The North Carolina Housing Coalition is a private, nonprofit membership organization working for decent, safe and affordable housing that promotes self-determination and stable communities for low-income North Carolinians. Incorporated in 1988, the Coalition today includes a network of housing and service providers, members of the faith community, civic and elected leaders, representatives of business and industry and other advocates who believe that housing is a basic human right and the cornerstone of vibrant communities.

Its mission is to lead a campaign for housing to ensure that working families, seniors and people with special needs may live with dignity and opportunity. For a full description of the NC Housing Coalition work, please visit its web site at www.nchousing.org.

The North Carolina Housing Coalition's mission is supported through four primary activities:
We work to accomplish our mission by supporting our members and building partnerships to improve affordable housing, and focus on the following activities:

Resource and Information Referral Service for individuals Searching for Housing - we provide people from across the state with direct assistance to find the housing-related resources and services they need in their local communities. To do this we maintain the most comprehensive list of housing organizations and services in the state.

Serving as a Clearinghouse for Best Practices, Statistics and Research - we serve as a clearinghouse of information research, statistical information, and best practices in affordable housing. We have also produced several publications of our own, including the popular *Affordable Housing Primer,* to assist our members with their work.

Engaging and Empowering People in Advocacy to Improve Public Policy - we are a collective voice for providers of affordable housing and the people they serve. NCHC provides the statewide voice for low-income North Carolinians in educating the General Assembly and other key policy makers at the national, state and local levels. It monitors programs and legislation and is leading a grass-roots campaign to build support for increasing the trust fund for housing in North Carolina (For additional information on North Carolina's Trust Fund, see page 12).

The North Carolina Housing Coalition is governed by a 25-member board of directors, half of whom are working for organizations that serve low-income persons affected by the lack of decent affordable housing. For a complete listing of the NC Housing Coalition Board of Directors, please visit the Coalition's website at www.nchousing.org.

2009 North Carolina Housing Coaltion Staff

Chris Estes
Executive Director

Harold E. "Hunter" Thompson
Director, CHIN

Vickie Parsons
Bookkeeper

John Niffenegger
Membership Coordinator

Regina Green
Mortgage Foreclosure Project Coordinator

Carley Ruff
Policy and Outreach Coordinator

Anne Ehlers
Communications and Development Coordinator

Laura McDuffee
Statistics and Reports, CHIN

Sonia Ensenat
Lead Coordinator, CHIN

Holly Barham
Coordinator, CHIN

Rob Tripp
Coordinator, CHIN

Michael Tillman
Coordinator, CHIN

Aaron Asbury
Coordinator, CHIN

NC Housing Coalition's
LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

As an advocacy organization, each year the North Carolina Housing Coalition develops a state and federal legislative agenda based housing needs, member and board input, and partnership work. The NCHC strives to create and actively support legislation focused around the following priorities:

- **Production.** Expanding the supply of quality affordable homes in North Carolina through public and private investments so that working families and individuals, persons with disabilities, people in crisis, and fixed-income seniors may live with opportunity and dignity. This included advocacy for HUD and USDA production programs, Section 8 vouchers, and Public Housing capital and operating funds.

  NC Housing Trust Fund. Support annual legislative increases in the NC Housing Trust Fund, which provides financial support for the development of affordable housing, emergency repairs,modifications to make homes handicapped-accessible, and supportive housing for the homeless, victims of domestic violence, persons with mental illness, and other low-income populations. In order to adequately respond to NC's growing housing crisis amongst low and moderate income households, the state needs to invest significantly more resources in the NC Housing Trust Fund. The NCHC leads the campaign, supported by over 150 businesses and organiz tions, to advocate for $50 million of annual funding for the NC Housing Trust Fund.

  National Housing Trust Fund. Support for the expanded funding of the National Housing Trust Fund which will direct funding directly to NC's Housing Trust Fund.

- **Preservation.** Dedicating resources toward the revitalization of existing affordable homes, preserving affordable rental properties at-risk of being lost, and promoting long-term affordability. This includes support for increasing funding for weatherization (energy efficiency), rehab and repair from state and federal sources.

- **Accessibility.** Support for furthering fair housing and the elimination of housing discrimination so that all North Carolinians have access to safe, quality, affordable housing. This includes increasing the stock of affordable homes and apartments near jobs, transportation, and services and working to prevention discrim nation against the development of quality affordable housing.

- **Consumer Protection.** Ensuring that purchasers and renters of housing and treated fairly, are not exploited or mislead and have opportunities to build wealth and achieve economic self-sufficiency. This has included changing laws in the purchasing of manufactured homes, predatory and payday lending, forecl-sure prevention and landlord/tenant contracts.

Overview of
HOUSING TRUST FUNDS

Housing trust funds are distinct funds established by legislation, ordinance or resolution to receive public revenues, which can only be spent on housing.

The key characteristic of a housing trust fund is that it receives ongoing revenues from an annual appropriation or dedicated source of public funding [1] such as taxes, fees or loan repayments. In states with the most significant Trust Funds (Washington, Ohio and Florida), legislation or an ordinance was passed that increased an existing revenue source, such as a real estate transfer tax, with the increase being committed to the housing trust fund, providing between $50 million to $200 million annually for each state's Trust Fund. Other states and localities have passed housing bonds that have provided significant revenue for a housing trust fund for a certain number of years before a new bond must be passed.

Housing trust funds provide a more secure and sensible way to fund needed housing. Safe, affordable housing is essential to the health of every community and deserves the kind of funding a housing trust fund can promise.

- Housing trust funds are distinct funds established by cities, counties, and states that permanently dedicate a source of public revenue to support the production and preservation of affordable housing.

- There are approximately 600 [2] housing trust funds in the United States. Thirty-eight states, the District of Columbia, and more than 550 cities and counties have created these funds.[2] The number of housing trust funds has doubled in the past five years.

- More than $1.6 billion [2] is generated for affordable housing through these trust funds every year and this amount is increasing. On average, for every $1 committed to a housing development by a housing trust fund, another $5 to $10 is leveraged in other public and private resources.

- Several hundred thousand housing units have been supported through housing trust funds.

- Housing trust funds support a variety of housing activities for low- and very low-income households, including new construction, preservation of existing housing, emergency repairs, homeless shelters, housing related services and capacity building for nonprofit organizations.

- At any given time, as many as 50 additional jurisdictions are considering the creation of a housing trust fund. These unique funds are a fundamental aspect of emerging housing policy in the United States.

[1]National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009 available at http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009//http://www.nlihc.org/oor_current
[2] Center for Community Change, Housing Trust Fund Project , Available at http://www.communitychange.org/our-projects/htf

• Housing trust funds have demonstrated that when government makes a commitment to address critical housing needs, the ongoing dedicated source of revenue allows for more intelligent planning to address housing needs and for more effective use of existing resources by the housing industry.

• Housing trust funds enable jurisdictions to elevate their funding of critical housing needs by committing resources to a process that treats affordable housing as an essential component of maintaining healthy communities. Jurisdictions have documented increased jobs, growing sales taxes, higher property tax revenues and many other economic benefits from the operation of their housing trust funds.

National Housing Trust Fund

The National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) was established by the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-289). [1] The NHTF is a permanent housing program with a dedicated source of funding that will not be subject to the annual appropriations process. The program's main purpose is to increase and preserve the supply of rental housing for extremely low and very low income households, including those experiencing homelessness, and increase homeownership among households with extremely low and very low incomes.[2] Ninety percent of the funds are dedicated for the increase and preservation of affordable rental housing and the remaining 10% will be used to increase homeownership among low to very low income households. The legislation specifies that at least 75% of the funds for rental housing must benefit extremely low-income households and all funds must benefit very low income households.[2] Funds will begin to be distributed beginning in FY09-10. [1]

Funding for the NHTF, as first established, was to come from the Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSE), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Due to financial trouble, both GSEs were taken over by the Federal Housing Finance Administration (FHFA). The FHFA regulator has suspended the financial contributions of both entities, leaving the NHTF with no dedicated source of revenue. However, in the FY10 budget, President Obama initially capitalized the NHTF at $1 billion.

For more information on housing trust funds, please visit our website www.nchousing.org.

[1] National Low Income Housing Coalition, National Housing Trust Fund: A Home is a Foundation 2009. Available at http://www.nlihc.org/doc/FAQ-NHTF.pdf
[2] National Housing Trust Fund Campaign, National Housing Trust Fund FAQ. Available at http://www.nlihc.org/doc/NHTF-FAQ-6-Oct-09.pdf

The North Carolina
HOUSING TRUST FUND

The NC Housing Trust Fund is the North Carolina's only state-funded and state-designated resource for the financing of affordable housing.   The Trust Fund was established in 1987 by the North Carolina General Assembly to benefit households with very low (below 50 percent of local median income) and extremely low (below 30 percent of local median income) incomes. It is managed by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, a self-supporting public agency, which pays all of the Housing Trust Fund's administrative costs. A 13-person Housing Partnership representing the various sectors of the affordable housing industry and ex-official leaders from state government governs the Trust Fund. The Partnership ensures that the fund is free of undue influence by any one interest group, provides an ongoing conduit of information to the General Assembly, and helps secure adequate funding.

The Trust Fund is North Carolina's most flexible housing resource—able to finance homeownership and rental apartments, new construction, rehabilitation and emergency repairs. The Trust Fund provides the state's largest source of funds for financing supportive housing for the homeless, victims of domestic violence, persons with mental illness and others. In addition, the Trust Fund provides the state's largest source of funds for financing emergency repairs and accessibility modifications that allow elderly and disabled low-income homeowners to continue living in their homes.

> In 2004, Barbara and Jim Goodman and the AJ Fletcher Foundation Board of Directors committed to a multiyear effort to significantly expand the Housing Trust Fund. Other important organizations in this partnership are the Housing Finance Agency, NC Justice Center, United Way of North Carolina, NC Coalition to End Homelessness, the Community Development Initiative, AARP-NC, ARC-NC, and the NC Bankers Association.

The Trust Fund has improved housing in all 100 North Carolina counties and has won three national awards for its stewardship of the state's money, all of which is used for direct bricks and mortar housing costs rather than administrative purposes. Since 1988, the Trust Fund has financed over 20,000 homes and apartments and its activities have generated over 11,000 construction jobs, $40.6 million in state tax revenues, and $56 million in local tax revenues. The North Carolina Housing Trust Fund has confirmed its effectiveness in building communities, the economy and lives.

Unfortunately, current resources fall far short of meeting the state's need for safe, quality, affordable housing. To reach its full potential, this proven program needs a substantial, reliable source of funds to ensure affordable homes for working families, the elderly and persons with special needs. Due to the insufficient funding of the NC Housing Trust Fund, the NC Housing Coalition worked with several other statewide organizations to create the "Campaign for Housing Carolina." The Campaign's goal is to achieve annual , re-occurring funding of $50 million for the NC Housing Trust Fund. It has been endorsed by over 150 organizations and businesses and has achieved significant increases in the Trust Fund.

For additional information on the NC Housing Trust Fund and the Campaign for Housing Carolina, please visit www.housingcarolina.org.

Critical Information
on the Issue of
AFFORDABLE
HOUSING

NORTH CAROLINA
HOUSING
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EDUCATING *and* ADVOCATING *for* CHANGE
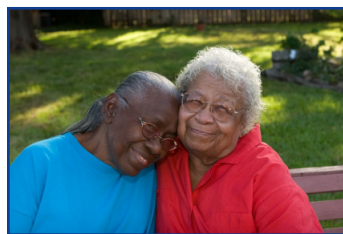
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What is
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The standard definition of affordable housing is drawn from government housing agencies and the private mortgage industry. **They view 30 percent of a household's gross income for housing expense as a standard of affordability.** Generally, when individuals or families spend more than 30 percent of their income to meet basic housing costs, they do not have enough income to meet other basic needs (such as food, clothing and medical insurance) or survive financial setbacks, such as reduced work hours or significant illness/injury.

When we advocate for affordable housing, we mean well-built, well-managed/maintained housing for families with low to moderate incomes that is often financed with government subsidies.

The expression "affordable housing" is also connected to the relationship between median incomes and market prices within a given community. Agencies such as the Metropolitan Council call a home affordable if a household earning up to 80 percent of median income can pay the mortgage spending no more than 30 percent of its income. For rental housing, an apartment is affordable to a renter earning up to 50 percent of median income. These choices, 80 percent for ownership and 50 percent for rental, were picked because in most communities the private housing industry is unable to provide homes or apartments to populations at or below these incomes without some subsidy. Of course, a price set to be affordable to a household at one income level often would not necessarily be affordable to lower-income households. Accordingly, a good deal of publicly subsidized "affordable housing" is still out of reach. for thousands of families.

Globally, it is estimated that 100 million people are homeless and as many as 1 billion people live inadequate shelter, largely because they cannot afford to do otherwise. The extent of conditions of homelessness is a global phenomena and is increasingly addressed in international law and policy.

Housing Needs in
NORTH CAROLINA

In North Carolina, 740,000 households do not have and cannot afford a safe, stable home; 9,762 households go without heat in the winter; and more than 11,000 homes still lack indoor plumbing. Over 14 percent live below the poverty rate, and many more people are unable to meet the basic requirements of decent affordable housing.

Additional facts about the state of housing in North Carolina are just as staggering. For example, in North Carolina, a minimum wage earner (earning $7.25 per hour) can afford monthly rent of no more than $377, and an extremely low-income household (earning $16,420, 30 percent of the Area Median Income of $54,735) can afford monthly rent of no more than $410. Unfortunately, the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom unit is $693. An SSI recipient (receiving $674 monthly) can afford monthly rent of no more than $202, while the Fair Market Rent for a one-bedroom unit is $606.

The bottom line is that a North Carolina worker earning the Minimum Wage ($7.25 per hour) must work 74 hours per week just to afford a two-bedroom unit at the area's Fair Market Rent[1]— putting the Housing Wage in North Carolina at $13.33, more than 180% of the minimum wage! (The Housing Wage is the amount a full time (40 hours per week) worker must earn per hour in order to afford a two-bed-room unit at the area's Fair Market rent).

- More than 20 percent of all North Carolina home owners must spend more than 30 percent of income on mortgage to afford a decent home.

- More than 40 percent of North Carolina renters must spend more than 30 percent of income on rent to afford even the most basic unit.

- Approximately 48,000 North Carolinians are living in shelters ,thousands more are living in homes without adequate kitchens or plumbing.

- One out of every five North Carolina children are living in substandard housing.

Along with the large number of North Carolinians paying too much for their housing, thousands are also living in houses that are substandard. More than 15,000 homes in North Carolina lack complete kitchens, and more than 11,000 do not have adequate plumbing.

[1] 2000 US Census
[2] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009: America's Housing Wage Climbs, available at http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009//

If current trends continue, the problems will only get worse. Over the last few decades, a number of factors have converged to make housing too costly for a growing number of low- and moderate-income North Carolinians. Our population is growing, and the demand for housing is outpacing supply in many of our urban counties. Wages are not keeping up with rising housing costs and the resulting wage-housing gap has led to increased homelessness. Between 2004 and 2007, the median home value rose almost 19 percent; while median incomes decreased by 25 percent during that same period.[1] In addition, we have seen hundreds of thousands of living wage manufacturing jobs leave our state. Most workers have found new employment, but their wages are typically less than what they were earning previously.

The statistics just outlined on affordable housing in North Carolina today are daunting. However, the numbers only represent the need for housing. The absence of a strong public consciousness on critical housing issues is even more discouraging.

Elected officials and the voting public have labeled housing a basic human necessity as a low-priority issue for too long. The current economic climate seems to have yielded to an increased awareness of the important role housing plays in the nation's well-being. Therefore, public officials seem to be more open to learning more about housing issues than in the past. Some have begun to see the connection between housing, education, jobs and economic prosperity or the human toll of the affordable housing crisis. However, they have yet to fully grasp that by creating and preserving affordable housing, a community can help stabilize the economy, expand its tax base, increase jobs, decrease crime and offer security for families and children who suffer most when frequent moves to avoid rent increases or escape crime force them to attend different schools each year. .

Numbers do not tell the stories of families who hold on to their homes by their fingertips, keeping the rent paid only by relying on food pantries and soup kitchens to eat at the end of the month and counting on informal and haphazard arrangements for child care so parents can work. Numbers do not describe what it means for a child to bounce from school to school because his or her family must keep searching for cheaper places to live, never catching up on lessons or forming lasting friendships. Numbers cannot make us feel the anxiety of an aging widow who fears that she will lose her home as her rent or property taxes go up and her pension does not. Numbers do not help us understand the frustration of wasted potential of a person with disabilities confined to an institution for lack of an affordable place to live in her or his community.

[1] National Low Income Housing Coalition
[2] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009: America's Housing Wage Climbs, available at http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009//

Unfortunately, when attached to housing, the terms *affordable, low-income* and *subsidized* immediately conjure fearful images of run-down projects inhabited by people who contribute to the decay. These fears create "Not In My Back Yard" (NIMBY) attitudes that can generate major obstacles to achieving adequate housing for all, as clearly evidenced by the state's slow recovery from Hurricane Floyd. Some advocates in Eastern North Carolina estimated that 3,500 people were still waiting for assistance, nearly five years after the flood. Although the governor and General Assembly appropriated enough funds to assist those affected by the flood, administrative strategies that allowed counties to control recovery efforts were ineffective. Attitudes of racism and NIMBYism that have historically been problems in some eastern counties were allowed to influence decisions of who received assistance; and some of the most vulnerable populations—women with children, the illiterate and the elderly—still remain unassisted.

North Carolina faces many housing challenges, all requiring strong leadership and continued partnerships among the private sector, philanthropic organizations and all levels of government. But nothing is more critical than telling the story behind the numbers, changing public attitudes and effectively educating the public about the need for action.

Affordable Housing in North Carolina –The Numbers

Population	9,22,414
Poverty rate	14.8%
Median income (2007)	$43,867
Fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment	$693
Housing wage (2009)	$13.33
Minimum wage (2009)	$7.25
Median mortgage payment (2007)	$1,174
People paying more than 30 percent of income on mortgage	21.1%
People paying more than 30 percent of income on rent	42.5%
Proportion of renters to owners	68.4/31.6
Homes without complete kitchens	15,151
Homes without complete plumbing	11,822
Manufactured housing	14.9%
Counties with shelters funded by Emergency Shelter Grants	49
Total ESG shelters in the state (2008)	135

Summary of North Carolina's Needs Assessment
FOR 2006-2010

The Consolidated Plan, or ConPlan, combines all of the planning, application and performance requirements previously required separately for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME, Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG), Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS (HOPWA) and programs such as HOME that require a Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) (for more information on these terms, please refer to the Glossary of Terms section).   The North Carolina Consolidated Plan 2006-2010 outlined many of the predominant housing needs in North Carolina to be addressed in this five year plan. The next ConPlan will come into effect in FY 2011 and will outline more of the housing needs in North Carolina as a result of the economic crisis.

The ConPlan notes that North Carolina's very low (at and below 30% AMI) and low-income population (30%-50% AMI) has the greatest housing needs. [1]   The chart below outlines the percentages in each population with housing
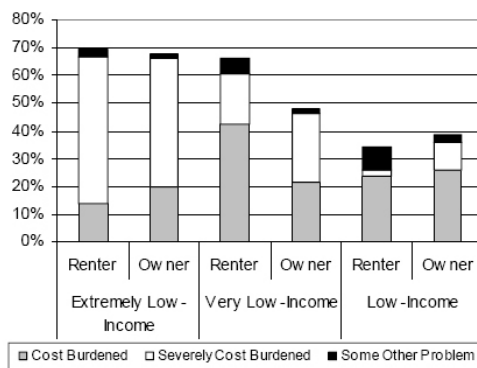
problems. Many of the individuals earning less than 30% of AMI are recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and earn less than $10,000 a year ($674 a month).[2] It is especially difficult for these individuals to find healthy, secure and affordable housing due to ever-increasing housing prices in North Carolina.[1]. In addition, many of North Carolina's working families (earning less than $8 an hour) are cost-burdened by rising housing costs. [1] Subsidies are necessary for North Carolinians at both income levels to obtain, "…safe, decent and sanitary housing." [1]

Economic shifts in North Carolina from a mainly agricultural and manufacturing state, to one of service providers and biotech/pharmaceutical manufacturing has left many working families with major pay decreases or without jobs altogether. [1] Foreclosures in North Carolina tripled between 1998 and 2003 as a result of the changing economy. [1] This creates a greater need for foreclosure prevention programs to continue to be implemented throughout the state. [1]

Immigration to North Carolina has increased dramatically in the past ten years as well. Groups moving to the area include young professionals seeking high-tech employment in the state's urban areas. [1] Additionally, retired persons have migrated to coastal and mountain regions to escape harsh winters and summers in our moderate climate. [1]   Lastly, immigrants from other countries move to North Carolina in search of more economic opportunities. The state as a whole must be able to meet the affordable housing needs of its ever-growing population, these groups included.

[1] North Carolina ConPlan Executive Summary 2006-2010. Available upon request from NC Housing Finance Agency.
[2] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009: America's Housing Wage Climbs, available at http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009//

Common
OBSTACLES

The Hart Research funded by the former Fannie Mae foundation identified the following obstacles that may need to be addressed as you reach out to educate North Carolinians about affordable housing:

•**Many citizens and communities are inclined to emphasize homeownership and marginalize renters.** Renter households make up one-third of the households in the United States–nearly 36 million households– and the lack of affordable rental units is especially problematic in North Carolina. Unfortunately, some of the most negative perceptions about affordable housing are related to perceptions of large, run-down rental units.

•**In areas of economic decline, housing affordability may be viewed as a nonexistent or lower-priority issue.** Conversely, in communities where once affordable neighborhoods have become over-priced due to an influx of wealthier newcomers, average citizens have an increased ability to personalize the issue of affordable housing and imagine that this might one day affect them.

•**Many view housing as symptomatic of other more compelling problems, such as health care or economic stagnation.** Some believe that any efforts are futile in the face of overwhelming political and economic forces. Some believe that the housing market is self-correcting, free market forces will solve it.

•**Many believe that fairness means not changing the rules as they exist today.** North Carolinians are moved by themes relating to fairness and opportunity and they are attracted to the notion of a level playing field. But they also are reluctant to grant anyone a break that they did not get themselves.

•**Many business leaders in North Carolina do not see the benefit or need to get involved.** They are willing to acknowledge that their employees face problems finding affordable housing, but they place much of the burden on their employees and the decisions they make.

•**Moral worthiness is a key issue.** Some argue that housing is a choice, with people spending money on what matters most to them. Others feel that people should create their own opportunities, or that it is a zero-sum game with no fair solution that is a win for everyone.

•**Many North Carolinians reject the idea that affordable housing benefits the middle class.** Most people consider themselves to be middle class, and it doesn't follow logically that the middle class deserves help because it includes almost everyone. Referring to working families as needing housing is also too inclusionary for some people.

•**Finally, many are still strongly influenced by negative images of traditional public housing.** Many fear irresponsible tenants, unwanted density, unattractive buildings and reduced home values. Renters and rental units particularly evoke these images.

For additional discussion on the common obstacles to affordable housing, please refer to the section on NIMBYism beginning on page 79.

An Assessment of the Barriers
TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

During the summer of 2004, two graduate students from Duke University, studied barriers to affordable housing in NC. The study was entitled *Locating Affordability: An Assessment of Barriers to Affordable Housing in Four North Carolina Towns*. The project was designed to evaluate whether zoning in NC presents unique barriers to developers of affordable housing. Four communities were chosen as case studies, and local affordable housing developers were interviewed about their experiences. Charlotte and Raleigh were chosen as examples of urban areas, and Rocky Mount and Haywood County were chosen as examples of rural areas. The following developers were interviewed:

1. Patricia Garrett: Ms. Garrett is the president of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Housing Partnership ("CMHP"). Chartered in 1988, CMHP is a nonprofit housing development and finance corporation organized to expand affordable housing and well-maintained housing within stable neighborhoods for low- and moderate-income families. They offer an extensive homeownership program. CMHP also owns and maintains 1,100 rental units. In addition, CMHP invests in other nonprofit. In addition, CMHP invests in other nonprofit and for-profit providers, which has resulted in another 856 rental units.[1]

2. Gregg Warren: Mr. Warren is the executive director of DHIC, Inc. DHIC is a private nonprofit housing development company that builds high-quality, affordable housing in the Research Triangle region. DHIC has built more than 1,000 affordable homes in the Triangle and renovated another 400 homes. It owns 30 apartment communities, 9 that were designed with senior citizens in mind. Units are leased to those whose incomes are at or below 60 percent AMI. DHIC provides financial counseling and lending education.[2]

3. Joyce Dickens: Ms. Dickens is the president of Rocky Mount/Edgecombe Community Development Corporation ("CDC"). CDCs are nonprofit organizations offering resources and assistance in the areas of housing, small business development, childcare and skills training. The Rocky Mount Edgecombe CDC developed several affordable housing projects in connection with Hurricane Floyd flood victim relief efforts. It also provides home buyer education and predatory lending counseling.

4. Cheryl Wilkins: Ms. Wilkins is the housing development director at Mountain Projects, Inc. ("MPI"). MPI is a nonprofit community action agency that provides services to promote safe, affordable and energy-efficient housing to people who are low-income, disabled or elderly. Operating in Haywood and Jackson counties, MPI has built 4 affordable housing developments (one still in progress). MPI also provides financial counseling to prospective homeowners

In addition to developers, the following city employees were interviewed. Rick Honeycutt was the assistant county manager for Haywood County in 2004, and Debra Campbell was the city manager in 2004 for Charlotte.

[1] http://www.cmhp.org
[2] http://www.dhic.org/html/home.html

Area 1
CHARLOTTE

Charlotte is in the southern region of North Carolina and sits near the state's border with South Carolina. As the largest city in North Carolina, Charlotte is home to approximately 440,261 households.[1] Charlotte is 55 percent white, 32 percent black, 7 percent Hispanic and 3 percent Asian.[2] Charlotte is the largest city in the state. Charlotte's population increased by 11 percent between the 2000 census and the 2006 census estimates, [3] and even greater growth occurred between 1990 and 2000 due in large part to Charlotte's emergence as a leading banking center in the Southeast. Such rapid growth has had certain effects on housing patterns.   Since the economic crisis, Charlotte has faced more foreclosures than any other city in the state, and an unemployment rate of 12.4% as of June 2009.[4] Within the city of Charlotte, one finds the kind of racial segregation in housing patterns that one finds in most major cities. The southeast sections of town are predominantly white and affluent, while the northwest is predominantly black and poor; middle-class and blue-collar whites occupy a sort of "transition zone" between the two.[5] Slightly more than two thirds of Charlotte residents own their own home; and about one-third rent, which is similar to the rest of the state. However, affordable rental housing is still out of reach for many residents of Charlotte. Median gross rent in Charlotte is $757, which is almost $65 more than for the state as a whole.[1] Charlotte's AMI is $66,500.[1] A significant percentage of renters in Charlotte are poor; one-third of Charlotte renters are low-income.[6] Due to high cost of living in Charlotte, 37,012 households, renters and homeowners combined, spend more than 50% of their income on their rent or mortgage.[7] Forty percent of Charlotte area renters are unable to afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rates1.[8] Obviously, Charlotte has a need for affordable housing.

Charlotte has recently been facing obstacles that were not present four years ago. Cuts in federal, state and local funds have left many housing developers wondering whether city bonds will be available for housing projects. Ms. Garrett (president of CMHP) stated that, "There is less money, and more need," characterizing Charlotte's current housing market. Stimulus funds yet to reach the city, make it difficult to contract work.

[1] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009: America's Housing Wage Climbs, available at http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009//
[2] US Census Estimates 2007 for Charlotte available at: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3712000.html
[3]http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3712000.html
[4] Unemployment Rates available at: http://www.economagic.com/em-cgi/data.exe/blsla/lauMT37167403
[5] Elise Richards, Residential Segregation in Charlotte, N.C.: Federal Policies, Urban Renewal, and the Role of the North Carolina Fund, (December, 2002) (unpublished paper, on file with the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy, Duke University).
[6] Generally "low-income" is defined as having a household income below 80% of AMI. "Very low-income" is often defined as having a household income below 50 percent of AMI, and "extremely low-income" is defined as having a household income below 30 percent of AMI. However, these terms are not used consistently from city to city or from program to program.
[7] Housing Charlotte 2007: Implementing Solutions Available at: www.housingcharlotte2007.org
[8] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009: America's Housing Wage Climbs, available at http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009//

Affordable housing has been a concern of Charlotte politicians and city planners. What follows is a description of the housing goals and initiatives that Charlotte has embraced. This description is drawn from public documents that track the city council's examination of Charlotte's housing needs.

Although nothing mandates affordable housing in Charlotte, the city embraces the federal government's goals to "provide decent and affordable housing; provide a suitable living environment; and expand economic opportunities to benefit low and moderate-income households."[1] Toward that end, Charlotte seeks to preserve the existing housing stock, expand the supply of low- and moderate-income housing, and support family self-sufficiency initiatives.[2] Charlotte maintains a goal of increasing the stock of affordable housing by 7 percent each year.[3] The city identified several high-priority projects that will increase affordable housing in a systematic way that considers overall urban development.

1. *Housing Trust Fund*: A housing trust fund, financed through city bond funds and private resources, is used to developed multifamily rental housing, homeownership housing, single -room occupancy housing and land-lease projects. The focus of the Fund is to provide rental housing for households earning 60 percent or less of the AMI, with a preference for households earning 30 percent or less than the AMI. Homeownership assistance would be available for households earning between 50 percent and 80 percent of the AMI. Assistance will be awarded on a competitive basis and will take the form of low-interest loans and/or grants based upon the financing needed to make the housing project viable.[1]

2. *Assisted MultiFamily Housing at Transit Station Areas:* Charlotte shall "aggressively pursue opportunities to develop assisted housing within a quarter mile of transit stations."[1] This] This includes publicly funded multifamily rental housing development serving households earning 60 percent or less of AMI. This policy recognizes that those in need of affordable housing may have other poverty- related problems, such as lack of reliable transportation.[3]

3. *Multifamily Housing Locational Policy:* The purpose of this policy is to avoid concentration of multiamily housing, promote diversity and support school and transit development by dispersing new multifamily developments. The policy establishes prohibited, permissible and priority areas for new multifamily rental housing development. Generally, the "prohibited areas" are sections of the city that already have a high concentration of similar development, have low rates of home ownership, or have high concentrations of low-income households. Generally, "priority areas" are wealthier areas of the city with high home ownership and little or no existing multifamily development. Through this plan, the Charlotte City Council seeks to avoid placing affordable housing in fragile neighborhoods that already may be experiencing strains on schools, police and other infrastructure.

[1] Housing Charlotte 2007 Available at http://www.housingcharlotte2007.org
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

Area 2
RALEIGH

Raleigh is the state's capital, and has seen rapid growth in the past decade. The city's population increased 25 percent from 276,000 in the 2000 Census to 356,321 in the 2006 Census Estimates. Raleigh has taken Charlotte's place as the fastest growing city in North Carolina. Major employers of Raleigh residents include the state government, North Carolina State University and Research Triangle Park. Raleigh is 63 percent white, 28 percent black, 7 percent Hispanic and 3 percent Asian.[1] Thirty-five percent of Raleigh's residents are renters, and the median gross rent is $795. In 2000, 26,500 low income households were cost burdened, which was up 32% from 1990.[2] Raleigh's AMI is $76,900.[3] Construction of affordable, multi-family, rental units is less expensive since the economic crisis begun. Many contractors are simply seeking work, and are more willing to negotiate lower prices than may have previously been accepted.

Assistance for affordable housing development is provided through Raleigh's Community Development Department, and Raleigh maintains a comprehensive development plan that is reviewed periodically. Raleigh's approach to affordable housing includes several initiatives.

> 1. *Scattered-Site Policy:* Raleigh recommends distributing affordable housing throughout the city to avoid "undue concentrations of assisted rental housing in minority and low-income neighborhoods."[4] Similar to Charlotte's policy, Raleigh divides the city into four priority areas. Priority 1 areas are the tracts with the lowest percentages of minority and low-income residents; priority 2 areas have high concentrations of low income residents, but are racially mixed; priority 3 areas are redevelopment areas with special emphasis on revitalizing older neighborhoods and public housing replacement; priority 4 areas have the highest concentration of low-income and minority populations.[4]

[1] US Census Estimates Quickfacts 2007 Available at: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3755000.html

[2] Raleigh Community Development Department, Housing: Public Hearing Draft March 2009 available at: http://www.raleigh-nc.org/publications/Planning/Comprehensive_Plan_Update/2030_Comp_Plan_Public_Hearing_Draft_Housing.pdf

[3] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009: available at: http://www.nlihc.org

[4] http://www.raleigh-nc.org/communitydevelopment/index.htm

2. *City-Owned Housing*: : The city owns and maintains approximately 200 affordable rental housing properties located throughout the city, which are available to households earning no more than 50 percent of the area's median income. These units are administered through Barker Realty. Current rent for these units average between $350 - $500 per month[1]

3. J*oint Venture Rental Program:* Raleigh Housing Bonds and HOME funds are used to support the joint venture rental program. This project provides below-market-rate loans to developers of affordable housing, whether it is new construction or rehabilitation. Usually, developers applying for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits are the recipients of these loans. Eligible developers must make housing available to renters whose incomes are at or below 60 percent of the AMI, and the units must be located within city limits. Developments also must comply with Raleigh's Scattered-Site Policy. Between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2008, 547 households benefited from this program.[2]

4.. *Homeownership Assistance:* Raleigh provides mortgage loans to assist first-time homeowners with good credit who are unable to qualify for traditional mortgages and who are income-eligible.[3]   The city also provides additional benefits to first-time homebuyers who are purchasing in low-income census tract areas. These benefits include second mortgages at 0 percent interest.

Other programs from the city of Raleigh to address the need for affordable housing include rehabilitation loans for elderly homeowners, loans for low-income households facing emergency repairs, and job training in the building trades.

[1] Raleigh Community Development; Available at: www.raleighnc.gov/communitydevelopment

[2] Ibid.

[1] US Census Estimates Quickfacts 2007 Available at: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3755000.html

[3] Raleigh Community Development Department, Housing: Public Hearing Draft March 2009 available at: http://www.raleigh-nc.org/publications/Planning/Comprehensive_Plan_Update/2030_Comp_Plan_Public_Hearing_Draft_Housing.pdf

Area 3
ROCKY MOUNT

Rocky Mount is located in eastern North Carolina and straddles both Nash and Edgecombe counties. It is home to almost 57,057 residents.[1] Rocky Mount has seen very little growth, with less than a 1.9 percent increase in population between the 2000 census and 2006 census estimates.[1] Similar to the rest of the state, 34 percent of Rocky Mount residents are renters, and median gross rent is $577.[2] Rocky Mount is 56 percent black and 40 percent white[3] with an AMI of $49,900.[4] Sixty-seven percent of renters are low-income, and more than two-thirds of residents in Rocky Mount have incomes below the AMI.[5] Five thousand households in Rocky Mount live below the poverty line. [6] The city has recognized a lack of affordable housing for those households. The city also has recognized a particular need for low-income housing for the elderly. Rocky Mount is home to almost 3,000 people age 65 or older who are below the poverty line. However, there are currently only 250 affordable housing units for the elderly in the city.[6] The city projects that Rocky Mount will need 1,119 housing units for the elderly in order to meet this increasing need. [6] This is a particular problem for Rocky Mount, as its population is aging more than the other cities examined.

The city has identified several goals to rectify its affordable housing shortage. These include:
(1) promoting the redevelopment commission, (2) establishing "neighborhoods of choice" that provide residents with a range of housing options, (3) collaborating with existing nonprofits to develop affordable housing, (4) considering a "demolition by neglect" ordinance to discourage disinvestment, (5) creating alternative funding sources, (6)promoting fair housing, and (7)studying ways of providing down-payment assistance and low-interest loans.[6] At this point, Rocky Mount has clearly recognized a need to improve its affordable housing options. However, its policy statements about housing are expressed as general goals and contain very few concrete plans. It appears that Rocky Mount is on its way toward addressing affordable housing in a more holistic manner.

[1] US Census Bureau 2006 Estimates: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3757500.html

[2] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, North Carolina Renter Households, available at http://www.nlihc.org/research/lalihd/

[3] US Census Bureau 2006 Estimates: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3757500.html

[4] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2009. Available at: http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009

[5] In calculating the AMI, the defined area also includes the wealthier city of Wilson, NC.

[6] Rocky Mount, NC, City Comprehensive Plan, available at: http://www.rockymountnc.gov/planning/compplan/Chapter07-Housing.pdf

Area 4
HAYWOOD COUNTY

Haywood County is located in western North Carolina and considers itself the "gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains." It includes four towns: Waynesville, Maggie Valley, Canton and Clyde. The largest is Waynesville with a population of 9,879. Waynesville is also the only location in the 546-square-mile county with a zoning ordinance. In fact, when the county last considered zoning in 1991, "it was chaos," according to its assistant county manager. The residents of Haywood County place high value on being able to do what they want with their land and being free from land regulation. This desire for autonomy is perhaps a characteristic one would commonly find among people who choose to live in rural un-zoned areas. For that reason, one does not find the kind of housing policies in Haywood County that one would find in the urban areas of Charlotte and Raleigh.

Although Haywood County contains four cities, the residents largely live outside city limits. Cumulatively, the four towns comprise only 28 percent of the county's 56,590 residents. The AMI is $49,700 and 77 percent of the county's households are homeowners. [1] Of renter households, 25 percent are below the poverty level.[2] Forty-five percent cannot afford the Fair Market Rate of rental units in the area ($633).[3]

[1] National Low-Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2003: America's Housing Wage Climbs, available at http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009
[2] MPI January 2009 Newsletter, available at: http://www.mountainprojects.org/MPI_News_01-09.pdf.
[3] ibid.

FINDINGS

Generally, the developers interviewed did not view zoning, per se, as a barrier to developing affordable housing. The zoning ordinances examined for this project make no overt distinctions between the development of affordable housing and any other development. Furthermore, those interviewed generally viewed zoning as one of several factors in project development. Because their time and resources are limited, affordable housing developers tend to select sites that are already zoned appropriately, thus sidestepping zoning barriers. They tend to work around zoning rather than challenge it head on. In this way, zoning is more of a battle developers choose to avoid rather than a non issue. However, there were several obstacles that are unique to developers of affordable housing.

1. Land Cost

Most developers of affordable housing list high land cost as the most significant barrier to developing affordable housing. Unfortunately, this is often the unintended result of policies to promote scattered affordable housing. For example, the cities of Raleigh and Charlotte have designated "priority areas" where affordable housing is encouraged and "prohibited areas" where it is not allowed until citywide parity has been achieved. The intention is a good one: to avoid "ghettos" of low-income housing. However, those "priority areas" are generally wealthier neighborhoods where the possibility of acquiring land is prohibitively expensive. In addition, priority areas in an urban city might include old established neighborhoods where no unused land remains. Land cost is not viewed as a pressing obstacle by some project managers in Raleigh. Instead, access to good, flat land has been difficult to find.

In many cases, developers could ask the city for help in acquiring prime land; but those interviewed thought this was a politically unpopular move and risked killing projects. This is another example of ways in which affordable housing developers "choose their battles." Similar to a general aversion to fighting over zoning, developers don't want to make touchy requests for additional financing.

Although not mentioned by the developers interviewed, there is one way in which zoning may exacerbate high land cost. If a wealthy "priority area" is zoned in such a way as to require a large setback or lot size, then the developer cannot maximize the use of the land. Fewer homes on a site or fewer units in an apartment building depresses the money the developer will recoup on the project, making zoning a hidden barrier to acquiring expensive land. Of course, this could be addressed through rezoning. However, that could lead to public resistance from affluent communities who want to protect their neighborhood character and landscaping.

In rural areas like Haywood County, the development costs include the infrastructure as well as the land. Rural developers may have to bear the cost of developing roadways, water lines and sewer lines. So while previously undeveloped land in rural North Carolina may be cheaper than the priority areas of Charlotte, for example, the rural developer faces additional costs in readying a site for occupancy. For example, one affordable housing development in Haywood County required several years and $120,000 per lot just to lay the water and sewer lines.

2. Permit Process

Many affordable housing developers have experienced community opposition during the permit process. A common sentiment in some neighborhoods when low-income housing is proposed is "not in my backyard," a phenomenon known as NIMBYism. Residents of established neighborhoods sometimes fear that affordable housing will be low-quality and unattractive or that low-income residents will be disruptive neighbors. This sentiment is exacerbated when the development will include units for recovering drug users, the disabled, the formerly homeless or the mentally ill [1]. For example, Ms. Garrett (president of the CMHP) relayed a story about one of CMHP's projects that was significantly delayed when neighbors launched an organized opposition. That project involved land that was appropriately zoned so the protesting residents had no legal recourse; yet vocal opposition cannot be ignored. All those interviewed had some experience with community opposition to affordable housing development. However, once a developer establishes a reputation for developing attractive, well-maintained and beautifully landscaped affordable housing, community opposition may subside.

As with land cost, scattered-site policies may exacerbate community opposition. When a city designates an area a "priority" for affordable housing development because it has a dearth of low-income residents, existing neighbors may be uniquely motivated to launch an opposition. Residents of wealthy neighborhoods with expensive homes may have the least experience with mix-income neighborhoods and may fear the value of their homes will drop. In that way, scattered-site policies may actually make community opposition a bigger factor for affordable housing developers than it otherwise would have been.

There are ways to predict and mitigate community opposition. Strategies include holding community meetings early in the development process, mobilizing potential allies and seeking positive press coverage.[1] When developers anticipate community opposition and respond proactively, they are in the best position to take control of the situation. Many residents confuse affordable housing with public housing and fear the crime, drug and gang activity that is often associated with the nation's worst public housing initiatives. When developers anticipate this, they can correct community misperception about affordable housing. Developers can highlight their success stories and showcase the plans and models of the proposed project. Of course developers with strong track records of developing attractive, clean and safe housing are in the best position to neutralize community opposition.

[1] Tim Iglesias, Managing Local Opposition to Affordable Housing: A New Approach to NIMBY, 12 J Affordable Housing & Community Dev. L. 78, 84-89 (2002)

3. Community Relationships

As has been mentioned, when developers face obstacles to their affordable housing plans, there are several options they face. If the obstacle is one of zoning, they can pursue the city's process for rezoning. If the obstacle is community protest, they can attempt to mobilize counter opinions. If the obstacle is land cost, they can seek additional city support. However, the developers who were interviewed all placed a premium on avoiding conflict and maintaining good working relationships. There are several reasons why this is so important.

First, the success of affordable housing developers often depends on maintaining a good reputation and solid working relationships with city officials. These developers live in the communities in which they work and can ill afford to anger or irritate those on whom they regularly depend. A pattern of butting heads with community leaders and city officials would quickly damage a developer's reputation. For that reason, developers said they could not afford to appear litigious to city officials.

Second, affordable housing developers have limited resources and cannot afford to begin each new project with lengthy rezoning applications or other struggles. Prolonged battles over financing or zoning drive up the cost and drag out projects. Most developers said that it was wisest to choose sites that were ready for development, so that they could get their project off the ground in short order.

Lastly, developers need to maintain a friendly and cooperative demeanor with the general public as a means to prevent community opposition to projects. As was noted with the problem of NIMBYism, a good reputation can sometimes neutralize community opposition. But a developer who treats neighbors dismissively or combatively is likely to invite further community protest. If the adage "you can catch more flies with honey" is true, it is especially so when managing resident response to affordable housing development.

CONCLUSIONS

North Carolina cities have tried different approaches to increase the availability of affordable housing. Housing trust funds, scattered-site policies, city-owned housing and homeownership programs are some of the ways cities have tried to improve the housing for their low-income residents. Developers of affordable housing have had to find ways to work with their city's housing policies and zoning ordinances.

Although zoning may present particular barriers to affordable housing developers, they generally choose to sidestep zoning battles by choosing sites that are already zoned appropriately. The strategy of "choosing one's battles" leads many developers to focus their limited resources on other areas. Developers are much more often challenged by land cost, community opposition and the permit process than by zoning.

> Most developers of affordable housing list high land cost as the most significant barrier to developing affordable housing.

A Review of the Interview Questions

The following interview guide was developed for use with one in the one-on-one interviews conducted during the research gathered for the study on *Barriers to Affordable Housing in North Carolina.*

1. How many affordable housing projects have you developed in North Carolina?

2. In what communities have you developed affordable housing? In general, is affordable housing clustered in one part of the city/count?

3. What is the typical size of an affordable housing project developed by your organization, who lives there, and how much rent do they pay?

4. As you begin a development process for a given project, have you had difficulty securing sites in your community?

      a. If so, have the problems been due to specific zoning or development provisions? If so, which local ordinances have you found most problematic and why?

      b. If so, have the problems been due to specific zoning or development provisions? If so, which local ordinances have you found most problematic and why?

      c. What other procedural problems has the organization faced during these early stages of development?

      d. What measures have you taken to combat or circumvent these difficulties? How often are you successful in this process? In which areas do you often succeed or fail? Do you feel there is disparate treatment of affordable housing developers by the local government?

5. What, if any, local reforms might improve the process for you and other local developers of affordable housing?

6. Does it seem that the communities in which you work comply with zoning and development codes? Are there specific ordinances that are not enforced when the project goal includes affordable housing?

7. How might local land use codes be used in your community to facilitate the process of siting affordable housing projects?

8. Do you know of any good models - communities with land use laws and best-practice policies that promote and ease the process of affordable housing developments?

9. With whom do you generally speak in the local planning department? Is there a person you would suggest we contact within the department if we have any other questions about the zoning in your community?

What to say about Affordable Housing

NORTH CAROLINA HOUSING COALITION

EDUCATING *and* ADVOCATING *for* CHANGE

In this
SECTION

Understanding Public Attitudes
ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The North Carolina Housing Coalition and other advocacy groups work to combat fear and misinformation by helping organizations and people understand the prevailing attitudes and perceptions about affordable housing and effectively communicate the facts and truth. This section examines those attitudes and perceptions with an analysis of public opinion attitudes toward affordable housing.

The information contained has been gleaned from a number of surveys as well as focus group research to reveal opinions about, among other issues, the need for more affordable housing, attitudes about community needs, who needs the most help, and who should be responsible for housing and policy making. Although significant challenges remain in getting people on board for affordable housing initiatives, people readily acknowledge that not enough affordable housing solutions exist and that there are real risks in not addressing the problem.

The research developed for this section has been organized and is presented as follows:

- Research Findings from the former Hart Research Associates
- Housing Attitudes Since the Foreclosure Crisis
- Housing California Poll Data

Research Findings
HART RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Information from a survey and focus groups on the subject of housing affordability commissioned by the Fannie Mae Foundation shed light on some issues that are unique or particularly relevant to North Carolina.

The research, conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, included 18 focus group discussions with participants in Asheville, Charlotte and Raleigh, NC; Chicago and Normal, IL; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, PA; Atlanta, GA; and Normal, MN. Two focus groups were conducted in each location, one among local leaders in the public, private and nonprofit sectors; and the second among involved citizens, defined as having high levels of interest in and activities relating to their communities. The researchers also surveyed 432 adults in North Carolina. Following is a summary of the responses from the groups held in the North Carolina locations as well as the North Carolina written survey.

In the survey, 32 percent of respondents say that the lack of affordable housing is a very big or fairly big problem. While housing affordability is not at the top of the list with issues such as job layoffs and high unemployment (61 percent), jobs paying a living wage (53 percent), or lack of affordable health care for low- and moderate-income working families (46 percent), respondents do see it as a problem on par with issues such as overcrowded public schools (32 percent) and traffic congestion (34 percent). (Not surprisingly, given the current economic climate, issues relating to jobs are more of a concern in North Carolina than they are in other states.) In addition, the following general attitudes were revealed concerning housing in North Carolina:

> North Carolinians acknowledge that there is a problem of a lack of affordable homes for low- and moderate-income working families.

• Local leaders hold more expansive views, are more aware of adverse consequences to a shortage of affordable housing and, are more sensitive to the need for action.

• In areas of population decline, the tendency is to view housing problems as symptomatic of greater economic, political and social failures (i.e., job and income losses). In contrast, in areas of population and job growth, housing affordability is more readily seen as a separate issue.

• Some areas have large imbalances between buyer and rental markets, in which it is difficult to purchase an affordable home but easy to find an affordable rental.

How Important Is the Issue: **Rankings of Local Concern**

Chart legend (left to right bars):
- Lack of Affordable Housing
- School Overcrowding
- Traffic Congestion
- Lack of Healthcare
- Job Pay
- Unemployment
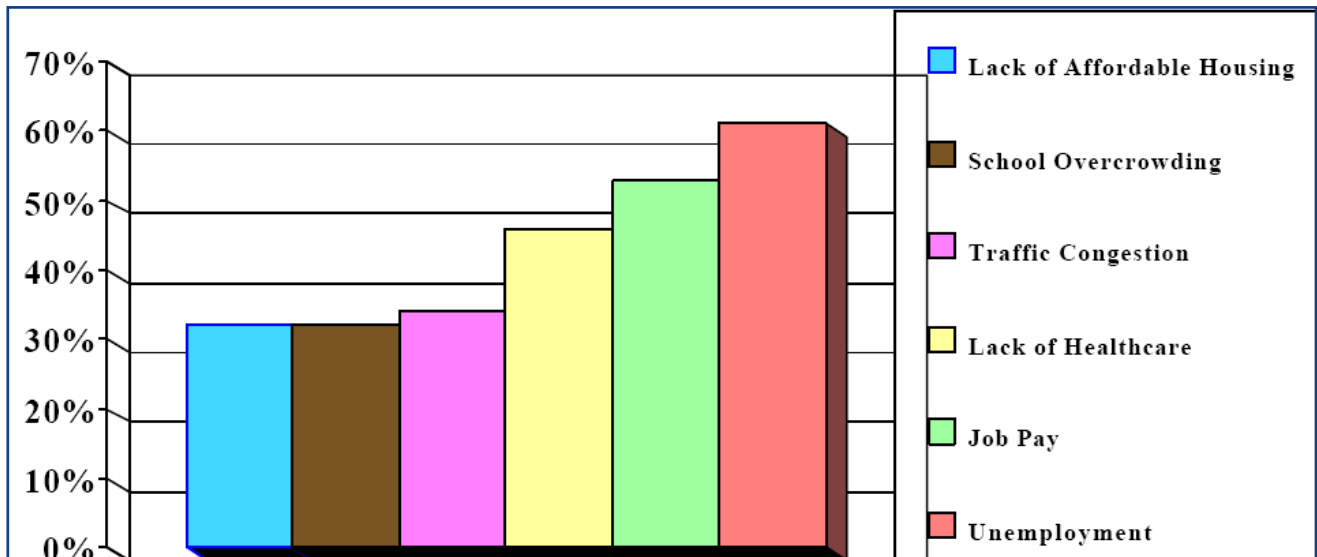
What Makes the Issue Compelling: **Why People Care**

Focus group respondents provided a number of compelling explanations for why they care about affordable housing. Most reasons relate to children and a community's being safe and functioning well. I think it's sad because part of the problem we have with teenagers is the fact that they're latchkey kids, and they come home by themselves and they get in trouble. And with the rate of pay the way it is in Asheville, it takes both parents to work; so the kids are coming home to being alone, so they're getting into trouble."

—Asheville local leader

"I believe it helps in creating a future, and I was always taught that the children are your future…I mean, if you put them in an area that is poor, that is dilapidated, they're not going to get ahead."

—Charlotte local leader

It is important to note that many respondents tie housing into other issues and say it is part of a larger problem. The lack of quality jobs and the idea that the middle class is being squeezed are major themes in North Carolina. While we heard this issue was consistent throughout the focus group discussions, it has become more prevalent in North Carolina with the recent economic crisis. The News and Observer reported that the labor market is still being threatened by high unemployment rates. Staff reporter, Jonathan Cox said,

> *"…The economy is not recovering fast enough to absorb all those out of work. In the past two months, 10,000 people in this state have exhausted their unemployment benefits. Within 120 days, 24,342 more could join them."* **Economists add that,…** *"One fear is that people will exhaust their benefits without finding work, dousing the embers of a fledgling recovery. More homeowners could lose their homes, and consumers could further tighten spending, intensifying instead of fixing the recession."*

Those with lower incomes and young adults just entering the labor force are seen as having the greatest difficulty in finding an affordable home to buy or rent. **To elaborate on this point, while 53 percent say finding an affordable home to buy or rent is a big problem for families with incomes less than $25,000, just 43 percent say this is a big problem for low-income families.** Young adults are also a group that a significant respondents acknowledge as having a problem—31 percent say finding an affordable home to buy or rent is a big problem for young adults who are just entering the labor force. A key target group— families with incomes between $25,000 and $40,000— is seen as having significant problems with housing affordability (24 percent say they have a big problem.).

> A majority of North Carolinians (53 percent) say finding an affordable home to buy or rent is a big problem for families with incomes of less than $25,000.

Across the focus groups, several elements that make an affordable housing initiative more compelling were revealed. These include the following:

  1. Case studies and images of developments that fit into the surrounding community can offer reassurances that housing efforts can be attractive and successful, and that the reward is worth the risk.

> *I think that's one of the reasons why organized neighborhoods resist the idea, because it looks cheaper than where they live. It looks out of place. If there were some way that we could make more affordable housing appear to be just normal housing…so no one is being stigmatized, no one is being labeled as being a low-income person, and when you arrive in the Halifax Court area, you will see exactly what I'm talking about. I was floored because that's someplace that I would enjoy living. It's a beautiful community. It's calm, it's quiet, it's neat, it's clean and it's beautiful."*

—Raleigh local leader

2. Statistics relating to increased housing costs validate the experiences of many and shock others into acknowledging a problem. Moreover, translating housing costs into necessary work hours or pay illustrates the magnitude of the problem.

3. Giving an economic justification for why this problem must be addressed makes sense for some and provides a rationale for action.

4. North Carolinians are optimistic that the problem of housing affordability can be solved. Yet to do this, focus group respondents are clear that the old ways of addressing affordable housing (i.e., government programs) have not worked. Respondents are open to public/private partnerships but do not have a clear picture of how they should look.

> Three in five (60%) of respondents believe that a great deal or a fair amount can be done to solve this problem.

"It's like before 9/11, the FBI and CIA weren't passing the same information. I don't know how to put that in necessarily a word or a sentence to combine what government should do as opposed to what the public sector should do about the issues. But it's a concerted effort to solve it."

—Asheville local leader

5. Research shows that when families live in safe, decent homes, adults are more successful in the job market, children experience fewer health problems, and students perform better in school.

6. As opposed to new construction in an existing community, efforts involving reclamation and renovation are more readily perceived as benefiting both the community and the individuals in need. Using an existing resource seems like less effort for something that otherwise would go to waste.

7. Listing the occupations that cannot afford housing can be alarming, but only if they truly reflect local pay scales for those occupations. (Note also that while teachers, as well as families with children, are far and away the most sympathetic groups, the question quickly becomes who else is eligible to live in a development and how people perceived as less desirable can be excluded.)

8. Stating that there are screening and qualifying criteria for applicants suggests a level of quality control and eases fears that residents in a development may not be truly deserving.

Public Attitudes Since the
FORECLOSURE CRISIS
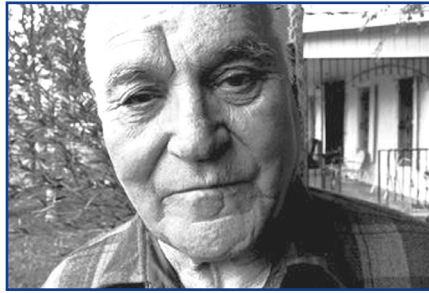
With foreclosures in NC tripling, due to subprime lending and increasing unemployment rates, attitudes towards affordable housing development have taken a shift.[1] In 2004, the National Association of Realtors conducted a survey of 1,000 adults from 25 metro areas across the United States assessing attitudes towards affordable housing.[2] The association found that Americans are more supportive of affordable housing developments built near them.[3] Seventy-six percent are willing to have affordable rental units or homes in their communities, 72% are comfortable with affordable housing in their neighborhoods, and 63% next door.[4] This is encouraging news for housing developers across the state. However, NIMBY attitudes are still abundant despite the changing face of homelessness since the foreclosure crisis.

Bobby Rayburn, National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB) 2004 president states,

"We are very proud of the survey…"It shows there's a real feeling for the issue … but do I believe we're all the way there? No, I do not; in many communities, you still find NIMBYism."

[1] Executive Summary: NC Five Year ConPlan 2006-2010
[2] Changes in Attitude by S. Zurier; August 1, 2004 available at: http://www.allbusiness.com/construction/construction-buildings-residential/1069606-1.html
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

Housing California
POLL DATA

Housing California, an affordable housing advocacy and resource organization, conducted a telephone poll in March 2008 with the help of an Opinion Research and Public Policy Analysis firm (Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, & Associates) of 800 California voters on attitudes toward affordable housing developments. [1] California's housing market has long been broken, with the majority of housing built to cater to the upper quarter of income levels. The crisis has only been exaggerated by the state's current fiscal crisis. These facts make California the perfect starting point in assessing how the foreclosure crisis has impacted the public's attitudes towards affordable housing developments. The results of this survey are similar to attitudes observed in North Carolina.

Two-thirds of California voters see the cost of housing as a serious problem, but lack urgency to solve it. [1] The cost of housing and lack of affordable housing for middle income families rank 8th and 9th respectively, below traffic congestion, crime, public education, state budget deficit and the cost of healthcare being number one. [1]

Barriers to housing affordability in the state were identified as:

1. Cost and affordability
2. Low wages
3. Lack of availability
4. Inflated house prices

Who is interested in improving the housing market in California?

- individuals earning less than $30,000 annually (38% unsatisfied)
- voters ages 30-39 (37%)
- persons living in big cities (30%)
- small city residents (26%)
- rural residents (25%).

[1] California Voter Attitudes on Housing Issues, Housing California and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, & Associates; March 2008. Full poll not available to the public.

The majority of California voters polled agrees that the housing market is broken. However, they disagree with how best to fix it.   Forty-seven percent of individuals polled believe that government should have a role in improving California's ailing housing market. [1] Equally notable, 45% believe the free market should manage the housing market, and no government role is necessary. [1] Many (45%) opposed government intervention out of fear that housing developers would benefit more than individuals needing housing. [1] Homebuilders were viewed more favorably than home developers for this reason.

Voters indicated several housing priorities. These priorities include:
- Making housing more affordable
- Building more affordable housing
- Increasing ability to become a homeowner
- Ensuring people of all income levels can afford a decent place to live
- Helping the neediest communities
- Building housing to aid specific vulnerable populations (i.e. homes for people with disabilities)
- Stabilizing the housing market
- Providing more housing for people with children

[1] California Voter Attitudes on Housing Issues, Housing California and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, & Associates; March 2008. Full poll not available to the public.

The North Carolina Housing Coalition has created messaging guidelines and materials to help North Carolinians understand the need for affordable housing for our communities. Based on research conducted by Peter D. Hart Associates for the Fannie Mae Foundation, the following messages have been identified as the most compelling statements about affordable housing for North Carolinians. Emphasize these key messages in all of your outreach communications.

Four Key Messages

1. **The people who most urgently need affordable housing are working families with children, young adults just entering the labor market, senior citizens and people with disabilities.** Many of the people who need affordable housing perform services vital to our communities: teachers, day care providers, mechanics, health aids, factory workers, etc.— people who, even with full-time employment, cannot find an affordable apartment or afford a mortgage on a new house.

Affordable housing also helps people on fixed incomes like senior citizens who must often choose between paying rent and buying groceries or medication. This fixed income group also includes many people with disabilities for whom housing is never developed in the "free market" setting because it is more difficult to develop due to higher costs and subsidy needs.

2. **Too many hard-working North Carolina families are not able to find an affordable place to live.** Housing is the largest single cost item for most families, and those who pay too large a percentage of their incomes for housing have too little left over for food, clothing, health care, child care and other necessities. As a result, many families are forced to live in substandard housing or move frequently when they are unable to pay rent. These families are at great risk of becoming homeless.

A core belief in America has been that if you work hard and play by the rules, you should be able to afford a decent home for your family. A family with income from full-time work at the minimum wage cannot afford to rent a modest two-bedroom home without overburdening the rest of the family budget.

3. **North Carolina's children deserve a safe, stable home and community in which to grow up.** Increasing the availability of affordable housing is an investment in our children. Stable housing provides a far healthier living condition for children. Children in substandard housing are more likely to experience violence and hunger and to suffer from injures, burns, infectious diseases and asthma attacks. They also are at increased risk of lead poisoning, which has been shown to lead to learning disorders, reading disabilities, aggression and antisocial behavior.

Children who have secure, affordable housing are far more likely to stay in school and succeed socially. Their parents are far more likely to keep their jobs and maintain family income. By contrast, children in substandard housing are more likely to fall behind in school and often drop out altogether.

4. **Communities that offer more affordable housing options are stronger economically.** A healthy economy requires a balance between the free market and the government. Affordable housing ensures that everyone, including those with the lowest incomes, can contribute effectively to the economy. Unless everyone can afford decent housing, our local economies will be dragged down by the limited self-sufficiency and stability of families in constant economic crisis.

Housing is an economic stimulus. More housing means more consumers in the neighborhood and often results in improved transportation. It brings money, jobs, tax revenue and consumers into a neighborhood and frequently generates a positive financial contribution by attracting new businesses or other development. Those businesses, in return, attract and retain employees in the local community.

Telling Your Organization's
STORY

Effectively telling your organization's story is the most critical factor in sustaining and growing your organization. In general, the public, your donors, your members, your legislators and others, prefer not to hear about numbers, statistics, facts or figures. They want to hear about the end result; they want to know about how someone's life was changed. And for that, you need a story. Your informational brochure, annual report, website, speeches, presentations, newsletters, etc. should all tell your story. So what makes a good story? Elizabeth Turnbull of the Turnbull Marketing Group gives us some guidelines:

- Characters you can relate to
- A plot that you can believe in (and is relevant)
- Well executed
- A call to action that moves you

Characters You Can Relate To:

- need to be personable/likeable
- should evoke sympathy or display a vulnerability
- have a need that can be filled (with help from your organization, of course)
- must have a story that directly relates to your mission
- and, whenever possible, is not you

A Plot You Can Believe In:

- reflects some sort of conflict. Without conflict, there's no need. Without need, there's no reason for your organization.
- has a story-like feel. Think about a feature story in your favorite magazine or newspaper.
- ties directly to your mission
- is succinct
- invites the reader/viewer into the character's world

A Well Executed Story:

- has good writing. Use literary techniques like suspense to keep your audience intrigued. Hook them from the very beginning with a great opening line.
- is descriptive. Involve all of your reader's senses. Think about sight, sound, taste, touch, smell. Use action words, present tense and adjective.
- is clear and succinct.

A Call To Action That Moves You:

- Is direct, just ask.
- Is repeated. Ask more than once.
- Is urgent. Why now? Why me?
- Is doable. You're not asking for millions of dollars or to organize a march on Washington. You're asking for something they can easily do.

Now that you know how to write a good story you need to know where to find one. Good stories are everywhere! You just need to be very conscious of gathering the stories. Every time you meet a new person, serve a new client, go to a meeting or on a site visit think to yourself, could this be a story? I wander what his/her story is? Now, the trick is to ask the questions. Don't be afraid to be nosy.   Most people want to tell their story, especially for a good cause. Ask questions that touch the heart.   The writer Anna Deavere Smith says the following questions are guaranteed to get people talking:

- Do you know the circumstances of your birth?
- Have you ever come close to death?
- Have you ever been accused of something you did not do.

Other Questions To Consider:

- What do you hope/pray for?
- What do you want for your children's future?
- How has our organization helped you? What was life like before we met?
- What do you want to tell our friends and supporters?
- Why should our friends and supporters help other people like you?

Even if some of these questions seem a bit off topic, they may get your subject talking. Once they're talking, you can gear the conversation towards your specific needs.

Social
MATH

"Social Math" means taking a large number and putting it into a social context to make it more comprehensible and meaningful for the audience. Social math can provide perspective on huge numbers that don't resonate with the general public. It gives the reader or listener a point of comparison that they can relate to their everyday life. Social Math will help you tell your story better by painting a picture with numbers.

Example One:

A large tub of movie theater popcorn (20 cups) packs in 76 grams of fat.

Social Math:

A large tub of movie theater popcorn (20 cups) packs in 76 grams of fat. That's the equivalent of five full size Snickers bars ... or more than six McDonald's cheeseburgers.

Example Two:

One less coal plant is like cutting 40% of Washington's vehicle emissions.

Social Math:

One less coal plant is like cutting 40% of Washington's vehicle emissions. That amounts to all the cars and trucks in Seattle, Tacoma, and Spokane plus the 25 next largest cities in the state, combined.

The Frameworks Institute's Ezine takes it one step further and gives this example:

Problem:

Lack of exercise leading to poor health and obesity

Policy Solution:

Increasing parks and open space

Possible Use of Social Math:

In Los Angeles, white neighborhoods (where whites make up 75 percent or more of the residents) boast 31.8 acres of park space for every 1,000 people, compared with 1.7 acres in African-American neighborhoods and 0.6 acres in Latino neighborhoods. (from *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space,* The Trust for Public Land. www.tpl.org/content_documents/parks_for_people_Jul2005.pdf)

Potential Problems:

Breaking the amount of park space down to a per person level gives a large number more meaning. However, because it is not easily clear how many acres of park space per person people actually needed to exercise, the reader is left to focus completely on the inequity of the park space. This example runs the risk of making this an issue about race rather than health, which FrameWorks research has found to be largely counterproductive in raising support for health promoting policies.

Better Use of Social Math:

Between 1971 and 2002, the Trust for Public Land's work in cities resulted in the acquisition of 532 properties totaling 40,754 acres. That's like adding park space equivalent to 326,000 soccer fields. (statistics from *The Trust for Public Land.*)

What Are We Using Social Math To Do?

This example again breaks down a large number into a manageable space, but this time, it is compared to a recreational unit that is familiar (a soccer field). It points the reader in the direction of a solution, and if combined with available data showing that people are indeed more likely to exercise when park space is available, it can help make the case for policies supporting the creation of more park space.

Choosing Your
MESSENGER

In regard to communication, all the brochures, websites and commercials in the world can't beat the impact of face to face contact. Seize every opportunity you have to tell your story in person. The passion and commitment with which you speak can heavily influence a person's perception of the issue.

Something to keep in mind when presenting your issue in a public forum is your messenger. If staff capacity permits, choose a messenger that can relate to the audience. People have confidence in people they find familiar. Cultural validation can go a long way in regard to trust and believability. Mark Farinella, director for the North Carolina Obama campaign calls these "indigenous messengers." Using an indigenous messenger can help you break through the monotony of boring solicitations and give you a greater chance of successfully reaching your audience.

The Importance of
VISUALS

You know the old saying a picture is worth a thousand words? Well, they're right. Stories help people to understand but pictures make the reality set in. Use compelling, well composed photographs to illustrate your point and use them at every opportunity you can. Choose your pictures strategically for your audience. Don't be afraid to use images that pull on the heartstrings or illustrate a need, especially in appeal letters. On the other hand, results oriented pictures show that your organization is successful and trustworthy. Pictures of happy children playing in their yard, or people enjoying their homes evoke feelings of hope and joy. But remember, a picture cannot be erased so chose wisely.

The following images on pages 57-58 are examples of affordable housing developments in North Carolina. These are wonderful examples of the changing face of affordable housing.

Fairview Pointe in
Lillington, NC
Funded in part by the Housing
Trust Fund.

Cardinal Chase
Siler City,NC
Multifamily Apartments

Arbor Glen
Charlotte, NC
Family Apartments

Benjamin House
Elizabeth City, NC
Multifamily home for
adults with development
disabilities.

Eddy's place
Mooresville, NC
Habitat for Humanity

Myron Place
Raleigh, NC
Multifamily Housing

Prosperity Creek
Charlotte, NC
Senior citizen apartments

Language of
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

When talking about affordable housing, language often evokes mental frames or images for the listener. It is important to understand how certain phrases carry negative baggage, and how the use of different phrasing can be helpful in transforming those negative images.

Important terms to understand:

-**Permanent supportive housing** is what is sought to end homelessness. These are apartments where services are offered but not as a condition of the lease.

-**Slumlord** or **substandard housing** is what the market provides when there are insufficient quality, affordable opportunities for low and moderate income households.

-**Transitional housing** used to refer to housing that used to move people from homeless shelters before they were ready to enter more independent settings. Services were required as part of the lease in order to stay there. This term and strategy is no longer seen as a best practice to end homelessness. Transitional housing is still sometimes used for domestic violence clients prior to moving into fully independent settings. For a long time, transitional housing was called A **halfway house**. *Halfway houses conjure up visuals of rundown, poorly managed housing.* When describing transitional housing, it is critical to explain the population, function, and the quality of the facility's management.

Example of Words linked to Mental Images:
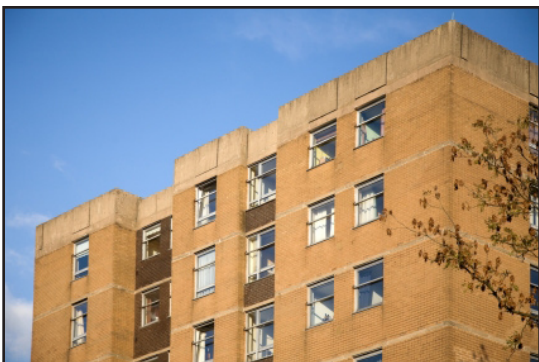
"Projects"

vs.

"Developments"

"low-income housing or subsidized housing"

vs.

"Affordable to all"

Phrases to Avoid	Alternative Phrases
Projects	*Developments* (i.e. housing developments)
Affordable Housing or *Low-income Housing*	*An affordable place to live, affordable to all*
Workforce housing as a standalone description without including vulnerable populations. (more on workforece housing, see below)	Same as above, *homes for low and moderate wage workers* (see below)
housing developers	*Home builders* (more favorable)
Low-income	*Hard working, lower-wage workers, fixed income*
Low-income housing or *subsidized housing*	*Affordable to all*, as well as *homes for persons with disabilities, fixed income seniors and working families*
Housing jargon (AMI, ELI, etc)	*Speak to values of housing for all*

Workforce housing can mean different things to different people. Often people will refer to workforce housing to include professionals earning 80% -120% of the Area Median Income (AMI), with emphasis on homeownership. Affordable housing advocates find this description offensive, because it connotes that people at incomes below 80% of AMI do not work. When in fact, many municipal workers, child care teachers and assistant teachers earn less than 80% of AMI. Therefore our definition includes anyone in the labor force, from minimum wage to 120% income.

Communication
DOS AND DON'TS

DON'T	DO
• Try to convince each person of the total truth and righteousness of our cause in every conversation.	• Remember our goals: to provide information, to present a human face, to begin dialogue, and to build relationships.
• Reflexively answer each question with your stock response.	• Listen to the questions nuances, paying attention to the questioner (body language, tone and demeanor). Take time to think about your response if necessary. Probe the questioner if you suspect there's something behind the question. For example, "Does your concern/question come out of a particular experience you've had?"
• Try to give "facts" that you're not sure about.	• Acknowledge the query as a factual question that you'll need to research to find out more information about. Promise to get back to the person and be sure to follow-up.
• Try to contradict the questioner's own experience of local opposition to a particular development.	• Put the experience in context. Acknowledge that you aren't familiar with all of the facts of that situation. Acknowledge that developers (like everyone else) do make mistakes sometimes.
• Present yourself as an expert on every issue related to affordable housing.	• Explicitly acknowledge the complexity and long history of the field. Allow yourself to say, " That's a good question. I don't know the answer now."
• Refer vaguely to all developers or all developments.	• Speak from your own experience about particular developments that you know.
• Claim that every affordable housing development is well-designed, professionally managed, contributes to the neighborhood, and works perfectly.	• Acknowledge that the affordable housing movement has learned many lessons over the past decade, including the importance of good design and quality management. Acknowledge that not all developers have the same level of experience, expertise and funding to do everything they and the community might want them to do. Explain that groups like yours are continually trying to improve the work of housing developers.
• Let the education stop with one presentation.	• Encourage elected officials at every opportunity to go on a housing tour as the best way to understand affordable housing.
• Talk about individual benefits to affordable housing	• Emphasize the benefits to the comunity as a whole (less vacant lots, lower crime rates, etc.)
• Use pronouns separating you/or your audience from those affected by affordable housing programs (i.e. him, her, them, their).	• Instead, make the conversation more inclusive using pronouns such as 'we' and 'our'. This creates a greater sense of ownership in the housing problem and can go a long way in softening opposition.

Building a Year-Round COMMUNICATIONS Campaign

NORTH CAROLINA HOUSING COALITION

EDUCATING and ADVOCATING for CHANGE

In this
SECTION

The Need for Year-Round
COMMUNICATIONS

In an effort to draw greater attention to the issues surrounding affordable housing, it is important to increase public awareness about those issues on a regular, ongoing basis. There are many issues to explore, including educating people about the need for affordable housing, reducing the fears associated with affordable housing, and countering the common obstacles to developing affordable housing, to name a few.

By continually communicating with media, legislators, advocacy groups and service providers, among others, we build a reservoir of goodwill and understanding. It is also important to routinely communicate with state and local agencies, the religious community and those in the health, social welfare and education fields—as well as the general public. Keeping housing issues on the front burner is key to building momentum and increasing awareness throughout the year.

While national housing advocates typically take this approach, planning and implementing your own, more localized campaigns throughout the year will heighten public consciousness in your own community. An effective awareness program reaches people in all the places where they live their lives, such as at work, home, school, shopping and recreational activities. Year-round awareness creates an essential foundation of support on which all other efforts build. It need not be expensive or showy. It does need to be consistent and lasting with simple, consistent messages. It is important to generate clear, succinct messages that will be reinforced throughout the year. Also, awareness messages need to flow along different communications channels. People learn by seeing, hearing and experiencing. Therefore, a variety of channels is required - print, television, radio, community activities and visual (posters, for example).

The following strategies, guidelines, messages, tips and materials should be used to help create an effective campaign for year-round communications about affordable housing in your community.

Strategies for a
YEAR-ROUND CAMPAIGN

The following strategies have been outlined to assist as you begin planning your year-round communications campaigns.

Focus broader issues back to housing.
Many North Carolinians see the high-profile issues of job loss and underemployment but don't see a housing affordability problem. This can undermine the case of housing affordability and allow people to say that the problem is really about jobs and incomes rather than housing, especially during an economic recession. Keep your messages and materials totally focused on tying these structural issues back to housing costs to emphasize that housing must be paid for first before other household needs can be met.

Avoid using terms such as low-income to describe individuals and families in communications and materials.
Using the term low-income is less effective than referring to actual income ranges–i.e., people respond more positively when the need is referenced for working families making less than $25,000 a year than when it's referenced for low-income working families. Ideally, your communications will define affordable housing as sufficient available housing to meet the needs of families at all income ranges within a community and highlight the real numbers spent on housing in terms of overall dollars and percentages of total income.

Present clear, common-sense solutions when communicating about the problem of affordable housing.
The research reveals that many North Carolinians are optimistic that the problem of affordable housing can be solved and are willing to embrace fair, workable solutions. But if solutions and initiatives are not presented clearly, many just dismiss the problem as unsolvable. Don't just report on the problems; identify and clearly communicate the tangible solutions and recommendations for action advocated by your organization and the North Carolina Housing Coalition.

Be prepared to substantiate information and facts.
Many in the general public are likely to be skeptical about the practicality and fairness of proposed housing solutions and hold negative perceptions related to property values and the impact of affordable housing developments on neighborhoods. This is especially true for those citizens who are actively involved in their communities. NCHC has crafted messages to reassure and persuade this important audience segment. See the NIMBY section for more details on page 79.

Focus on the needs of young adults, working families and other sympathetic groups such as children, teachers and people on fixed incomes.

Focusing on groups perceived to be especially worthy of affordable housing makes audiences more receptive to the issue. In some ways, the general public sees aiding such groups as an investment in their community rather than as an expense or handout. They also see these groups as more deserving of the opportunity to live in safe, decent homes. Also emphasize the levels of screening and the rigorous qualifying criteria for applicants to further suggest a level of quality control as appropriate for proposed developments.

Emphasize collaboration in solving the problem.

Both community leaders and average citizens in North Carolina are attracted to the idea of collaboration between the public and private sectors–i.e., many groups working together to solve the problem suggest an increased chance for success. The North Carolina Housing Coalition exemplifies this kind of multifaceted partnership.

Promote the positive themes of family, community and opportunity, but also actively work to neutralize fears and concerns.

Housing is very personal. Almost everyone has a point of reference based on first-hand experience, and many are defensive about their current standing. If faced with the possibility of a development in their own neighborhood, even advocates of the broader concept can have negative reactions based on their fears about the impact of a development on their quality of life and property values. Many perceive the downside risk of increased affordable housing as very great and the upside as uncertain. It is helpful to have ready-available examples in these circumstances, of affordable housing developments that have positively impacted a community. Be sure to bring up the studies of the unsubstantial effect on property values, and even the possible increase of property values with the addition of a well-managed, and well-maintained affordable housing development.

TOOLS FOR INVOLVEMENT

- Identify and seek other allied groups and grassroots organizations in your area.
- Publish an article about local affordable housing issues in your newsletter.
- Send letters to your members of Congress.
- Meet in person with members of your congressional delegation.
- Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.
- Distribute information about the need for affordable housing at your meeting.
- Work with local media to promote the campaign.
- Sample materials for your use are included later in this section of the resource manual.

Following the example of the Housing Minnesota program, the North Carolina Housing Coalition additionally advises framing the issue of affordable housing differently for different audience segments as well. Suggested approaches include:

Faith-based:

Do you have the security of coming home every day to a safe, permanent, affordable house or apartment? Thousands of North Carolinians don't. They may live in apartments they can't afford or in overcrowded shelters. They may have to move every six months as their rent climbs. They may dream of buying their own homes with a yard for their children to play in, but can't afford the mortgage. *North Carolina has allowed quality housing that is affordable to households making $25,000 or less to become scarce and expensive.* As communities of faith, we are called to action when others are in need. If you are blessed with the stability of a secure home, join your friends and neighbors in speaking out for social justice and creating solutions to this housing crisis.

Business:

Does your business find it difficult to attract and retain employees? Is your business reluctant to fund or advocate for affordable housing because doing so seemingly produces no tangible returns? It might be time to reconsider the issue of affordable housing from a bottom-line perspective. *Employers in urban, suburban and rural North Carolina are beginning to realize that the crisis in affordable housing compromises their growth and the stability of their work force.*

Potential Residents:

If you feel stressed, frustrated or powerless because you can't find an affordable place to live, you are not alone. There are twice as many low-income renters competing for affordable housing as there are apartments or houses available. This competition for housing pits you against thousands of others in the same situation when you could be allies– partners in the solution. The crisis in housing is affecting thousands of people. *You are not powerless. You can speak out and share your stories - individually and collectively.* Elected officials, employers, neighbors and the media need to hear how the housing crisis affects the day-to-day lives of ordinary North Carolinians. They need to understand the difficulties of finding a place to call home. By working together, we can make affordable housing a top priority in North Carolina.

Sample Communications
MATERIALS AND TIPS

The press can be great allies in letting people know that an investment in housing is one solution to solving economic issues in your community. Keeping the media involved as you prepare special events and activities will help your organization garner local visibility and attention to the important issue of affordable housing. This section provides samples of media materials with tips on using them for your media relations efforts and for use in educational, awareness raising and action planning.

Included are:

- Helpful Hints for Writing a News Release
- Draft Press Release
- Tips on Getting an Editorial Placed
- Suggestions for Writing a Letter to the Editor
- Sample Public Service Announcements
- Tips for Contacting Policy makers

Tips for Writing
A PRESS RELEASE

Many news stories are triggered by a timely, well-written press release. Sometimes small newspapers will run the release word-for-word or with minor changes. Most media, however, will use it as background information. Following are some tips to help you in writing your own release to promote your organization's news.

- **Always have a good reason for developing a release.** To be useful, a release must be newsworthy. For example, you might issue a release if your organization:
    - Announces the results of a poll, survey or study that is relevant locally
    - Launches a new public education program
    - Begins a new type of service or makes significant changes to existing services
    - Hires a new director or high-level staff person
    - Receives a large grant or donation
    - Wants to publicize the local impact of a national news event
    - Plans local activities to tie into a well-known day, week or month
    - Honors an individual or organization

- **Keep it short.** Press releases have a better chance of getting read if they are kept to about a page in length. They should contain short sentences and paragraphs.

- **Stick to the format.** At the top of the page, include the name and phone number of a contact for more information. The release should begin with the name of your city and the date. If the release is longer than one page, type "-more-" at the bottom of each page except the last. Signify the end of the release by typing "###" centered after the last sentence.

- **Give the most important details first.** Begin with a headline that summarizes the release. The first paragraph should answer the five questions "who, what, where, when, and how."

- **Put the local connection at beginning.** Local connections catch the attention of the reader.

- **Be careful with language.** Avoid using slang or technical terms. If necessary, explain them.

- **Check for accuracy.** Make sure to verify all spelling, statistics, names and titles.

- **Write factually.** Editorial comments or other opinions should be expressed only in direct quotes.

- **Seek placement.** Distribute your release to local print and broadcast reporters in your community. Follow up to encourage them to write or air a story. Try to schedule an interview with an official of your organization. Collect samples of any resulting coverage to document your outreach efforts.

- **Be sure to include quotes.** Quotes make a press release more interesting and gives support for your ideas.

- **Use letterhead.** If you print the press release or send a pdf, it should be on organizational letterhead.

Emailing
A PRESS RELEASE

The most convenient form of sending a press release is through email. When emailing a press release it is important to keep an updated contact list of newspaper editors, radio shows and other possible recipients. The following tips are unique to emailing a press release.

- **Use simple text in the email.** Fancy formatting is not necessary and may be changed due to conversion problems when sending the email to recipients. Make sure everything is justifed on the left.

- **State "press release" in the subject line.** In your subject line identify that you are writing regarding a press release. Be sure to say something intriguing to catch the editor's attention. Sample subject line, "press release: Craven County Home Saved from Foreclosure"

- **Send press releases early in the day.** The best time to send a press release is around lunch when people are checking their emails. By late afternoon, many are too busy don't have time to read a press release.

- **Email press releases before Friday.** Often times, newspaper staff are overwhelmed with putting together the weekend papers on Friday. If you would like your press release to be included in the weekend paper, you would need to send itearlier in the week.

SAMPLE RELEASE

Media Contact: **\<Insert your name\>**
\<Insert the name of your organization\>
\<Insert your telephone and fax numbers\>
\<Insert your email address\>

North Raleigh Affordable Housing Development Wins Recognition

Madison Glen is the result of community partners including First Union/Wachovia

\<YOUR CITY\> \<DATE\>—A coalition of affordable housing allies has been awarded the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency's annual "Housing North Carolina" Award. **\<Organization\>** received the award for its partnership role in affordable housing development. The Housing Finance Agency selected \<project name\>, a mixed income apartment community in **\<location\>**, for its exemplary real estate development. Commended as a model for other communities, outstanding ratings were given to its affordability, creative financing, attractive design, cost-effective construction and services offered to residents.

\<Organization\>, a non-profit housing developer, developed the community, with support from the city of **\<Name\>** and **\<County\>**. **\<insert name\> Bank** Community Development Finance Group provided a $5 million letter of credit to enhance the construction loan provided by **\<insert source name\>.**

"The success of **\<project name\>** was made possible by the shared vision that building solid communities requires innovative partnerships with businesses and organizations," said **\<organization executive director\>**. "The common goal of this team effort was to focus on helping to develop strong neighborhoods that enhance quality of life for residents."

Bank \<insert name\> will continue its support of projects such as **\<project name\>**, committing $6 billion in community development lending and investments in its markets over the next 12 months. "Our success as a company is forever linked to the success and health of the communities we serve," said **\<insert bank official's name\>**. **\<Project name\>** was built as an economically diverse community that blends with the surrounding neighborhoods. Fifty of the development's 120 apartments serve households with incomes at or below 50 percent of median income ($33,050); four of the units are reserved for participants in **\<Your county\>** County's Work First program. By combining market-rate units with apartments financed with federal tax credits, **\<organization\>** was able to provide amenities, including a clubhouse, business center, fitness center and swimming pool.

—MORE—

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About Your Organization

Add pertinent information about your organization. (One or two lines about the organization. Be sure to include the organization's web address.)

# # # #

Tips on getting an Editorial
IN YOUR NEWSPAPER

Editorials, that is, opinion pieces written by the newspapers' editors, don't just appear out of the blue. Advocates meet with editorial boards and try to convince them of the importance and immediacy of their issues and then ask the editorial board to take a position on the issue. Meeting with editorial boards takes some preparation but is very rewarding when a good editorial is written. Below are some steps for getting editorials.

1. **Do your homework.** Read some of the editorials previously published in your newspaper and pay attention to the patterns of positions they take. Does the newspaper tend to favor public investment in housing and other important programs? If the newspaper is against public spending or has an anti-housing angle, it's probably better not to meet with them. You could invite an editorial against affordable housing, which is a step in the wrong direction. If the paper has a positive angle on issues relating to housing and social welfare problems, it's a good idea to meet with their representatives.

2. **Find out who the editors are and schedule a meeting.** The editors' names are usually listed just above the editorials and/or on the newspaper's Web site. Jot down the names and positions. If there is an administrative assistant or scheduler for the editorial board, note that too. Call the newspaper office and tell them you'd like to schedule a meeting with the editorial board. They will ask for information about who you are, what your issue is and who will be coming with you. It's very rare to have a meeting with the full editorial board; usually, one or two editors will meet with you.

3. **Build a coalition to attend the meeting.** Think about what angles on the affordable housing issue would be important to this paper and make sure they are represented. Consider bringing low-income residents who can tell their stories about struggling to find housing, shelter directors facing bed shortages, developers who can't find the money to build affordable housing, or elected officials who are supportive of affordable housing. Brief everyone on how long they have to talk at the meeting (usually five minutes each or so) and to make sure to mention your organization in their comments. Remember: You requested this meeting so you control the agenda. Make sure you arrive prepared to make a presentation.

4. **Bring helpful information in packets.** You will want to include in the packet some data on affordable housing in your area that shows the local problem and any information you have about the local housing crisis, such as the rate of people turned away at overflowing local shelters, the length of the Section 8 Voucher waiting list, or personal stories from low-income residents. Be sure to include possible solutions for these housing problems. People tend to become more engaged with a cause when there is hope that change can be achieved, especially when an organization has clear steps to move forward.. Include also basic information about your organizations and what they do and about the attendees at the meeting. Make sure you also bring business cards.

5. **Make your case in the meeting.** Remember that you're trying to convince the editors to take a position. Be persuasive, be factual, be timely and be prepared to answer questions about the issue. Make sure you give them a reason why it's important for the paper to take a position and write an editorial on the issue this week instead of six months from now, like winters' approach making homelessness more dangerous than ever, or new numbers on unemployment showing more people will need affordable housing, or shelters at capacity. At the end of the meeting, ask them if they think they'll write an editorial about the issue. Make sure you give them your contact information in case they have more questions, and follow up later in the day to answer any questions you couldn't answer in the meeting.

6. **Follow up.** Call the editors you met within three to five days and ask them if they need more information. Ask them if they're planning on writing on the issue and offer to give them more information or contacts, if that is helpful.

7. **Call or email every time a story is run about your issue.** This does not have to be long, just be sure to thank them for bringing attention to the issue. In addition, let them know that you are available to answer questions if they do articles on this topic in the future.

8. **If your release is about a report, attach it in a pdf.** All attachments should be in pdf format to prevent it from getting blocked or losing formatting.

Tips on Writing a
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Be brief, be quick and leave your phone numbers. These are the three most important things to remember when writing letters to the editor.

Be brief, there's a lot of competition for a small amount of space. Letters to the Editor should be no more than 200 words. Write the letter within one or two days because the best letter in the world won't get printed if the newspaper gets it three or four weeks after the article it refers to was printed. Include your home and work phone numbers on your letter because many papers won't print letters unless they can verify the author.

Contact information is located on the editorial page. Many papers accept letters by fax and email as well as regular mail these days. It never hurts to both fax and email. And you can be most certain by either faxing or emailing and then following up with a phone call to make sure the appropriate person got your letter.

Other tips:

1. **Use statistics sparingly.** They can get confusing and overwhelming very quickly.

2. **Mention an article already printed by the paper.** This dramatically increases the chances that your letter will be run.

3. **Remember your audience.** In most cases, you're trying to sway the public, not your adversary. Therefore, you should make an effort to seem moderate and fair. This doesn't mean you should be bland. But you should write with the average person in mind and use phrases and arguments that resonate with them. You don't want John Q. Public to be turned off by your rhetoric and think, "Well, both sides are extremists."

4. **A catchy first line is helpful.** Instead of "I'm writing to respond to the Post editorial of August 3…" try "The August 3 editorial left me wondering if Post editorial writers live in the real world."

5. **Don't mention criticism that has been leveled against you**. Avoid saying, "I am not a crook, thief and a liar as reported in last week's Post." Better to say, "Post readers wonder who's telling the truth in the controversy over…"

6. **Use short, punchy sentences.** This makes it easier for the reader to follow your thinking and easier for the editor to cut the letter if necessary (better to have an edited version of your letter printed than none at all).

Tips for Contacting
POLICYMAKERS

Although speaking with policy makers about affordable housing may seem difficult and intimidating, often the biggest challenge is making the first phone call or writing the first letter. It's important to remember that advocacy does not always take place on the Capitol steps–often it's the conversations with local decision-makers that truly make the difference. Meetings with local officials also can be a great source of information about local issues affecting the availability of affordable housing in your community.

State senators and representatives receive less mail than you might think–many say three letters on one topic is considered a flood of mail. Taking the time to write to your elected officials is an excellent way to show your concern, and it prompts them to pay attention! Here are some tips for writing to your elected officials.

1. **Personalize your letter–relate your own experiences or those of your friends or neighbors.** Elected officials want to understand what's going on in their districts.

2. **Keep it short.** A one-page letter in your own handwriting or from a word processor is long enough to convey your concerns, but short enough to ensure that they'll read it.

3. **Always include your home address so that your elected official is sure you're a constituent.** Mail from constituents is taken much more seriously than letters from outside the district.

4. **Always ask for a reply, in writing or on the telephone.** This will let your official know that you're watching him/her and waiting to see where he/she stands on the issue.

5. **Encourage your friends and neighbors to write letters.** Offer to give them information or share a copy of your own letter to help them out.

6. **Use these links to find your NC State policy makers.**
   For State Senators, http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Senate/Senate.html
   For State Representatives, http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/house/house.html

7. **Use these links to find your NC Federal policy makers.**
   For NC Senators, http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm?State=NC
   For NC Representatives, https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml

Overcoming the
Challenges
of
NIMBYism

North Carolina
HOUSING
COALITION
EDUCATING *and* ADVOCATING *for* CHANGE

In this
SECTION:

Introduction
TO NIMBY

The American frontier has been officially closed, and staking claim to a piece of land is not as simple as it once was. Inevitably, the proposed site for affordable housing will sit in someone's perceived backyard. Therefore, the majority of housing developments, public or private, are likely face objections from various members within the community.

This section is designed to help you build community support and fight neighborhood opposition to proposed affordable housing developments in your community. It is a guide to understanding, preparing for and successfully overcoming the challenging phenomenon we call NIMBYism.

We believe the right planning and information are key to dealing with the NIMBY syndrome and that it can prepare you for a NIMBY reaction well before it becomes apparent. Included in this section are a discussion of the factors that create NIMBYism, research data that will help you dispel NIMBY fears, and best-practice examples for defeating NIMBYism.

Most of this information is compiled from the experiences and documents of organizations that share our challenges and goals and have dealt first-hand with NIMBYism. While we believe good planning can give you the shot at success, it should be noted that there is no "silver bullet" to prevent NIMBY opposition from ever preventing a development from getting approval.

NIMBY **DEFINED**

NIMBY is most simply defined as an effort to stop the establishment of certain types of housing or service facilities within or adjacent to a specific community. It develops when a community group says it supports a project as long as it is built somewhere other than in its own neighborhood. Typically, NIMBY opposition may sound like this:

> *"Our community should support affordable housing. Affordable housing serves many important human and community needs. Affordable housing in our community could be located in many places but Not Here!"*

The reasons most typically cited are that there is enough "affordable housing" in this area and it needs to go somewhere else or it doesn't fit in with the upper income nature of the community, will bring down property values and should go somewhere else.

NIMBYism involves more than just an attitude, however. It is a collective protest in response to perceived threats about the social character or the potential impact on property values of a proposed affordable housing development.

Challenges and Obstacles Created by NIMBY

Dealing with NIMBY opposition is a crucial aspect of developing affordable housing. NIMBY-driven concerns can be focused on a variety of elements associated with your project, including:

- The physical characteristics of the housing proposed.
- The assumed negative impacts of the housing proposed.
- Past experiences with the housing type and/or the developer.
- The particular occupants of the housing proposal.

Typical NIMBY tactics may include:

Circulating neighborhood petitions

Writing letters to facility owners, politicians, and the media

Lobbying elected officials

Holding demonstrations

Taking legal action

Forming neighborhood opposition groups

The Role of
FEAR

You will undoubtedly find that a significant amount of public opposition to affordable housing is based on misperceptions and exaggerated fears about the impact of affordable housing developments on communities.

According to a document published by the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH) about dealing with opponents of housing and service developments, *these fears include concerns about the type of facility to be built, how big it is, how many are already in the area, how it will be operated, what it will look like, and who will own and/or manage it.* Unfortunately, fear is a powerful force. Fear draws on racial and, even more often, class prejudice. Fearful people feed on each other and spread their hysteria like a virus. It can unite an otherwise disjointed neighborhood against a common enemy.

> *"Those people will bring drugs and crime into our neighborhood!"*
> *"The buildings will be ugly and run down!"*
> *"Our property values will plummet!"*

Fears related to affordable housing can be expressed in a variety of ways, some of them very subtle. Personal security concerns can be communicated as concerns about the operating procedures of the facility or as concerns about increased traffic, decreased parking and infrastructure problems. Opposition leaders will sometimes deliberately stir up fears in flyers and statements at community meetings to organize opposition. The media can inadvertently fuel and multiply fears by broadcasting unsubstantiated rumors and misunderstandings. Sophisticated opponents can even come across with a "caring face" when they express concern for the prospective residents of affordable housing as they describe certain neighborhoods as unsuitable for the target client group.

The good news is that many fears about affordable housing are based on lack of information or blatant misinformation. Contemporary affordable housing is not well-known among some decision makers and planners, much less the general public. Even more encouraging is the finding that there's a base of potential support that can be tapped.

According to the Hart funded by the former Fannie Mae Foundation survey, 46 percent of respondents acknowledge that the lack of affordable homes for working families is a problem on par with issues such as overcrowded public schools and traffic congestion, especially for those with very low incomes or for young adults just entering the labor force.

Guidelines for
OVERCOMING FEAR

While there are no silver bullets, here are five strategies which may be helpful to overcoming public fears of affordable housing. *Keep in mind, however, that using these strategies requires time and resources as well as extraordinary patience, preparation and self-discipline.* After all, it's hard not to be adversarial when opponents treat you as the enemy. And being subject to double standards is infuriating—opponents' factual allegations are likely to be assumed true until proven false, while developers' statements, even with supporting facts, are almost always treated with suspicion. In order to choose which strategies are most likely to work for you, it also is important to probe and analyze the sources of the fears. Are the fears based on personal experiences, second-hand stories, media images, purported factual studies or other sources? If there is a primary source, you can try to address it.

1. Educate Thoughtfully

Many fears, e.g., that affordable housing reduces nearby property values, are based on lack of information or blatant misinformation. *While bias and prejudice may not yield to facts, getting the facts out is an important and necessary step.* Remember that contemporary affordable housing is not well known among some decision makers and planners, much less the general public, so some questions should be expected. Even when these queries are accompanied by a hostile tone, it's best to calmly convey pertinent information or arrange a later time and place when it can be provided.

Keep your facts accurate and well-grounded. Rebuilding credibility after getting caught in half-truths is difficult. Also, pay attention to who presents information, how and in what context. Often fears are paired with distrust of the developer. In this case, information will be more credible if communicated by other people or organizations. Facts that have already been publicized by education campaigns outside of the context of a particular development approval process are more likely to be believed.

Education is more likely to be effective with decision makers and the media than with neighbors. To some degree, early education can inoculate decision makers from fears about issues that arise regularly; they may still respond to the fears from political reasons, but they won't actually believe them. Early education of the media, including providing background materials on typical issues, may lead to useful investigative stories, reporting which includes references that question the fears, or at least stories which include the developer's point of view.

But be prepared that just the facts may not be enough. With many people, factual information has no effect, or even inflames their fears. *Repetition is important; people in the grip of fear and anger won't hear things the first time they are said.* Sophisticated opponents also may find apparently contradicting facts or hire their own "experts" to dispute your facts. Unfortunately, misinformation, once spread, is almost impossible to completely eradicate. Opponents may continue to repeat and spread misinformation even after exhaustive responses have been made.
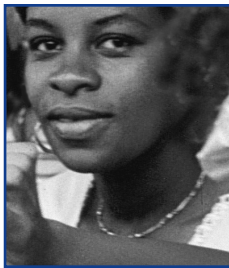
2. Humanize the Target

Many fears are ultimately based on stereotypes of prospective residents. In some cases, meeting prospective residents can calm these fears by replacing abstract concerns with a human face and a compelling story.

Housing tours and testimony at public hearings are two opportunities for introductions. Of course, the longer and more deeply the prospective residents have been involved with the proposal, the more powerful their impact. Before involving a prospective resident in this work, it's critical to warn them that opponents may treat them in a hostile and offensive manner, especially at community meetings when decision makers or the media are not present. Don't forget to include neighbors of existing developments in your testimonies – their support can really change the "sky is falling" story put forward by opponents.

3. Enlist Support From Trusted Authorities

Reassurance about a development from a trusted and credible authority can help significantly. In some communities, a respected leader from local government, the faith community, business or local civic organizations will support the proposal in a letter, in public testimony or as a spokesperson to the media.

These leaders often do need to be more educated on the issue and have their own concerns met before lending their reputation. But if they are convinced, they can become highly successful advocates. For example, after researching the issue himself, one chief of police wrote a letter testifying that there was no increased crime associated with a developer's previous projects. Leaders of the opposition subsequently dropped this issue from their arguments before decision makers.

4. Build Relationships With Opponents

Treating initial skeptics and questioners as opponents may become a self-fulfilling prophecy. But building a relationship with former skeptics can turn them into very powerful allies. Always treat opponents with respect. Recognize and seek to understand their legitimate concerns

Unfortunately, many people see a nonprofit affordable housing sponsor as an unskilled, incapable developer and the for-profit sponsor as just another unscrupulous, slick developer whose unlimited resources will be used to shove its project down the community's throat. Getting out from under this reputation is a prerequisite to effectively dealing with fears.

Some developers, especially community-based developers, view education and other strategies as part of building a relationship with the local community. The scope of this relationship may only extend to winning project approval, or it may extend to future cooperation in other community-building efforts.

Often building a relationship means listening to and acknowledging fears in a sympathetic manner without agreeing that they are factually valid and not blaming the questioner for not being properly informed. Sometimes a developer can earn trust by using its contacts to focus local government's attention on pre-existing neglected neighborhood problems that are now being used as issues to oppose the proposed development. *Invitations to the developer's office and previous developments are common ways of establishing a relationship.* During long delays, keeping in touch with opponents regularly may head off suspicion.

The goal is not becoming "friends," but engaging opponents in a series of conversations and a consistent pattern of interactions, including making and keeping promises, so that, by virtue of actually knowing who they are dealing with, they will withdraw opposition and give your development a chance to demonstrate that common fears will not be realized.

5. Take Action When Necessary

In some cases, it is appropriate to revise a development proposal or to take other action to address fears (e.g., organizing a study, adding staffing or creating a review mechanism). Sometimes the change is made to build confidence and to show that no basis for fear exists. Planning commissions and city councils may try to add unnecessary, burdensome and even illegal conditions in conditional-use permits in order to calm fears. Developers' acceptance of such conditions is controversial. Even though the project will get built, the conditions may be used as a precedent against the next proposal.

While numerous laws, including fair housing law, prohibit discrimination against prospective residents, citing law directly as a response to neighbors' fears is more likely to incite resentment than to improve the situation. ***The best role for working with the law in these cases is to challenge discriminatory local laws and practices used to educate and to persuade local government to prevent a violation of the law through carefully selected channels.*** Of course, if discriminatory fears cause violations of the law, developers, advocates and prospective residents should consider enforcement.

Remember: Some advocates strongly question the approach of attending to the emotional issues, such as fear, behind local opposition. In their view, these strategies may not work and may even backfire. And if it's discrimination, why not just call it what it is?

Finally, it's important to set reasonable expectations. Don't expect to dispel years of accumulated fear or every opponent's fear even by a combination of these strategies. You probably don't need to. The goal should usually be to strip away legitimate concerns, focus on the issues properly before decision makers, and allow fearful and prejudiced opponents to reveal themselves as just that.

Winning the
NIMBY BATTLE

Well-planned operating procedures, a well-maintained and physically attractive structure, and an agency with a good reputation in the community will increase a development's chances of being perceived as acceptable. But there are a number of proactive steps organizations can take to further reduce or even avoid community resistance. By anticipating likely public resistance and addressing it in a strategic manner, you can minimize the controversy, cost and delay of affordable housing and tame the NIMBY monster.

First and foremost, a strategic and proactive approach should be taken with community outreach. The best community outreach campaigns are those that, "…use rational , emotional, and peripheral tactics." [1] This includes identifying the various stages at which information is valuable, what kind of information is needed, and by whom. It is also essential to keep all players (government officials, housing providers and the media) up-to-date on new ideas and concepts in housing, aware of the changing demographics of their area, and informed about research on NIMBY cases in other areas.

Especially critical is getting organized locally -- controversial developments often require a groundswell of popular support that can only be won through sustained, active, local organizing. Local organization activities most relevant to potential NIMBY battles can involve some or all of the following:

- **A meeting with your elected officials.** A meeting with legislators when they are not in session is usually more effective. Taking a group with you will also grab their attention.

- **A tour of low-income areas.** This provides an opportunity both to demonstrate the needs of the community (i.e., more affordable housing) and to celebrate successful projects already under way (new developments or rehabilitation projects) with local officials and the media.

- **Documentation that demonstrates the need for low-income housing.** This should be information obtained either through a survey of local housing providers and available data that documents items such as how many households are on the public housing waiting list or how many households have no indoor plumbing. Deaths, illnesses and injuries in your community that are attributable to substandard housing or homelessness can also be documented, as well as examples of elderly persons suffering in the heat of summer without air-conditioning, children dying in house fires caused by unsafe heating sources, and homeless persons dying on the streets. This also helps emphasize human suffering related to the low-income housing crisis. Such documentation should be shared both with elected officials and media contacts. Check out our website (www.nchousing.org) for some examples of such documentation.

[1] Multi Housing News Magaine online, 2008 Available at: http://www.gcastrategies.com/uncategorized/321/overcoming-nimby-opposition-before-it-stalls-your-project/

• **Document the economic development benefits of your housing development.** Housing creates jobs and local (as well as state) tax revenues. Calculate those numbers and publicize them. If you are working on housing for those in the work force, provide data on types of jobs residents of current developments are performing. It is also useful to show how average salaries of common and sympathetic service workers can not afford local market housing prices.

• **Petitions about specific housing issues.** These petitions can be signed by potential housing residents as well as other interested persons and used as an opportunity to educate people about housing issues.

• **Public forums.** Forums give candidates and local officials an opportunity to state their positions on housing and poverty issues. Registered voters can learn more about candidates and follow up by casting educated votes. A candidate forum is also a valuable media event. (Note that there is a difference between a forum and a debate. At a forum, candidates deliver prepared speeches on a given subject. Hence, they may be more willing to speak at a forum than discuss ad hoc at a debate).

• **Voter registration drives.** These should be targeted especially in low-income housing developments and homeless shelters where voter participation is typically low.

• **Scrapbooks of newspaper and magazine articles related to housing.** This can include pictures of substandard housing in your community that are also used for slide presentations and newspapers. (Note that newspapers usually prefer black and white film to color). Also include pictures of what affordable housing looks like today. Organizations may also want to create an anthology of creative writing, photos and personal testimony from a person in a low-income housing community to include in such a scrapbook. An anthology offers numerous benefits to an organizer: anecdotal information can give a localized, often emotional bite to otherwise bland statistics; contributors to the anthology are provided with a forum for telling their stories and being heard; anthologies can serve as excellent fund-raising tools for a local organization.

A good recommendation for getting organized is to also become familiar with the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) and the Fair Housing Act, and how they relate to local financial institutions. Each financial institution receives an annual rating based on how well it serves diverse populations (geographic, economic) in a community. Local banks should be approached about how they support affordable housing efforts. For more information on CRA grading follow this link http://www.ffiec.gov/craratings/default.aspx.

When it comes to fighting NIMBYism, the best defense may be a strong offense. Organizations that have successfully overcome NIMBY attitudes agree that with the right planning upfront, it is possible to head off NIMBY reactions before they emerge.

However, every local opposition conflict is different, so it isn't feasible to use the same outreach plan for every proposal and then wait and see what will happen. It is necessary to develop a proactive and collaborative work plan at the beginning of each development, engaging in a "due diligence" process in which organizations work with local advocates to create a development team and make deliberate decisions about key areas that are important for the specific development proposal. These key areas typically include:

1. Preparing a political strategy that coordinates all work towards getting the votes needed for approval.

2. Preparing a strategy to build active community support for the proposal.

3. Preparing a strategy to work through concerns of community members and to deal with active opposition.

4. Preparing a strategy to protect and use all legal rights.

5. Preparing a public relations/media strategy to send messages to decision makers and the public. When it comes to fighting NIMBYism, the best defense may be a strong offense.

This kind of planning preparation usually requires two or more meetings of the entire development team together with local advocates. At the first meeting, the following types of issues are frequently assessed:

- The organization's reputation, capacity to attract broad community support for its work, and its previous experience in dealing with local government, opponents and the media.

- What local government approvals are required, who will decide, what is the process and criteria or decisions, and an expected timeline.

- Local government's current knowledge of and support for affordable housing, the organization's work and the current proposal.

- Full analysis of the neighbohood surrounding the proposed site (history, problems, organizations, assets, etc.).

- Likely concerns neighbors might have about the proposal, the neighborhood's experience with similar problems and its potential for organized opposition.

- Potential legal issues associated with the development proposal, including the organization's and clients' legal rights.

- The regional and local media's approach to the development and clients.

Second and later meetings are held to additionally determine strategies toward local government, potential supporters, potential opponents, legal issues and the media, staffing required to implement identified strategies; and any consequences for the proposal's timeline, funding needs or site selection.

It is also important to distinguish this planning process from the adoption of a high-visibility entry with early notification of neighbors. Whether to notify neighbors (and, if so, how and when) is one of the decisions made during this planning process. In fact, all timing issues are critical and must be decided after consultation with persons most familiar with local politics and the relevant neighborhood.

There will be changes that occur throughout the course of a development which require organizations to improvise plans as they go along. But the original planning always helps manage the process and avoid some fire drills and surprises. It is also wise for organizations to continually draw on the collective experience of others to gain further insight into the strategies for community acceptance.

Of course, all plans will work more effectively if organizations have participated in ongoing, community-wide strategies to improve the political climate for affordable housing and services in your community, e.g., tenant organizing, voter registration, participation in the development of local housing policy, promoting pro-housing candidates in local elections and promoting the enforcement of fair housing laws.

Taking
ACTION

Getting organized locally and planning outreach in advance of potential NIMBY reactions helps ensure that organizations are ready to defend a proposed housing development. But there are also many specific actions that organizations should take once a project is under way and NIMBY issues have become real.

Understanding what has worked for other communities is valuable, and there are a number of basic guidelines that will apply almost universally. But always keep in mind that what works for one community might not work for another because of differences in the communities, residents, elected officials and locations. Different projects require different treatments of the same functionality. ***One factor that holds true in almost every circumstance is that people must be kept well informed once your project is public.*** Effectively disseminating information so that each citizen can make individual informed decisions about affordable housing is essential. This will make it easier for everyone to learn about local housing issues from a reliable source.

Public officials should always be briefed first; followed by neighborhood leaders next (it is essential that these groups hear about the project from you, not second-hand). Meetings should be held in small groups, when possible, and organizations should have clear illustrative materials showing site plans, building design, floor plans, etc.; and clear management standards for resident selection to present.

Organizations also should try to visit all interested parties at roughly the same time in order to assure that everyone has access to the same information. It can be helpful to show photos and recommend visits to previous, successful, attractive, well-maintained properties during these meetings as well.

There are some common mistakes that organizations routinely make. It can be damaging to let print or electronic media do a story on your project before you have carried out all your briefings of neighbors and officials. ***It is also not advisable to meet with people in large groups of more than a dozen or so, as these meetings can become unruly or difficult to manage.*** Whenever possible, organizations should not meet in their office or in a public place. Meeting in individual homes is preferred.

Effective NIMBY
COMMUNICATIONS

Before you begin to sell the affordable housing you're developing, you have to sell the idea itself. Organizations that know how to communicate with honesty and intelligence and stick to the issues that count will ultimately win support for their proposal.

There are some advised goals for communications designed to overcome NIMBY concerns. These include neutralizing opposition and building active support where possible as well as motivating and enabling people to visit existing developments in or near their community.

Accomplishing these goals generally requires communications to:

1. Provide factual information on a limited set of issues (e.g., design, density, crime, traffic, parking), acknowledge controversy and present available facts on contested issues.

2. Provide a new perspective (e.g., mortgage interest deduction subsidizes most housing).

3. Build credibility and trust and create relationships for follow-up.

4. Multiply impacts of presentation (e.g., generate good media attention when possible).

One of the most effective techniques to counter NIMBY concerns is to show particularly successful examples of affordable housing to emphasize the fact that opponents' fears about affordable housing are simply not borne of or from experience. The most important allies for you can be the neighbors of the existing developments.

Messages that could accompany such examples include:

• A demonstration of how the development is a local community asset (eliminates blight, provides local jobs, brings federal and state subsidies, addresses jobs/housing balance, generates sales tax revenues, reduces traffic/pollution, provides community amenities, etc.) with emphasis on the attractiveness and design of the development (if appropriate, note that it's impossible to recognize the development at a glance as affordable housing).

• An explanation of how professional property management (including tenant screening and lease provisions) prevents crime and protects neighboring property values with emphasis on the fact that well-managed properties do not decline physically and that behavior problems are not be tolerated.

• An overview of the successful results for residents of affordable housing developments (e.g., educational and employment achievements) along with a listing of the broad range of types of qualifying residents; express need by typical jobs, (firefighters, policemen, civil servants, city and own employees).

Organizations should always try to localize images as much as possible and include before and after shots of developments and images of older buildings that are well-maintained and of people living in buildings as their home. These messages and themes should be repeated as many times and in as many contexts as possible.
The personal testimony of trusted and/or interested parties on local impacts such as neighbors, police, business, former opponents, good press and other authorities also will have a strong effect.

The style and tone of your communications will equally have an impact. Organizations should acknowledge and address real concerns, but not attempt to oversell. Interesting, fun and creative presentations (e.g., guess which is affordable housing?) can put people at ease and reduce tensions. The language used is important as well. For example, the term housing "project" has notable negative associations; it is much more effective to use terms such as development, complex, apartment house or home.

Another important strategy during a NIMBY conflict is to use communications to acknowledge mistakes in part and explain lessons learned and how they are being used to make improvements. Organizations should additionally encourage positive action in their communications, such as suggesting a housing tour or providing links to local and regional resources.

Gaining the Support of
PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Public officials play a key role in dealing with NIMBY attitudes, as they are typically the target audience for both the proponents and opponents of a development and hold the power to make decisions that may significantly affect the development's success.

Ideally, most organizations will have already approached local officials and let them know how much they rely on their support in advance of the time when they cast their votes. During a tough NIMBY fight, it frequently helps to stake out the moral high ground and urge them to demonstrate the "courage to withstand NIMBY pressure." It also helps to observe that advocates of the proposal will look favorably on supportive public officials.

> It is especially critical for an organization to have its own house in order before engaging with public officials during a NIMBY fight. If an organization or development does not perform as advertised the first time, there will probably not be a second time.

Organizations should ensure that necessary steps to address any actual problems with existing affordable housing developments in the community have been taken and that there is documentation available that shows the actual impacts and benefits of affordable housing in the area. *Public officials will expect affordable housing advocates to be able to succinctly and persuasively state the tangible community benefits of affordable housing.*

Activities designed to network with officials and build support can play an important role. Organizations may want to initiate and support intergovernmental (e.g., city and county) and interdepartmental planning and collaboration on affordable housing, especially in procuring funding (e.g. support continued and additional state and federal funding as well as finding a local funding source). This may expand to include community partnerships and alliances among stakeholders (e.g., changers of commerce, environmentalists, faith congregations, etc.).

Organizations should also be able to demonstrate their knowledge of and support for local zoning ordinances, planning codes and housing policies, and know how they should comply with federal and state fair housing laws and how to promote affordable housing (e.g., streamline funding and land use approval process, identify and rezone sites for multifamily habitation, adopt density bonus and inclusionary zoning programs, etc.). The establishment and enforcement of professional management policies and standards through regulatory agreements and management plans may also be issues that are addressed. Finally, organizations should help clarify for officials and their colleagues that concerns about broader, previously existing problems that require the jurisdiction's attention (e.g., overcrowded schools, insufficient public services to a neighborhood) should not warrant denying the proposal. They should also ensure that discriminatory information is not taken into account in decision making and that discriminatory conditions are not applied in order to mollify opponents.

Managing Controversy at
PUBLIC HEARINGS

During a period of controversy before a public hearing, organizations can support the affordable housing developer and advocates by constructively engaging opponents and working through legitimate concerns. They can also make resources available for neutral mediation where useful and stand up to opponents who are acting in bad faith or discriminating.

If controversy is expected at a public hearing, organizations can request that the jurisdiction's legal counsel brief the decision-making body on legal issues involved, especially anti-discrimination law. Groups should also set (and enforce) ground rules for a civil, reasoned discussion focused on legitimate, substantial concerns and solutions to community problems.

Planning Support
MATERIALS

Going into any battle unarmed will certainly guarantee an unsuccessful outcome. Fighting the NIMBY battle is no different. The following section is designed to ensure that you have some of the necessary material to support the planning of your NIMBY efforts.

This toolkit is a step-by-step how to guide for organizing and conducting a campaign to work through NIMBY challenges in your community. We have provided communication tools as well as planning information, strategies and exercises

Keep Focused on the Goal

Getting local government approvals for a good proposal is the goal—it does not entail making everyone happy. The two are somewhat related, but not the same. Note: In this sense, community acceptance is confusing.

Assess the Threat

Who is articulating this concern? What is their political power or potential to keep you from getting approval because of this concern? Don't spend an inordinate amount of resources or time responding to concerns that are not likely to be consequential.

Determine Appropriate Response(s)

Through careful listening, conversation and other research, try to figure out to what degree is the basis of concern primarily (a) an honest factual issue, (b) based on fear, or (c) hiding another different issue (and, if so, what?).

A. ***If the concern is primarily factual,*** consider the following responses:
- Provide most relevant property value studies.
- Get testimony from an informed realtor and/or appraiser familiar with doing property value studies.
- Show the concerned neighbors your budget (and sources of funds) for property maintenance, your management plan and other information to demonstrate that you will be a responsible property manager and neighbor.
- Demonstrate that your proposal and program are based on best practices or best models and incorporate lessons learned from other similar facilities (e.g., that the plan tracks advice from *Rethinking Local Affordable Housing Strategies: Lessons from 70 Years of Policy and Practice* -Brookings Institute, 2003).
- Conduct a new property value study of potential effects or show the enclosed summary of property values studies for your particular housing type.

B. *If the concern is primarily fear*, consider all of the above responses AND:
- Try to build a respectful, honest and professional relationship with the concerned neighbor.
- Get testimony from a realtor who is informed about the issues and trusted by the concerned neighbor.
- Conduct a housing tour of similar existing residences and talk with other peer neighbors.
- Keep distinguishing between current fears and whether or not the fears are substantiated by facts and are likely to be realized.

Remember: The key issue about fears that are not primarily based on lack of credible relevant information is that the person usually needs reassurance from a trusted authority.

C. *If the concern is primarily something else*, you will need to consider and/or try all of the above and during this process make an effort to smoke out the underlying basis for concern/opposition.
- Pay attention to the neighbors' responses to what you present. Are they consistently unwilling to accept credit any credible, relevant genuine factual information? Do they somehow always identify new and additional issues of concern?
- Document all your actions, conversations and interactions with the concerned neighbors.
- Consider your political and legal options.

While making responses to concerned neighbors, be sure to keep elected officials and staff (especially supportive and potential swing individuals) informed about how you are attempting to meet the concern. Don't stop creating and building active support for the proposal and always consider how your supporters may assist you in this work. Finally, prepare to address this issue when responding to questions from reporters.

The Myth of Property Value
DEPRECIATION

One of the most common misconceptions in a NIMBY 'battle' is that affordable housing will depreciate surrounding property values. When planning for a NIMBY communications, it is important to understand the most current research related to property values and affordable housing's impact.

 It is well documented that well-planned, well-built, well-managed affordable housing does not adversely affect neighboring property values. But while you may be convinced, chances are that your audiences are not. Whatever the ultimate source of opposition to a given proposal for affordable housing is, nine times out of ten someone will raise the issue of property value depreciation.

Overall, changes in neighborhood property values are usually determined by larger economic trends, overall neighborhood desirability, the characteristics of the particular housing for sale, and only rarely by the presence or impacts of one particular nearby property. But while there is much data to support these facts, it is not always easy to understand or communicate the uses and limits of property value statistics that are based on the complexity of home buying dynamics and appraisals and statistics.

> The good news is that over a period of several decades, dozens of studies conducted by independent researchers and employing a wide variety of methods have [generally] found that contemporary affordable housing has [little or] no negative impact on surrounding property values, rate of turnover or other measures. A few studies have even shown increases in property values, while a few other have shown possible or small negative impacts.

Following are some key points to consider when presenting statistical data and research about property values:

1) It is important to look at the reasons for the results of property value studies.

For example, what might account for no impact or an increase in surrounding property values? Most studies finding no negative impacts on nearby property values attribute the finding to the fact that the residences, though controversial, were well-designed, well-maintained and well-managed. Studies finding increases in property values usually explain that finding by the fact that the new use had replaced what had been a dilapidated structure or vacant property, or that its presence spurred other positive action in an otherwise declining neighborhood.

1] Low Income Housing Tax Credit Housing Developments and Property Values, The Center for Urban Land Economics Research, The University of Wisconsin, June 14, 2002.

2) Statistics cannot predict behavior.

In other words, a particularly fearful buyer may not be aware of or moved by facts about non-impact on property values or livability, and she/he might withdraw an offer. This single event does not mean that the market value of the nearby properties has decreased – only that this particular buyer decided not to buy the property. Only a pattern of such behavior would indicate a possible decrease. In this case, it would be useful to know whether such a prospective buyer would be willing to buy the property, but for less money or not at all. If for less money, this may indicate a potential decrease in value, but if not at all, then his/her reluctance is not about price. Rather, it may indicate a subjective decision on the part of the buyer about the proposed use of the nearby property.

We shouldn't be held hostage or responsible for the subjective preferences (or prejudices) of individual potential buyers if we've done our best to create a well-designed, well-maintained and well-managed residence that fulfills critical community needs and city-identified priorities. Some studies demonstrate that there can be a conflict between some residents' feelings about the proposed residence and their objective property values. In other words, some residents might not like certain neighbors, but this doesn't reduce the objective value of their property. If the neighbors are not actually causing a nuisance or doing things that detract from the livability of the neighborhood, then these feelings will not be reflected in the property value of the unhappy neighbor's house.
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3) There's almost never an exactly on-point study, so there will always be room for dispute by both sides.

This is the problem with any argument based on statistics; you can always argue about methodology, etc. But everyone should note that a common finding in many studies (including in San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's 1993 "Following Up" report on supportive housing residences) and in almost all developers' experience is that feared negative impacts do not occur. Most neighbors who were initially very concerned about a proposal tend to feel much better about it after it actually is completed and operating for a while (assuming it is well-designed, well-maintained and well-managed). This perspective is hard to gain in the moment of fear, but it is true.

Property Values
A SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

The North Carolina Housing Coalition has reviewed an extensive amount of public and private sector research about affordable housing's impact on property values. A summary of this combined research is provided in pages 96-105. In addition, listings of major study summaries are broken down in five categories (Single-family homeownership; Supportive housing; Federally assisted, subsidized and scattered-site housing; Affordable rental housing; and Effects on residential property values) as a resource for additional and/or specific information. Where available, we have noted Web addresses for a particular study. Please note that some studies are available at no cost; others require a fee.

> Please feel free to remove the research listings from this manual and copy any or all for distribution in your communications efforts.

Common Attitudes vs. the Facts

It is commonly believed that affordable housing, including residential care facilities and supportive housing, will lower neighboring property values. However, numerous studies conducted over a period of many years and in various locations find that this widely held preconception is incorrect. Why? Because property values are primarily determined by the condition of the particular property for sale and other broader, more complex forces, such as overall area development and prosperity. The location of affordable housing has no significant impact on these other conditions that determine property values.

A Wide Variety of Types of Housing and Residential Areas Were Studied

The studies cover a wide scope of housing and residential areas. Elaborate studies have been conducted regarding affordable rental housing, owner-occupied housing and housing for the physically and developmentally disabled, mentally ill, the elderly and homeless women and children. The actual housing structures vary from single-family houses to high-rise apartment buildings, from manufactured housing to multiple family units in garden clusters. Areas examined include rental from prosperous suburbs to rural routes to densely populated urban areas in locations all over the United States. Despite this variety of factors, all of the studies except one offer the same conclusion—facilities of this kind simply do not affect neighboring property values. With the wide variety of affordable housing programs in the United States it is hard to hypothesize a causal relationship between the development of affordable housing and property values.

Studies Were Conducted by a Variety of Public and Private Sector Experts

Some studies are from the academic community; some were conducted by independent researchers and others are government reports. The U.S. General Accounting Office, Coopers and Lybrand, U.C.B.'s Institute for Urban and Regional Development, California's Department of Housing and Community Development, and Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs conducted the available studies.

Studies Used Many Different Methods to Detect Effects

The studies assess the potential effect of housing facilities on neighboring property values in many ways. Some compare the sale prices of neighboring housing to prices in a similar control area. Some compare sale prices before, during and after the construction of a facility to determine changes and then compare this data to statistics on the prevailing trends in that community. Others utilize a sophisticated statistical techniques called "regression analysis" and "hedonic models" to determine the effect of proximity to affordable housing.

Almost No Effects on Nearby Property Values Were Found

Except for one, all of the studies, utilizing many methodologies, determined that affordable housing units do not have as pronounced an effect on property values as conceived by the general public. In many cases where the quality and scale of the structure resembled its neighborhood, property values remained the same or increased. However, when structures are not well maintained or are located in areas with a large concentration of affordable housing units and/or depreciating neighborhoods, the property values remain low. There is not statistically significant changes with the addition of affordable housing units to property values.

> The assumption that property values will decline with the location of affordable housing is based on the idea that one facility can affect a whole neighborhood and that such a facility will be conspicuous, unattractive, poorly maintained and poorly managed. The studies cited in the following sample bibliographies, as well as others, show that these assumptions are incorrect.

Conclusion

The assumption that property values will decline with the location of affordable housing is based on the idea that one facility can affect a whole neighborhood and that such a facility will be conspicuous, unattractive, poorly maintained and poorly managed. The studies cited in the attached sample bibliography, as well as others, show that these assumptions are incorrect.

It is a common assumption that property values will go down in areas where affordable housing is located. Contrary to popular beliefs, studies indicate conclusively that affordable housing has little or no effect on neighboring property values. No one really knows what determines property values -- they are a complex phenomenon and seem to be most closely related to the condition of the particular property for sale and broad trends in neighborhood prosperity, urban and suburban expansion, road and highway construction and nearby large-scale commercial and industrial developments.

Affordable Single-Family Homeownership

Habitat for Humanity South Ranch 2 Community Impact Study
(Coopers & Lybrand, 1994)
Study of potential impact of a proposed 196 owner-built and occupied home development on a previously unoccupied area of Phoenix concluded that the development would benefit the overall community by bringing in community-committed, stable, working families, drawing commercial development to a new area and spatially linking existing developed areas of Phoenix.
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Homeownership and Neighborhood Stability
(Rohe, W. M. and Stewart, L. S. Housing Policy Debate 7(1), 1996)
Study shows that although initial values and citywide value changes appear to have much stronger effects on changes in property values than the tract homeownership rate, modest changes in homeownership rates are clearly associated with increased property values.
Summary by The Housing and Community Development KnowledgePlexTM

Property Values in Inner-City Neighborhoods: The Effects of Homeownership, Housing Investment, and Economic Development
(Ding, C. & Knapp, G. Housing Policy Debate, 13(4), 2002)
Research in Cleveland found that investments in new houses had a positive impact on housing values, especially for houses close to the new investment; homeowner exodus had a negative effect; and growth in the number of business establishments, with the exception of social service establishments, had a negative impact.
Summary by The Housing and Community Development KnowledgePlex.

Building Homes, Reviving Neighborhoods: Spillovers from Subsidized Construction of Owner-Occupied Housing in New York City
(Ellen, I. G., Schill, M. H., Susin, S., Schwartz, A. E. Journal of Housing Research, 12(2), 2001)
Based on an analysis of 300,000 property sales, the authors find that over the past two decades (1974-1999) the prices of properties near two major New York City affordable homeownership projects rose relative to others in the same zip code. The results suggest that part of the rise is attributable to the homeownership programs.

Why Affordable Housing Does Not Lower Property Values
(Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California, San Francisco, CA: NPH, 1994)
Tool Box issue paper for use by affordable housing advocates. Includes facts vs. common attitudes analysis and features the Habitat for Humanity International bibliography of studies on the topic.
Available at http://www.nonprofithousing.org/actioncenter/toolbox/acceptance/affhousingpropvalues.pdf
Summary by California Department of Housing & Community Development, Division of Housing Policy Development

The House Next Door
(Innovative Housing Institute by J. Siegel and Grier Partnership, Rev. 2001)
Web resource includes summary of findings from neighborhood surveys. Surveys include quantitative results in price behavior for Fairfax County, VA & Montgomery County, MD.
Available at http://www.inhousing.org/housenex.htm
Summary by California Department of Housing & Community Development, Division of Housing Policy Development

Why Affordable Housing Does Not Lower Property Values
(Habitat for Humanity International by Homebase, The Center for Common Concerns, San Francisco, 1996)
Report includes summary of the issue plus annotated bibliography of studies where findings support the assertion.
Available at: http://www.habitat.org/how/propertyvalues.aspx
Summary by California Department of Housing & Community Development, Division of Housing Policy Development

Supportive Housing

The Effect of Group Homes for the Mentally Ill on Residential Property Values
(Hospital and Community Psychiatry, Boydell, K. M., M.H.Sc., J. N. Trainor, MSW, A. M. Pierri. 1989)
Determined that property values in a suburban area with a group home increase more than a similar area without one.
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Questions and Answers
(Johnson and Olson Associates of Austin, 1988)
Summary finds no evidence of property values declining because of the location of a group home for the mentally ill and finds that there was less residential turnover near the group home than in other similar areas.
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

The Impact of Group Homes on Residential Property Values
(The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department, 1988)
Study found that most areas around group homes appreciated more than other similar areas in the county. Determined that there is no correlation positive or negative between location of group homes and neighboring property values.
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Impacts on the Surrounding Neighborhood of Group Homes for Persons with Developmental Disabilities
(Illinois Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities, Daniel Lauber, Springfield, Illinois, 1986)
Research found that the location of group homes had no effect on property values, sales price or residential turnover rates.
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

The Impact of Assisted Housing Developments on Concentrated Poverty
(Freeman, L. Housing Policy Debate, 14(1-2), 2003)
From Abstract: Findings imply that assisted housing developments do not typically contribute to concentration of poverty in surrounding neighborhoods and suggest that the negative reaction to assisted housing developments is unwarranted.
Available at: http://www.mi.vt.edu/data/files/hpd%2014(1,2)/hpd%2014(1,2)_freeman.pdf

Toward More Inclusive Neighbourhoods: Property Values Unaffected by Non-Market Housing
(CitySpaces Consulting Ltd. for The Ministry of Housing, Recreation and Consumer Services, 1995)
Studies examined the impact of non-market housing projects and group homes on the property values of nearby homes and concluded that there were "no negative impacts on the sale prices of homes in the immediate area. Additionally, they found no evidence of panic selling or an extraordinary length of time on the market of homes for sale within the area."
Available at: http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/housing/100_Jan_PropVal.html

The Question of Property Values
(Dear, M. and Wilton, R. For Campaign for New Community, 1996)
From Introduction: Annotated bibliography of 47 studies that focus on facilities such as group homes, outpatient facilities, affordable housing developments and foster homes. "An overwhelming majority of the reports indicate that facilities have little or no negative impact upon surrounding property values."
Available for $10 at: http://www.bettercommunities.org/index.cfm?method=bookstore

Financial Implications of Public Interventions on Behalf of a Chronically Homeless Family
(Hart-Shegos, E. Prepared for Family Housing Fund, 1999)
A report that demonstrates that supportive housing offers a solid, cost-effective solution by reducing public costs by fifty-one percent over time and helping families break the cycle of homelessness. The third report in the Fund's study "Supportive Housing for Families with Children."
Summary by Family Housing Fund

Transitory Effects of Disamenities on residential Housing Values: The Case of Public and Senior Housing
(Carroll, T.M. and Clauretie, M., Journal of Real Estate Portfolio Management; 5(3); 1999)
This study examined public and senior housing development and their impact on 6,321 surrounding residents. Their findings showed that, " public housing in general and senior housing in particular has an initial negative impact on nearby property values the effect is neither substantial nor long lasting."
Full text is available at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3759/is_199901/ai_n8846292/

Federally Assisted, Subsidized and Scattered-Site Housing

In the Wake of Desegregation: Early Impacts of Scattered-Site Public Housing on Neighborhoods in Yonkers, NY
(Briggs, X., Darden, J. and Aidala, A. Journal of the American Planning Association, 65(1), 1999)
Article "tests claims about the early effects of scattered-site public housing on receiving neighborhoods" using data from "real estate sales and homeowner-reported attitudes and expectations…near seven low-rise, public housing complexes." Findings indicate that "overall proximity to scattered-site public housing is shown to have no detectable price effect during the study period, neither after the announcement nor after occupancy."
Available at: http://www.huduser.org/publications/pubasst/wake.html

Subsidized Housing and Neighborhood Racial Transition: An Empirical Investigation
(Freeman, L. and Rohe, W. Housing Policy Debate, 11(1), 2000)
Study of several types of project-based federally assisted housing developments found that development of assisted housing in a neighborhood did not lead to racial transition or even spur enough outmoving activity to be characterized as "white flight." Authors suggest that the design of subsidized housing can have a strong favorable effect.
Summary by The Housing and Community Development KnowledgePlex

Differential Impacts of Federally Assisted Housing Programs on Nearby Property Values: A Philadelphia Case Study
(Wachter, S. M.; Lee, C.; Culhane, D. P. Housing Policy Debate, 10(1), 1999)
[The authors'] analysis shows modest to slightly negative impacts of public housing and Section 8 rental assistance on local property values after controlling for neighborhood characteristics. In contrast, Federal Housing Administration insured housing, Section 8 New Construction and public housing homeownership programs have positive effects. Although the study involved just one city, Philadelphia, it challenges the common negative perception and provides interesting insights into the complicated relationship that multifamily has on its surrounding housing markets.
Available full text via the Web: http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1066&context=spp_papers

Toward More Inclusive Neighbourhoods: Property Values Unaffected by Non-Market Housing
(CitySpaces Consulting Ltd. for The Ministry of Housing, Recreation and Consumer Services, 1995)
Studies examined the impact of non-market housing projects and group homes on the property values of nearby homes and concluded that there were "no negative impacts on the sale prices of homes in the immediate area. Additionally, they found no evidence of panic selling or an extraordinary length of time on the market of homes for sale within the area."
Available at:
http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/housing/NEIGHBOUR/p_value1.htmlhttp://www.mcaws.gov.bc.ca/housing/neighbour/index.htm

Assessing the Property Value Impacts of the Dispersed Housing Subsidey Program in Denver
(Santiago, A.M., Galster, G.C., and Tatian, P.; Journal of Policy Analysis and Management 20(1), 65-88; 2001)
The authors found that property values of sing-family homes located near subsidized housing had " independent positive effects" on home sales prices when not concentrated with other affordable housing developments..
Available at : http://www.jstor.org/stable/3325594

The Impact of Neighborhorhoods who use Section 8 Certificates on Property Values.
(Galster, G.C., Tatian, P, and Smith, R.,; Housing Policy Debate—Fannie Mae Foundation; 1999)
Study found that values of homes located 500 ft. from Section 8 housing appreciated in white census tracts. However, single-family homes depreciated when in neighborhoods with high concentrations of vulnerable populations. This study suggests that Section 8 housing not be placed in neighborhoods with existing high concentrations of vulnerable populations, but instead be dispersed across the community for better results.
Available at; http://www.knowledgeplex.org/showdoc.html?id=2582

The external Effects of Place-based Subsidized Housing
(Schwartz, A.E., Ellen, I.G., Voicu, I., & Schill, M. H. Regional Science and Urban Economics 36(6): 679-707; 2006)
"We find significant and sustained external benefits. Spillovers increase with project size, and decrease with distance from the project sites and with the proportion of units in multi-family, rental buildings. Our results are robust to alternative specifications. Some of the benefit appears due to the effect of the replacement of existing disamenity"
Full text available at: http://furmancenter.org/files/hsg_extern_paper_ssrn_rv7.pdf

Federally Assisted, Subsidized and Scattered-Site Housing Continued...

Estimating the External Effects of Subsidized Housing Investment on Property Values (Working Paper)
(Schwartz, A.E., Ellen, I. G., Voicu, I., & Schill, M.H.; Lincoln Institute on Land Policy, Cambridge MA; 2003)
"The results suggest that subsidized housing investments produce significant and sustainable external benefits to urban neighborhoods. The magnitudes of the external effects are found to increase with project size, and to decrease with the proportion of units in multi-family, rental buildings and with distance from the housing investment sites. Spillovers are typically larger in the more distressed neighborhoods, although smaller projects appear to generate larger spillovers in more prosperous neighborhoods."
Full text available after free profile is completed at: http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/PubDetail.aspx?pubid=824

Does Federally Subsidized Rental Housing depress Neighborhood Property Values?
(Ellen, I.G., Schill, M, Schwartz, A.E., & Voicu, I.; Forman center for Real Estate and Urban Policy; 2005)
The study found that fears of a decrease in property values due to the development of federally subsidized rental units in unfounded and sometimes property values will increase in these areas.
Full text available at: http://furmancenter.org/files/fedrentalC_march05ffr.pdf

Affordable Rental Housing

The Vitality of America's Working Communities
(A. von Hoffman, E. Belsky, J. DeNormandie and R. Bratt, Harvard University, Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2003)
Using U.S. Census data from 1970 to 2000, the study finds that apartments do not threaten the value of nearby single-family houses. The average value of owner-occupied houses was actually highest in working communities (neighborhoods in which residents earn between 60 percent and 100 percent of area median income) that have the most apartments.
A summary is available at: www.nw.org/network/newsRoom/pressReleases/pdf/executiveSummary.pdf
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

On Common Ground: Apartments and Detached Home Values
(A. C. Nelson and M. Moody, Virginia Tech University, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, 2003)
Concludes that over the long run, a well-located apartment building with attractive landscaping and entranceways probably raises the over-all value of detached homes compared to having no apartments nearby. Notes locating apartments near major transportation access points minimizes traffic congestion, disarming a perennial NIMBY rallying cry.
Available from National Multifamily Housing Council. Contact LaToya Scott, 202-974-2349, lscott@nmhc.org
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Housing Developments and Property Values
(University of Wisconsin Center for Urban Land Economics Research, 2002)
This study reviewed eight prior studies on Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties and property values and found no evidence that LIHTC properties cause property values to deteriorate. Instead, contrary to conventional wisdom, LIHTC developments often cause surrounding property values to increase. It notes with interest that past research has generally found that such developments have a more positive impact in higher-income areas.
Available at http://www.cacities.org/resource_files/24079.uwisconsin_study.pdf
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

A Review of Existing Research on the Effects of Federally Assisted Housing Programs on Neighboring Residential Property Values
(G. Galster, Wayne State (MI) University, 2002)
Supports the claim that apartments are critical to revitalization efforts. The author measures property values both before and after affordable housing is built, rather than just after. Like many studies, it found that assisted housing has an insignificant or positive effect on property values in higher-value, less vulnerable neighborhoods, but is likely to improve property values in lower-value, more vulnerable neighborhoods.
A review is available at www.realtor.org/Research.nsf/files/galsterreport.pdf/$FILE/galsterreport.pdf
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

A Study of the Relationship between Affordable Family Rental Housing and Home Values in the Twin Cities
(Family Housing Fund and Maxfield Research, Inc., 2000)
Examines three standards of single-family house performance: sales price per square foot, percentage of sales price to asking price, and time on the market in 12 Twin City neighborhoods where a tax credit rental housing development was located within an area of owner-occupied homes. The study finds nearly no negative effects and many positive effects to integrating tax credit rental housing into these neighborhoods.
Available at www.fhfund.org/Research/Maxfield-Exec%20Summary.pdf
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

There Goes the Neighborhood? The Impact of Subsidized Multi-Family Housing on Urban Neighborhoods
(E. Goetz, Hin K. Lam and A. Heitlinger, 1996)
From Abstract: "Study of 23 subsidized multifamily projects developed by nonprofit community development corporations in the central neighborhoods of Minneapolis which "found that property values actually go up next to CDC housing projects, that crime goes down, and that the projects add to the stability of the neighborhood."
Available for free upon request: cura@umn.edu or 612-625-1551.

Impact Study for Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency
(Spear street Advisor, Inc., San Francisco, CA 1988)
Determined that proximity to affordable housing was not a statistically significant factor affecting property values.
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Affordable Rental Housing Continued...

NIMBY fears, community perceptions: Analysis of Affordable and Market Rate Housing Developments in Oakland, California
(C. Cha. Dept. of City and Regional Planning, University of California at Berkeley, 1996)
Study found that neighbors living near affordable housing developments perceived them more favorably than neighbors living near similarly priced market rate developments.
Summary by Westchester County Department of Planning.

Housing's Impact on the Economy
(Submitted to Millennial Housing Commission, National Assoc. of Home Builders. Washington, DC: NAHB, 2001)
Excerpt on property values states, "Contrary to popular perceptions, multifamily projects do not have an adverse impact on surrounding property values. Data from the AHS provide the evidence."
Available at http://www.mhc.gov/papers/nahb.doc
Summary by California Department of Housing & Community Development, Division of Housing Policy Development

Affordable Housing and its Relationship to Neighboring Property Values
(McLean County Regional Planning Commission, Illinois, 1998)
Brochure includes bibliography featuring how well-designed affordable housing units benefit neighborhoods and communities without lowering property values.
Available at http://www.mcplan.org/c_p/brochures/Aff_Hous-std.pdf
Summary by California Department of Housing & Community Development, Division of Housing Policy Development

Affordable Rental Housing Does Not Reduce Property Values: Evidence from the Twin Cities
(Family Housing Fund: Public Education Initiative, 2001)
This newsletter gathered information from the Maxfield Research Inc, a private real-estate research firm, which found that in 98 % of the cases property values of areas surrounding newly constructed affordable rental units was as high if not higher than before the units were built. Also, the firm concluded that these affordable rental units, " benefits the city neighborhoods by revitalizing old housing stock," as well as having reduced crime rates.
Available at: http://www.fhfund.org/_dnld/reports/Property%20Values_Fact%20Sheet.pdf

Affordable Housing In Our Backyards: The Impact on Property Values

Low Income Housing Tax Credit Housing Developments & Property Values
(Green, R. K., Malpezzi, S., Seah, K. Center for Urban Land Economics Research. Madison, WI, 2002)
From Executive Summary: "… we have not been able to find evidence that Sect. 42 developments cause property values to deteriorate. We have found no evidence of an impact in Waukesha and Ozaukee [Wisconsin], and find evidence that properties in Madison [WI] near Sect. 42 developments appreciate more rapidly."
Available full text at: http://www.wheda.com/cat_tca/uw_study.pdf
Summary by California Department of Housing & Community Development, Division of Housing Policy Development

From NIMBY to Good Neighbors: Recent Studies Reinforce That Apartments Are Good for a Community
(National Multi Housing Council; National Apartment Association, Washington, DC, 2003)
"Community leaders and public policy planning officials agree that the key to growing smarter is to develop more high density housing, such as apartments. Developers eager to meet these housing needs are often thwarted, however, by misguided local not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) activists."
Available full text at: http://www.nmhc.org/Content/ServeFile.cfm?FileID=3765content
Summary by California Department of Housing & Community Development, Division of Housing Policy Development

Myths and Facts about Affordable and High Density Housing
(California Planning Roundtable; California Dept. of Housing & Community Development, 2002)
Brochure asserting that the facts of California's recent experiences with high-density and affordable housing often contradict the myths about negative impacts on property values, traffic and crime.
Available full text at: http://www.cproundtable.org/cprwww/docs/mythsnfacts.pdf

Relationships Between Affordable Housing Development and Neighboring Property Values: An Analysis of BRIDGE Housing Corporation Developments in the San Francisco Bay Area
(Cummings, P. M. Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley Institute of Urban and Regional Development, 1993)
Determined that proximity to affordable housing is not a significant factor in determining sales prices, and in one instance it may have had a positive impact on sales prices.
Available for purchase at: http://www-iurd.ced.berkeley.edu/srcpubs.htm
Summary by Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Does Affordable HousingAffect Property Values? A Review of the Literature
(Nguyen, M.T., Journal of Planning Literature 20(15))
This study found that determining the affect of affordable housing on property values is a complex process with no direct yes or no answer. There can be negative affects on property values,however they are small and can be reduced by creating and preserving quality affordable housing units with compatible design and scale to their neighborhood and good management. In addition, affordable housing units should not be concentrated in one area.
Can be purchased at: http://www.sagepublications.com

PLANNING TOOL

The Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH) has developed a useful process tool for proactive and collaborative planning that has been successfully employed to help organizations overcome NIMBYism in the San Francisco Bay area over the last several years. Its process consists of five steps to guide the development of specific strategies with a clear plan of actions: who will do what, when, how and with whom.

Step #1: Prepare a political strategy

- Get to know your local government's players and relevant policies. There are "key leaders" in every community, but they don't always have the same jobs or titles. To find them always ask: "Who else should I talk with about this?"

- Identify solid supporters, committed opponents and uncertain votes on your proposal.

- Determine education and advocacy efforts needed to keep supporters, neutralize opponents and win uncertain votes.

- Coordinate your efforts with supporters, concerned community members and with the media to get the votes you need.

- Document everything and tell your best story at public hearings. Usually something like: "We're a professional, community-based organization with significant community support meeting a critical need, and we've done everything we can to respond to neighbors' legitimate concerns."

Step #2: Prepare a strategy to build public support

Active, vocal community support for your proposal will help you get political support, counter your opponents, tell your story to the media and, when appropriate, say hard things that developers usually do not want to say.

- Develop solid support for the proposal (at least in the broader community) before contacting potential opponents.

- Don't fall in the trap of spending all of your time and energy responding to opponents.

- Identify and prioritize actual and potential supporters, including tactical allies. Think widely about your potential allies.

- Plan recruitment of supporters and what you want them to do for you.

- Organize and support your allies with background information, housing tours and up-to-date information.

- Mobilize supporters at critical points (e.g., using a database and tax sheets).

- Keep them informed and encouraged.

Step #3: Prepare a strategy to work through issues

- Notification and community outreach decisions should be designed to surface and deal effectively with legitimate concerns and for positive presentation of the proposal, not to create an open forum for opponents to organize themselves against you.

- Consider alternative methods for community outreach (e.g., door-to-door canvassing, open-house forums or small house meetings) instead of the large, open community meetings.

- Use an issue-based strategy for working through local community concerns.

- Find out the probable basis of their concerns before fashioning a response (e.g., misinformation, fears about impacts, expectation to participate, legitimate conflicts of interest, prejudice or issues unrelated to your proposal).

- Prepare appropriate responses to each kind of concern (e.g. education, reassurance by trusted authority, appropriate forum participation, negotiation, clarifying legitimate from illegitimate issues.)

- Peel away layers of opposition and their issues to leave only "unreasonable" opponents.

Step #4: Prepare a legal strategy

- It will be essential for you to identify the legal rights of your organization and your prospective tenants/clients and learn how to spot potential legal violations.

- If your proposal is likely to encounter illegal discrimination or raise complex legal issues, contact legal assistance immediately to learn what you should do now to protect your rights. Also find out how and when to get further legal assistance.

- Work with legal advocates to identify how to protect and assert your legal rights without litigation, e.g., educating the city attorney early in the process.

- Keep records of all statements, fliers, etc., that may be evidence of discrimination.

Step #5: Prepare a public relations/media strategy

Before you get any media coverage on a proposal, decide if you want to generate media coverage (proactive strategy) or if you want to be able to respond effectively to any media coverage you receive (reactive approach).

- Designate and prepare spokesperson(s), including former clients and supporters.

- Develop your message(s) and alternative stories for your target audiences (e.g., decision makers).

- Prepare brief, easily faxable fact sheets about your organization, the proposal, your supporters, your efforts to resolve legitimate community concerns and other information to support your message(s) and alternatives stories.

- Promote the broad scale advantage of your project on the community as a whole.

- Follow up on any coverage you receive with thank-yous and corrections.

- Develop ongoing relationships with media (to the degree your resources allow).

Preparation for
EXERCISES

Some organizations may wish to prepare for a fight against NIMBYism before an actual development is on the horizon. The NPH has also come up with a series of small-group exercises that can prepare team members to carry out the real tactical planning quickly when a real development is at stake.

These exercises use fictional scenarios to help organizations assess their strengths and weaknesses in generating active community support for the organization and/or a potential development proposal. They also prompt internal brainstorming on how to use your strengths and heal weaknesses, and suggest repeating the process for relationships with local government, local community and media.

There are five sets of exercises that correspond to the planning process tool. Three fictional scenarios have also been provided to facilitate creative group problem-solving work.

To use these exercises, each organization should ask participants to read through the scenarios and then role-play the exercises as a group as outlined, drawing on the information provided in the scenarios (e.g., the "Political Environment" and "Media Environment ") to guide the improvisation. A team member with some experience in conducting or participating in workshops of this kind might volunteer to facilitate the training.

Planning
EXERCISES

Using either a scenario or each participant's own organization, assess your organization's strengths and weaknesses in generating active community support for your organization and/or proposal. Brainstorm how to use your strengths and heal weaknesses. Time permitting, do the same for relationships with local government, local community and media. Debrief.

Exercises for STEP #1: Political Plan:
Educating/advocating with elected officials:

Divide the group into two parts, one group will be local elected officials/staff people (identified as either potential supporters or unknown positions) and the other group will be representatives of the developer and identified supporters (e.g., businesspeople). Developer group has 10 minutes to prepare for a meeting with elected officials in which developers will try to get buy-in for its project from the elected officials. Preparation can include deciding who to bring, what to bring, what to say, who to say it, etc. Then the groups role-play the meeting together for 10 minutes. Trainer will give additional facts to elected officials while developer group meets to prepare meeting with elected officials. Debrief.

Political intelligence:

In small groups, brainstorm ways to identify where decision makers might stand on your proposal. Then brainstorm ways to influence their opinion. Debrief.

Exercises for STEP #2: Building support:
Prioritizing potential supporters:

Using the scenario, do a preliminary support plan. Prioritize the first three potential supporters you would contact (core supporters), how you would approach them and what you'd ask them to do. Be creative and work the "six degrees of separation." Next, identify two other potential sources of support that you'd approach if you have time and what you'd like them to do. Debrief.

Using supporters:

Trainer (or other group acting as opponents) tells the small group what we'll do to oppose your proposal. Small group then determines how to use its identified supporters to deal with opponents' actions. Debrief.

Exercises for STEP #3: Dealing with community concerns:

Struggling with key predicaments:

Using the scenario, in small groups decide the following in 15 minutes: (1) if/when to notify and who to notify (in what order), and (2) whether, when and how to do additional outreach (e.g., canvassing, house meeting, community meeting, open house, etc.) Debrief.

Listening exercise:

In groups of two with roles assigned by trainer (one as representative of the developer and one as neighbor), role-play an initial conversation about the proposal for 5 minutes. The goals are for the developer representative to identify the neighbors' primary concerns and think of how to address them. (This could also be done in a "fishbowl" format.) Debrief.

Exploring the arguments:

Using scenario, in two groups (developer and supporters in one group, neighbors in the other) role-play discussion of neighbors' issues (property values, crime, etc.) for 10 minutes. (If time allows, groups switch roles and see how the conversation differs.) Debrief.

Exercises for STEP #4: Legal plan:

What is discrimination?:

Brainstorm what opponents and/or local government might do or say that may be discriminatory against your proposal under federal fair housing law. Debrief.

Using the law:

Brainstorm ways that the developer and advocates could use pro-affordable housing laws to advance the proposal short of litigation. Debrief.

Exercises for STEP #5: Media plan:

Preparing the message:

Using scenario, developers and supporters decide on two to three messages about the proposal and how they will support them to create a positive news story, including assigning roles to spokesperson and other potential interviewees. Debrief.

Getting the message out:

Role-playing a reporter, the trainer interviews one or more of the spokespersons and other potential interviewees to see if the message gets out. Debrief.

Responding to bad press:

Trainer informs small group of a bad (inaccurate and biased) story just published; small group brainstorms how to respond. Debrief.

Final Exercise: Prepare for public hearing:

Divide into three groups: (1) developer/supporters, (2) opponents and (3) decision makers. Each group meets for 10 minutes to prepare for public hearing. Role-play public hearing for 10 minutes. Debrief.

Planning Scenarios (optional)

Scenario #1—Developer: Affordable Housing Advocates (AHA)

Affordable Housing Advocates was founded 10 years ago by community organizations for the purpose of developing housing for low-income families in Tri-Area County. Since then, AHA has completed five projects, including two rehab and three new construction, and won two design awards. In part because of its emphasis on hiring only planning school graduates as project managers, AHA has developed a solid reputation as a professional developer in Tri-Area County where most of its developments are located.

Some developments have received community support; others have been opposed at public meetings. The staff of seven is comprised of an executive director, financial manager, housing director, two project managers and two clerical/bookkeeping staff. The board of directors includes an attorney, two social workers, one resident of low-income housing, two congregation leaders, one homemaker and three local businesspeople.

Proposed Development and Neighborhood Context—The proposal is for new construction of an 80-unit complex with mostly three- and four-bedroom units located in the Mission District, a middle- to upper-income neighborhood of New City, which is about 20 miles outside of Tri-Area County. Units will be rented to lower-income families who may access limited supportive services on site. The service program has not yet been fully defined, but may include a large community room and a computer-learning center. A group of religious sisters owns the site, which is part of a larger parcel where their headquarters and retirement residence are located. They want to sell the land to produce revenue for caring for retiring sisters, but want to have the land used for a noble purpose. The Mission District neighborhood has an active chamber of commerce and "neighborhood watch" signs around it, but it is unclear how organized it is. The neighbors are particularly proud of and involved in their high-quality public schools.

Political Environment—This proposal would fulfill priorities identified in New City's adopted housing plan. The project requires city approval of a conditional-use permit. Some planning commissioners and city council members have supported low-income housing development, while others have expressed concerns about property values, crime and "projects not fitting into the neighborhood."

Media Environment—The local newspaper, owned by a regional media outlet, tends to emphasize community conflict. There has been some coverage of housing problems, but little about affordable housing developments.

Scenario #2—Developer: Community Advancement by Shelters for All (CASA)

CASA was founded five years ago as a local community development corporation for the purpose of developing housing for low-income families in Suburbia, North Carolina. CASA has completed two developments, including one rehab and one new construction. In response to the need for service-enriched housing among homeless people, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with mental disabilities and others, CASA recently began partnering with local social service providers to offer on-site and off-site services to residents. Each of CASA's developments has been opposed at public meetings, but has eventually won approvals. The staff of seven includes an executive director, services coordinator, housing manager, two project managers and two clerical/bookkeeping staff. The board of directors includes one attorney, two social workers, three residents of CASA's existing developments, two congregation leaders, one homemaker and one local businessperson.

Proposed Development and Neighborhood Context

Rehabilitation of a 20-unit complex located in a mixed neighborhood of working-class residential and neighborhood commercial (retail and offices) of Suburbia. The site is currently occupied by an unused apartment building, which CASA will substantially rehabilitate. Units will be rented to mentally disabled women with families who may access limited supportive services on-site and additional services off site by a van. The service program is not yet fully defined but will include case management, counseling, training and job search assistance, and independent living skills. The proposal does not require state licensing. Some of the local businesses are struggling to survive. The neighborhood has "neighborhood watch" signs around it, but it is unclear how active it is. There is one group home for developmentally disabled children and one job training program in the immediate neighborhood.

Political Environment

This proposal would fulfill needs identified in Suburbia's approved housing plan. The planning department informed CASA that it will require a conditional-use permit either under Suburbia's "boarding-house" classification or as a "group home." Some planning commissioners and city council members have supported low-income housing development, especially for seniors, while others have expressed concern about overburdening certain neighborhoods with "public housing," which they perceive as social service facilities.

Media Environment

The local newspaper tends to emphasize community conflict. There has been little coverage about housing. One of CASA's project managers used to work as a reporter with a regional newspaper called The Guardian.

Scenario #3—Developer: St. Vincent De Paul (SVDP)

In response to the rise of homelessness in the early 1980s, St. Vincent De Paul, a Roman Catholic service organization, opened a homeless shelter and dining room in the downtown commercial area of Upscaletown, North Carolina. The shelter provides beds and minimal services for 30 individuals per night, and the dining room serves about 200 meals per day. Since its opening, the staff and volunteers have been single-mindedly focused on providing services to their clients. The staff of seven includes an executive director (who recently replaced the former executive director), dining room manger, shelter manager, two volunteer coordinators and one clerical/bookkeeping staff person. The board of directors includes two congregation leaders, two social workers, one resident of low-income housing, one professional photographer/artist, one homemaker and one local businessperson. The volunteer base of more than 50 residents of Upscaletown includes mostly congregation members but also some family members of prominent city leaders.

Proposed Development and Neighborhood Context

For the last three years, Upscaletown has been engaged in a "downtown revitalization program." SVDP has been publicly blamed for crime, vandalism, aggressive panhandling and other blight in the immediate neighborhood of the shelter/dining room, and for creating a "magnet" drawing homeless people to Upscaletown. The city manager of Upscaletown has been pressuring SVDP to move out of the downtown area because the site is scheduled to be redeveloped for retail use. Most of the neighborhoods outside of downtown do not provide public transportation to downtown. Any relocation would require a major conditional-use permit as well as funding to rehabilitate/remodel the new site.

Political Environment

Some planning commissioners and city council members have supported low-income housing development in the past. Relations between the elected leaders of Upscale town and the former executive director had soured over this period. While the new executive director has attempted to negotiate with the city manager about alternative sites for relocation, there never seems to be a site which the city and SVDP can agree on, in part because SVDP wants to remain located downtown where it can be accessible to its clients. Recently, the city manager has told the executive director that if SVDP doesn't move of its own accord, the city will begin eminent domain proceedings against it.

Media Environment

The local newspaper has publicized the city's complaints about SVDP without much comment or response from SVDP. There has been some coverage of homeless problems, but little about successful solutions to homelessness.

Glossary of
HOUSING
TERMS

NORTH CAROLINA
HOUSING
COALITION

EDUCATING *and* ADVOCATING *for* CHANGE

Glossary
OF TERMS

This glossary defines words used by housing advocates in communications with the public. It is not a complete dictionary of housing terms, however we have identified, defined and compiled terms and acronyms that are commonly used in discussions about affordable housing.

Abandoned property- Property that is no longer being maintained by its owners and is either vacant or not lawfully occupied. Some jurisdictions limit the term to properties that have gone through a legal proceeding confirming their failure to pay back property taxes.

Abatement- Any set of measures designed to permanently eliminate lead-based paint, asbestos, or other hazards in accordance with federal standards. See also Lead-Based Paint Hazard.

Accessible Housing- Housing units that are designed and constructed to be useful to persons with physical impairments.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)- A small, self-contained residential unit built on the same lot as an existing single-family home. (Because they are often used by extended family members, ADUs are also referred to as "in-law apartments" or "granny flats.") ADUs may be built within a primary residence (such as in an attic or basement), attached to the primary residence (like a small duplex unit with a separate entrance), or detached from the primary residence (such as conversion of a detached garage). An ADU will be subordinate in size, location, and function to the primary residential unit (which is why ADUs are sometimes referred to as "secondary units" or "second units"). (From HousingPolicy.org Glossary of Terms.)

Advance Appropriation- An appropriation made to become available at least one fiscal year beyond the fiscal year for which the appropriation act is passed. Advance appropriations in FY 2004 appropriations acts will become available for programs in 2005 or beyond.

Affordability covenant- A legally binding clause to a deed that specifies that the property will remain affordable by setting certain terms and conditions related to its long-term use. An affordability covenant may restrict to whom a rental unit is rented and at what level or to whom and at what price a for-sale unit will be sold. These guidelines are typically put in place to preserve the affordability of homes financed with substantial government subsidies for future residents. (From HousingPolicy.org Glossary of Terms.)

Affordable Housing- Housing for which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for total housing costs, including rent, mortgage payments, condominium fees, utilities, taxes and insurance, as applicable for rental or owned housing units.

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OF TERMS

Annual Action Plan- An annual strategic housing plan that is a requirement of the Con Plan. It describs activities to take place in the next 12 months and the resources available to carry them out. See also Consolidated Plan.

Anti-Deficiency Act- A federal law forbidding federal employees from spending more money than has been appropriated or spending money in advance of an appropriation.

Appropriation- A provision of law providing budget authority that enables an agency to incur obligations and to make payments out of the Treasury for specified purposes. Appropriations are the most common means of providing budget authority. Annual appropriations are provided in appropriations acts; most permanent appropriations are enacted in substantive law.

APR—Annual Progress Report – required by HUD on a yearly basis for any program receiving HUD funding.

Area Median Income (AMI)- is a statistic generated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for purposes of determining the eligibility of applicants for certain federal housing programs. HUD determines AMI on an annual basis for each metropolitan area and non-metropolitan county, making adjustments for household size and other factors. Different housing programs use different percentages of AMI – such as 30 percent of AMI or 80 percent of AMI – as maximum income limits for admission. Many state and localities have adopted HUD's income limits for their own programs, or use a variation on the HUD limits – for example, 120 percent of AMI. (From HousingPolicy.org Glossary of Terms.)

Assisted Housing- Housing where the monthly costs to the tenant are subsidized by federal or other programs.

Authorization- Legislation granting authority for the Congressional consideration of appropriations for general or particular purposes. Although unauthorized appropriations may be subject to points of order, they are legally valid if enacted.

Below Market- a general term that refers to housing that rents or sells for less than prevailing market levels. In some cases, below-market housing is used synonymously with affordable housing. In other cases, below-market housing is targeted at moderate-income families with somewhat higher incomes than those served by federal affordable housing programs. Generally, housing can be offered at below-market levels only with a public subsidy or with a public concession such as density bonuses or reduced-cost publicly-owned land.

Below Market Interest Rate Mortgages- A mortgage that has a reduced interest rate which can subsequently increase your purchasing power.

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BMIR- Below Market Interest Rate.

Block Grants- Grants made by the federal government on a formula basis, usually to a state or local government.

Borrowing Authority- Authority to incur indebtedness for which the federal government is liable, which authority is granted in advance of the provision of appropriations to repay such debts. Borrowing authority may take the form of authority to borrow from the Treasury or authority to borrow from the public by means of the sale of federal agency obligations. Borrowing authority is not an appropriation since it provides a federal agency only with the authority to incur a debt, and not the authority to make payments from the Treasury under the debt. Appropriations are required to liquidate the borrowing authority.

Budget Authority- Legal authority to enter into obligations that will result in immediate or future outlays of federal funds.

Budget Enforcement Act- An expired 1990 act of Congress credited in part with creating a budget surplus by establishing limits on discretionary spending, maximum deficit amounts, pay-as-you-go rules for revenue and direct spending, new credit budgeting procedures and other changes in budget practices. The budget resolution process in the Second Session of the 108th Congress has been marked by wrangling over the re-establishment of pay-as-you-go rules and disagreement about whether such rules should apply to both spending and taxation or only to spending.

Budget Resolution- A concurrent resolution passed by both houses of Congress that does not require the signature of the president. The budget resolution sets forth various budget totals and functional allocations and may include reconciliation instructions to designated House or Senate committees.

Capacity- is a person's means for repaying debt.

Capital- is the money for down payments and closing costs.

Carolina Homeless Information Network (CHIN). An ICCHP-facilitated statewide HMIS collaborative designed to assist communities that have not yet been able to comply with the federal mandate for an HMIS system.

CDBG—Community Development Block Grant - Distributed by the Department of Housing and Urban Renewal in Washington, DC. Larger cities in North Carolina receive CDBG money directly, while the Division of Community Assistance in the NC Department of Commerce distributes funding to smaller cities.

Glossary
OF TERMS

Chronically Homeless- A chronically homeless person is defined as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

Closing- A formal meeting where homeownership is transferred from the seller to the buyer. Also, known as a settlement, the meeting is typically attended by the buyer(s), the seller(s), their attorneys if they have them, bot real estate agents, a representative of the lender, and the closing agent. The purpose is to make sure the property is physically and legally ready to be transferred.

Closing Costs- Expenses in addition to the price of the property that are paid at closing, which generally include a loan origination fee, attorney's fee, taxes, an amount placed in escrow, and charges for obtaining title insurance and a survey.

Collateral- protects the lender if a person fails to repay the loan.

Colonias- Rural, mostly unincorporated communities located in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas along the U.S.-Mexico border. Colonias are characterized by high poverty rates and substandard living conditions. Colonias are defined primarily by what they lack, such as potable drinking water, water and wastewater systems, paved streets and standard mortgage financing.

Community and Housing Development Organization (CHDO)- "A federally defined type of nonprofit housing provider that must receive a minimum of 15 percent of all federal HOME Investment Partnership Funds." (HUD's Glossary of Terms.)

Community Development Corporation (CDC)- A nonprofit corporation whose activities and decisions are initiated, managed and controlled by its constituencies, and whose primary mission is to develop and improve low-income communities and neighborhoods through economic and related development. Community development corporations were enabled by Title VII Special Impact of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)- A specialized financial institution that works in market niches that have not been adequately served by traditional financial institutions. CDFIs provide a wide range of financial products and services, including mortgage financing, commercial loans, financing for community facilities and financial services needed by low-income households. Some CDFIs also provide technical assistance. To be certified as a CDFI by the CDFI Fund of the Department of the Treasury, an institution must engage in community development, serve a targeted population, provide financing, have community representatives on its board and be a nongovernmental organization.

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Community Land Trust- Community land trusts are a form of shared equity homeownership designed to ensure that homes made affordable through public or philanthropic subsidies remain affordable over the long-term. Under the traditional community land trust model, a nonprofit community land trust is established to own the land on which homes are situated. The trust then sells the physical structures to home purchasers for an affordable price, along with a long-term lease on the land. When the home is sold, it must be sold an affordable price to a qualifying homebuyer.(From HousingPolicy.org Glossary of Terms.)

Congressional Budget Office (CBO)- An organization created by Congress that provides staff assistance to Congress on the federal budget. (HUD's Glossary of Terms.)

Consolidated Plan- The Consolidated Plan, or ConPlan, combines all of the planning, application and performance requirements previously required separately for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME, Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG), Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS (HOPWA) and programs such as HOME that require a Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS).

Continuum of Care (CoC)- A strategic community-based plan that addresses homelessness and serves as an application to HUD for McKinney Homeless Assistance resources. See also McKinney or McKinney-Vento.

Cooperative- Organization owned by its members.

CRA- Community Reinvestment Act.

Credit History- shows how well a person has paid past debt.

Credit Report- A record of your debts and payments compiled by credit bureaus. Credit bureaus gather this information from credit card companies, banks, department stores, and other firms.

Credit Union- Not-for-profit financial institution typically formed by employees of a company, a labor union, or a religious group and operated as a cooperative. Credit unions may offer a full range of financial services and pay higher rates on deposits and charge lower rates on loans than commercial banks. Federally chartered credit unions are regulated and insured by the National Credit Union Administration.

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Demand-side policies- Are policies that address housing affordability challenges by increasing individuals' purchasing power. For example, the federal government provides Section 8 housing choice vouchers to individual households to enable them to afford the costs of private-market rental homes. Supply-side policies, by contrast, seek to directly expand the supply of affordable homes – usually through subsidies to enable developers to build or rehabilitate affordable homes. (Housingpolicy.org Glossary of terms)

Development Subsidy- occurs when the construction, acquisition or rehabilitation of a building is subsidized and some amount of rent or operating assistance is available to assure the housing is affordable to low-income households. (Housingpolicy.org Glossary of terms)

Disabled Individual- A person with a physical, mental, developmental or emotional impairment that is expected to be of indefinite duration, that substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently, and that is of such a nature that the ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions.

Discharge Planning Work Group- A workgroup of the ICCHP. The DPWG is drafting a statewide discharge policy strategy aimed at reducing the number of persons discharged from public funded systems (e.g., state psychiatric hospitals, jails, prisons, foster care) into homelessness.

Discretionary Spending- Budget authority, other than appropriated entitlements, and ensuing outlays provided in annual appropriations acts. The Budget Resolution sets limits or caps on discretionary budget authority and outlays.

Down Payment- A portion of the buyer's own funds put towards purchase of a home. Down payments may come from buyers' savings accounts, checking accounts, stocks and bonds, life insurance policies, and gifts.

Doubled Up- A situation in which persons are living with relatives or friends on a temporary basis for economic reasons, and they have a host/guest relationship. These persons are not on a lease or mortgage and could be asked to leave at any time. This does not include legal arrangements such as foster care.

Earmarks- Appropriations that are dedicated for a specific, particular purpose. The funding of the Community Development Fund typically has earmarks as part of the Economic Development Initiative.

Escrow Account- An account where a portion of your mortgage payment is held to cover realestate taxes, homeowner's insurance, and mortgage insurance (if applicable).

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Employer-Assisted Housing- Employer assisted housing is housing assistance provided by employers for their workers or the broader community. A growing number of employers are extending employer assisted housing benefits to their workers by providing grants or loans to assist with downpayments (for homebuyers) or security deposits (for renters), offering homeownership education and counseling, and investing in the development of affordable homes in the community. (from Housingpolicy.org glossary of terms)

ESG—Emergency Shelter Grant- federal dollars funded through the McKinney-Vento Act. These dollars are a block grant and are administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity within the NC Department of Health and Human Services. The funds may be used for operating expenses, services and homelessness prevention.

Existing Homeowner- An owner-occupant who holds legal title to residential property and used as his/her principal residence.

Extremely Low Income- Household income below 30 percent of area median, as defined by HUD.

Fair Market Rent- HUD's estimate of the actual market rent for a modest apartment in the conventional marketplace. Fair market rents include utility costs (except for telephones). Every year HUD develops and publishes FMRs for every MSA and apartment type. FMRs are currently established at the 40th percentile rent, the top of the range that renters pay for 40 percent of the apartments being surveyed, with the exception of some high-cost jurisdictions, where it is set at the 50th percentile.

FDIC—Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation- Federal agency established in 1933 that guarantees (within limits) funds on deposit in member banks and thrift institutions and performs other functions such as making loans to or buying assets from member institutions to facilitate mergers or prevent failures.

Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation—(Freddie Mac)- Publicly chartered enterprise that buys qualifying residential mortgages from lenders, packages them into new securities backed by those pooled mortgages, provides certain guarantees, and then resells the securities on the open market. Like Fannie Mae, the corporation's activity has helped to create an enormous secondary market, which provides more funds for mortgage lending and allows investors to buy high-yielding securities backed up by implied federal guarantees. The corporation was established in 1970.

Federal Housing Administration (FHA)- Federally sponsored agency that insures lenders against loss on residential mortgages. It was founded in 1934 in response to the Great Depression to execute the provisions of the National Housing Act. FHA is a division of HUD.

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Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Insurance- Predominant vehicle by which the federal government stimulates new housing production. When a mortgage is FHA-insured, the federal government promises to buy it from the lender at full value if there is any default.

Federal Housing Finance Board (FHFB)- Federal agency created by Congress in 1989 to assume oversight of the Federal Home Loan Bank System from the dismantled Federal Home Loan Bank Board.

Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae)- Publicly owned, government-sponsored corporation established in 1938 to purchase both government-backed and conventional mortgages from lenders and securitize them. Its objective is to increase the affordability of home mortgage funds for low-, moderate- and middle-income home buyers. Fannie Mae is a Congressionally chartered, shareholder-owned company and the largest source of home mortgage funds in the United States. Because of its closeness to the federal government, which is perceived to back the obligations of Fannie Mae with an implicit guarantee, its securities are considered second in safety only to those of the United States Treasury.

Federal Reserve Board (FRB)- Governing board of the Federal Reserve System. Its seven members are appointed by the President of the United States, subject to Senate confirmation and serve 14-year terms. The Board establishes Federal Reserve System policies on such key matters as reserve requirements and other bank regulations, sets the discount rates and tightens or loosens the availability of credit in the economy.

Federal Reserve System- System established by the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 to regulate the U.S. monetary and banking system. The Federal Reserve System ("the Fed") consists of 12 regional Federal Reserve Banks, their 24 branches and all national and state banks that are part of the system. National banks are stockholders of the Federal Reserve Bank in their region. The Federal Reserve System's main functions are to regulate the national money supply, set reserve requirements for member banks, supervise the printing of currency at the mint, act as clearinghouse for the transfer of funds throughout the banking system, and examine member banks' compliance with Federal Reserve regulations

Federal Savings And Loan Association- Federally chartered institution with a primary responsibility to collect people's savings deposits and to provide mortgage loans for residential housing. Federal Saving and Loans may be owned either by stockholders, who can trade their shares on stock exchanges, or by depositors, in which case the associations are considered mutual organizations. Federal Savings and Loans are members of the Federal Home Loan Bank System. After deregulation, S&Ls expanded into non-housing related financial services such as discount stock brokerage, financial planning, credit cards and consumer loans.

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Financial Institution- An organization that collects funds from the public to place in financial assets such as stocks, bonds, money market instruments, bank deposits or loans. Depository institutions (banks, saving and loans, saving banks, credit unions) pay interest on deposits and invest to the deposit money mostly in loans. Nondepository institutions (insurance companies, pension plans) collect money by selling insurance policies or receiving employer contributions and pay it out for legitimate claims or for retirement benefits. Increasingly, many institutions are performing both depository and nondepository functions.

Fiscal Year- The accounting period for the budget. The fiscal year for the federal government begins on October 1 and ends the next September 30. The fiscal year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends; for example, fiscal year 2010 begins on October 1, 2009, and ends on September 30, 2010.

FMHA- Farmers Home Administration, now called Rural Development and part of USDA.

FMR- Fair Market Rent – How much HUD is willing to pay for a rental unit, which is just below the average rent for a region (actually calculated at the 40th percentile). Fair Market Rents include the cost of utilities (excluding telephone), ranges and refrigerators and all maintenance, management and other services that would be required to be paid in order to rent privately owned, decent, safe and sanitary rental housing of a modest nature with suitable amenities in a given market area. Landlords within an urban setting may feel that the fair market rent is too low, because the region would include rural areas surrounding the urban area, and the average in those communities might be lower, which would pull down the regional average. The fair market rent is set by HUD and published in the Federal Register.

Foreclosure- Process by which a homeowner who has not made timely payments of principal and interest on a mortgage loses title to the home. The holder of the mortgage, whether it be a bank, a savings and loan, or an individual must go to court to seize the property, which may then be sold to satisfy the claims of the mortgage. The repossession of a manufactured home is not considered a foreclosure unless the title has been converted to real estate (original title comes from the NCDMV).

Foreclosure Prevention- Assistance provided to help struggling homeowners avoid a foreclosure and possibly retain their home. Foreclosure prevention programs often include counseling and financial assistance. (from the Housingpolicy.org Glossary of Terms).

FY- Fiscal Year.

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Gaps Analysis- A community's analysis of its homeless service delivery system — what housing and services are available, what's needed and what the gaps are in that system. The gaps analysis is usually completed by the Continuum of Care and is part of the annual competitive application for federal HUD dollars.

Green Building- refers to a set of building design and construction practices that seek to reduce a building's environmental impacts by improving energy efficiency and indoor air quality, reducing water use and consumption, choosing sustainable building materials, and situating the home in a manner that takes advantage of sunlight and other natural amenities. (from Housingpolicy.org Glossary of Terms).

Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae-Agency Of HUD)- Ginnie Mae guarantees payment on mortgage-backed, pass-through securities, which represent pools of residential mortgages insured or guaranteed by the FHA, the Veterans Administration or the Rural Housing Service, which has taken over some of the functions of the Farmer's Home Administration.

Government Sponsored Enterprise (GSE)- An enterprise established by the federal government but privately owned and operated. These enterprises are excluded from the budget totals because they are classified as private entities. However, financial information concerning them is included in the budget. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are GSEs, as are the Federal Home Loan Banks. Because of its closeness to the federal government, which is perceived to back the obligations of Fannie Mae with an implicit guarantee, its securities are considered second in safety only to those of the United States Treasury.

Guaranteed Loan- Loan in which a private lender is assured repayment by the federal government of part or all of the principal or interest, or both, in the event of a default by the borrower. Unlike an insured loan, no insurance fund exists and no insurance premiums are paid.

HAMFI- HUD Adjusted Family Median Incomes are estimated incomes for a family of four. They vary by family size and by metropolitan area or by non-metropolitan county. The income for the non-metropolitan part of the state is used instead of the non-metropolitan county, where the state income is higher. The income figures are adjusted for high-rent and low-income areas. The income figures were based on the same period of time and same metropolitan area definitions as were used in the 1990 Census.

Harm Reduction Model- A model of services better known in Europe. The Harm Reduction Model focuses on minimizing damage that occurs to individuals while they are homeless so that when their circumstances change it is easier to make a transition back into the mainstream. This model is particularly used with persons who are in active addiction, or who have a mental illness with symptoms that lead an individual away from treatment. Many street outreach programs are harm reduction projects.

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HECM- Home Equity Conversion Mortgage.

HMIS- Homeless Management Information System — A system communities use to determine an unduplicated count of persons being served within the homeless service network. HMIS can also be used to provide aggregate information about homeless persons and homeless services to assist in policy development. The system can also be used to facilitate streamlined case management and information & referral between agencies working with the same program participant(s). HMIS is a congressional mandate that has no designated funding source, though communities may choose to use service dollars available from HUD to pay for their HMIS.

HOME- Established by Congress in 1990, this federal program is designed to expand the supply of decent affordable housing for low- and very low-income families and individuals. HOME funds are provided each year by HUD to states and localities, which determine how the funds are spent. HOME funds may be used for: tenant-based rental assistance; assistance to homebuyers; property acquisition; new construction; rehabilitation; site improvements; demolition; relocation; and administrative costs. (from Housingpolicy.org)

HOPE VI- Is a federal program designed to revitalize distressed public housing through demolition and reconstruction. HOPE VI grants are made to public housing authorities based on a competition administered by HUD. Many HOPE VI developments include households with a mix of incomes and provide supportive services.

Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA)- Legislation requiring "most financial institutions and mortgage lenders that make mortgage loans home improvement loans, or home refinance loans to collect and disclose information about their lending practices." (HUD's Glossary of Terms.)

Homeless—The HUD definition is:
(a) An individual or family which lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; or
(b) An individual or family which has a primary nighttime residence that is:
(1) A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters and transitional housing for persons with mental illness).
(2) An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized.
(3) A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
(4) The term does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to an Act of Congress or a State law.
    The Departments of Education and Health and Human Services include being doubled-up in their definition of homelessness. HUD only includes double-ups in the case of families fleeing domestic violence.

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HOPWA- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. These dollars are administered through the NCAIDS Care Office. They are competitively awarded to regional consortia to provide housing assistance to persons who are HIV+ or who have AIDS.

Homeowner's Insurance- An insurance policy that includes personal liability insurance in case someone is injured on the property, personal property coverage for loss of and damage to personal property due to theft or other events, and dwelling coverage to protect the house against fire, theft, weather damage and other hazards. If the home you want to buy is located near water, you may be able to get flood insurance as part of your homeowner's protection. Flood insurance may be required in some areas. Check withyour real estate professional or lender for further information. Lenders may require payment of the first year's premium at or before closing. Lenders may add the insurance cost to monthly mortgage payments and keep this portion of payment in an escrow account. Lenders pay the insurance bill out of escrow when premium notices from the insurance company are received.

Household- a loosely defined term that can vary depending on project management, and refers to family members and others who live under the same roof.

Housing Costs- The costs of occupying housing. Calculated on a monthly basis, housing costs for renters include "contract rent, utilities, property insurance, mobile home park fee." For owners, monthly housing costs are "the sum of monthly payments for all mortgages or installment loans or contracts, except reverse annuity mortgages and home equity lines of credit. Costs also include real estate taxes (including taxes on manufactured/mobile homes, and manufactured or mobile home sites if the site is owned), property insurance, homeowner association fees, cooperative or condominium fees, mobile home park fees, land rent, utilities."

Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)- a federally funded housing assistance program administered by local Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) or other administering agencies in which very low-income households receive vouchers to help cover housing expenses. See also *Section 8 Vouchers*.

Housing Finance Agency- State agency responsible for financing housing and administering assisted housing programs.

Housing First, Housing Plus- A new model of homeless services that involves moving persons directly from the streets and placing them into permanent housing accompanied by intensive services. Initially a research project, this model has been shown to be very effective with chronically homeless persons and cost-neutral to communities. This model has also been shown to work well with homeless families and with homeless young adults.

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Housing Problems- Households with housing problems include those that lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities, are overcrowded (i.e., with more than one person per room), and/or pay more than 30 percent of gross income for total housing expenses.

Housing Starts- Indicator of residential construction activity monitored by the Department of Commerce. Housing starts represent the start of construction of a house or apartment building, which means the digging of the foundation. Other categories are housing permits, housing completions and new home sales.

HUD- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

ICCHP—Interagency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs (NC)- This council has been appointed by the Governor since 1992. The Council is to advise the Governor and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services on issues of homelessness. The Council's members include representatives from various state agencies as well as state legislators, homeless service providers, formerly homeless persons, local government representatives and advocates. The Council is currently developing the NC 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness.

ICH—The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness- The federal Interagency Council coordinates the efforts of its 20 federal member agencies. The ICH was re-energized under the current administration and is challenging states and communities to develop 10-year plans to end homelessness. The ICH has also focused specific attention on discharge planning as homelessness prevention as well as Housing First, Housing Plus as a successful program model for working with chronically homeless persons.

IHA- Indian Housing Authority.

Inclusionary zone- A requirement or incentive to reserve a specific percentage of units in new residential developments for moderate-income households. (from Housingpolicy.org Glossary of Terms)

In-kind Services- When program participants, or residents, of Agency A receive services from Agency B, and Agency B is not charging Agency A to provide the services, those services are called In-Kind Services. The value of those services can be used as matching resources for some federal and community grants. In-kind services may also be provided by individual volunteers.

Inspector General- HUD official appointed by the President who is "responsible for conducting audits and investigations of HUD's programs and operations." (HUD's Glossary of Terms.)

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Insured Loan- Loan in which a private lender is assured repayment by the federal government of part or all of the principal or interest, or both, and for which the borrower pays insurance premiums.

Key Program- provides rent/operating assistance for persons with disabilities living in Housing Credit properties.

Lead-Based Paint Hazard- Any condition that causes exposure to lead from lead-contaminated dust, lead-contaminated soil, lead-contaminated paint that is deteriorated or present in accessible surfaces, friction surfaces or impact surfaces that would result in adverse human health effects. See also *Abatement*.

Leveraging Funds- If a grant, say from HUD, is used to partially fund a project or program, the remaining dollars used to fund that project or program are called leveraged funds.

Leveraging- The maximization of the effect of federal assistance for a project by obtaining additional project funding from nonfederal sources.

LIHPP—Low-Income Housing Preservation Program- In 1990, Congress enacted a federal preservation program designed to preserve federally assisted housing as affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households by providing financial incentives to owners and financing purchases by nonprofits and tenant organizations. Currently, owners must give 150 days advance notice of prepayment. While the Title VI Low-Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act ("LIHPRHA") has not been repealed, Congress short-funded the program beginning in 1996 and zero-funded the program in FY '98, and this trend has continued up to the present, limiting its funding to replacement vouchers. For more information see: HUD Housing Programs: Tenants' Rights and 1998 Supplement, Sec. 15.3.1.

LIHTC—(Low-Income Housing Tax Credit)- A federal tax credit awarded to developers of multifamily or senior housing by the Housing Finance Agency. Credits are sold to developers and the receipts used reduce the development costs of the project.

Loan Management Set Aside (LMSA)- A form of Section 8 used to support properties that need assistance, either to alleviate resident rent hardship or to prevent high vacancy and potential default. Originally created in 1976, LMSA has been allocated annually thereafter.

Loan Origination Fee- A fee sometimes called a "point" or "points" that covers the lender's administrative costs of processing the loan. Often expressed as a percentage of the loan, the fee varies across lenders. Generally, the buyer pays the fee.

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Low Income- As applied to most housing programs, household income below 80 percent of metropolitan area median, as defined by HUD, is classified as low income. See also *EXTREMELY LOW INCOME, VERY LOW INCOME.*

Low-Income Households- Households whose incomes do not exceed 80 percent of the median income for the area as determined by HUD. See also *Median Income.*

Manufactured Home- A housing type that is wholly or substantially built in a factory and then delivered to the building site for final assembly and installation. [1].

Mark-To-Market- The process of reducing above-market rents to market levels. In ordinary usage, this means HUD recognizing defaults on FHA-insured mortgages, paying the mortgage claims, and restructuring the remaining available debt service into a new mortgage.

Market Rate Rental Housing- privately owned housing that rents at whatever the owner or landlord deems reasonable, which is usually dictated by the market or local economy, and varies by location.

Matching Funds- These are leveraged funds that are required for certain grants. It is not uncommon for a grant to require 20 percent to 25 percent matching funds.

McKinney or McKinney-Vento- The federal funds for homeless programs. The McKinney-Vento act was passed in 1987. Funding is administered through five federal departments. Some funding goes through states, but most of it, especially the HUD funding, goes directly to local communities through nationally competitive grant applications.

Median Income- That income level at which an equal number of families/households have incomes above the level as below. The median income is based on a distribution of the incomes of all families/households including those with no income.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)- The basic census unit for defining urban areas and rental markets.

Mixed- Income- A type of development that includes families at various income levels. Mixed-income developments are intended to promote deconcentration of poverty and give lower-income households access to improved amenities. (from Housingpolicy.org Glossary of Terms)

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Mixed Use- A type of development that combines various uses, such as office, commercial, institutional, and residential, in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development project with significant functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design. (from Housingpolicy.org Glossary of Terms)

Moderate Housing Problem- As used in this Guide and by HUD, moderate problems consist of cost burden above 30 percent but not over 50 percent of income, occupancy of housing with moderate physical problems, or overcrowding (more than one person per room).

Moderate-Income Households- Households whose incomes are between 81percent and 95 percent of the median income for the area. see also Median Income

Mortgage Banker- Company, or individual, that originates mortgage loans, sells them to other investors, services the monthly payments, keeps related records and acts as escrow agent to disperse funds for taxes and insurance. A mortgage banker's income derives from origination and servicing fees, profits on the resale of loans and the spread between mortgage yields and the interest paid on borrowings while a particular mortgage is held before resale.

Mortgage Credit Certificate- is a federal tax credit authorized by Congress to assist home buyers with moderate and low incomes.

Mortgage Insurance- Generally, if down payment is less than 20% of the purchase price of the home, mortgage insurance is required. Mortgage insurance is issued by a private company or by a government agency such as the Federal Housing Administration. Lenders may require payment of the first year's premium at closing, but there are mortgage insurance products that do not require a lump-sum payment at closing.

Mortgage Interest Deduction- Federal tax deduction for mortgage interest paid in a taxable year. Interest on a mortgage to acquire, construct or substantially improve a residence is deductible for indebtedness of up to $1 million.

Mortgage- Debt instrument by which the borrower (mortgagor) gives the lender (mortgagee) a lien on property as security for the repayment of a loan. The borrower has use of the property, and the lien is removed when the obligation is fully paid. A mortgage normally involves real estate and is commonly used to purchase a house.

Move In Costs- additional costs that must be paid before moving into housing, and can include such fees as security and utility deposits.

MRB- Mortgage Revenue Bond.

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MSA- Metropolitan Statistical Area- A region dominated by one or more urban areas. Can contain more than one county.

NAEH- National Alliance to End Homelessness. A national advocacy group that has been the driving advocates force behind the 10-year plans to end homelessness.

NAMI- National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. A national advocates group with a state chapter and local chapters throughout our state.

NCCEH- North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness. A NC advocacy and public education organization that has been championing the NC Plan to End Homelessness.

NCH- National Coalition for the Homeless. Another national homeless advocacy organization that has been very supportive of North Carolina, participating in almost all of our homeless conferences.

NCHFA—North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. A quasi-governmental agency that administers some federal dollars, the state's Housing Trust Fund, mortgage bond program, and both federal and state tax credit projects.

NIMBY—Not In My Back Yard. The opposition that many affordable housing projects face when siting a development. This energy intensifies if the persons to live in the development have any disability, special needs, or criminal history.

NOFA—Notice of Funding Availability. An announcement that funders send out to let communities know about available funds. The NOFA includes the application and other information that communities need to know about how to apply for funds. Federal NOFAs are published in the Federal Register.

Obligation- An order placed, contract awarded, service received or similar transaction that will require payment.

OEO—Office of Economic Opportunity, within the NC Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of Economic Opportunity administers the federal pot of money called Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG).

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Office Of Thrift Supervision (OTS)- Agency of the U.S. Treasury Department created by the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act of 1989 (FIRREA). The OTS replaced the disbanded Federal Home Loan Bank Board and assumed regulatory responsibility for the nation's saving and loan industry. The legislation empowered OTS to institute new regulations, charter new federal savings and loan association and federal saving banks, and supervise all savings institutions and their holding companies.

Outlays- Payments made (usually through the issuance of checks or disbursement of cash) to liquidate obligations. Outlays during a fiscal year may be for payment of obligations incurred in the previous year or in the same year.

PATH—Projects for Assistance in the Transition from Homelessness – another funding stream of the McKinney-Vento Act targeting assistance to homeless persons. These dollars are administered by the Division of Mental Health within the NC Department of Health and Human Services. Grantees have been area mental health programs.

Payment Standard- The amount used to determine how much rent a housing authority will pay monthly to subsidize a voucher holder, expressed as a percentage of the Fair Market Rent. The payment standard must be at least 80 percent of the FMR.

Performance Funding System- A system developed by HUD for analyzing costs of operating public housing developments, used as the basis for calculating the need for operating subsidies.

PHA—Public Housing Authority

Physical Problems- According to the definitions used for the 2001 American Housing Survey, "a unit has severe physical problems if it has any of the following five problems: Plumbing. Lacking hot or cold piped water or a flush toilet, or lacking both bathtub and shower, all inside the structure (and for the exclusive use of the unit, unless there are two or more full bathrooms). Heating. Having been uncomfortably cold last winter for 24 hours or more because the heating equipment broke down, and it broke down at least three times last winter for at least 6 hours each time. Electric. Having no electricity, or all of the following three electric problems: exposed wiring, a room with no working wall outlet, and three blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers in the last 90 days. Hallways. Having all of the following four problems in public areas: no working light fixtures, loose or missing steps, loose or missing railings, and no working elevator. Upkeep. Having any five of the following six maintenance problems: (1) water leaks from the outside, such as from the roof, basement, windows, or doors; (2) leaks from inside structure such as pipes or plumbing fixtures; (3) holes in the floors; (4) holes or open cracks in the walls or ceilings; (5) more than 8 inches by 11 inches of peeling paint or broken plaster; or (6) signs of rats in the last 90 days."

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Physical Problems Cont.- A housing unit has moderate physical problems "if it has any of the following five problems, but none of the severe problems: Plumbing. On at least three occasions during the last three months, all the flush toilets were broken down at the same time for six hours or more…. Heating. Having unvented gas, oil, or kerosene heaters as the primary heating equipment. Kitchen. Lacking a kitchen sink, refrigerator, or cooking equipment (stove, burners, or microwave oven) inside the structure for the exclusive use of the unit. Hallways. Having any three of the four problems [considered severe physical problems under Hallways]. Upkeep. Having any three or four of the six problems listed [considered severe physical problems under Upkeep]."

PIT—Point-In-Time Count. A community's effort to determine how many people are homeless on a given night. The Point-in-Time Count usually includes, at a minimum, the number of persons who are staying in residential programs on that night but frequently also includes some attempt at a street count. Since the count is done on one night, there is a guarantee of no duplication.

Portfolio Re-Engineering—Another term for mark-to-market, intended to recognize that the issues involved are not purely financial but also involve repositioning the properties, rethinking their regulatory structure and reducing HUD's workload.

Prepayment Penalty—A fee that may be levied for repayment of a loan before it falls due.

Preservation- The act of saving housing from losing its affordability or the prevention of building from being destroyed.

Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)- program where rental assistance is tied to a particular building, or particular units within a larger development, that is owned and operated by private for profit or non-profit entities.

Property Based Vouchers- These housing assistance vouchers provide rental assistance to qualified households living within a housing complex. All qualified renters within that complex would pay only 30 percent of their income for housing and utility costs. The voucher would cover the remaining housing expenses.

Public Housing Agencies (PHAs)- organizations that contract with the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development to administer the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) at the state or local level. Some of these agencies are also *Public Housing Authorities*.

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Public Housing Authorities- organizations created by state law to provide subsidized housing and own and operate public housing units. Within broad federal rules PHAs have flexibility to operate their programs to best meet local needs. Examples of this flexibility include whether the PHA will establish preferences for certain populations, how they set their payment standards, etc. Policies and procedures must be documented in the PHA Administrative Plan.

Public Housing Plan (PHA Plan)- A 5-year comprehensive document that describes a Public Housing Agency's over-all mission for serving low-income and very low-income families and the activities that will be undertaken to meet the housing needs of these households.

Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP)- An annual strategic housing plan describing how the Low-Income Housing tax Program will be utilized to meet the housing needs and priorities of the state. See also *LIHTC*.

Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA)- As defined by HUD, "a consumer protection statute first passed in 1974. The purposes of RESPA are (1) to help consumers become better shoppers for settlement services and (2) to eliminate kickbacks and referral fees that unnecessarily increase the costs of certain settlement services." HUD enforces RESPA. HUD's efforts to update RESPA have met with concern and controversy in Congress and are currently stalled.

Reconciliation Bill- A bill containing changes in law recommended by House or Senate committees pursuant to reconciliation instructions in a budget resolution.

Redlining- A discriminatory and illegal practice in which financial institutions deny mortgages and other types of financing to residents of predominantly poor or minority neighborhoods, without regard to individual creditworthiness. (from Housingpolicy.org Glossary of Terms).

Rental Application- a form or forms that landlords require prospective tenants to complete to provide information about the tenant's income, credit history, rental history, and criminal background.

Rental Assistance- A subsidy covering the difference between Fair Market Rent and 30 percent of an eligible household's income. See also *Fair Market Rent*.

Rezoning- The process and action of reclassifying a parcel, parcels or geographic area from one zone classification to a new zone classification. Some localities have expanded the supply of housing by rezoning land from industrial use to residential use. (from Housingpolicy.org Glossary of Terms)

RMC- Resident Management Corporation.

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Rural- As used in this Resource Book, areas that are not urbanized. The Census Bureau defines an urbanized area as "an incorporated place and adjacent densely settled (1.6 or more people per acre) surrounding area that together have a minimum population of 50,000."

S+C—Shelter Plus Care- This is a specific program that is part of the HUD McKinney-Vento funds. It is rental assistance for persons with disabilities. The rental assistance allows individuals to live in permanent housing, and the match for the rental assistance is provided in services to the residents. In NC these funds have primarily been used to assist homeless persons with mental illness or homeless persons who are HIV positive.

Safe Haven- A facility that provides shelter and services to hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who are on the street and have been unable or unwilling to participate in supportive services. Safe Havens usually follow a "harm reduction" model of services.

Savings and Loan Association- Depository financial institution, federally or state chartered, that obtains the bulk of its deposits from consumers and holds the majority of its assets as home mortgage loans. In 1989, responding to a massive wave of insolvencies caused by mismanagement, corruption and economic factors, Congress passed a savings and loan "bailout bill" that revamped the regulatory structure of the industry under a newly created agency, the Office of Thrift Supervision.

Savings Bank- Depository financial institution that primarily accepts consumer deposits and makes home mortgage loans. Historically, savings banks were of the mutual (depositor-owned) form and chartered in only 16 states; the majority of savings banks were located in the New England states, New York and New Jersey.

Second Mortgage- An additional mortgage that has a lien (legal claim) position subordinate to the first mortgage. A second mortgage often represents the difference between the price of the house and first mortgage plus the down payment. When offered through affordable housing programs, this is sometimes referred to as a 'soft second' mortgage.

Section 8 Vouchers- These are vouchers that provide rental assistance. A household with a voucher usually has to pay only 30 percent of their income for rental and utilities. The voucher covers the remaining housing costs. This program is funded by HUD and usually administered by local housing authorities. The average waiting list, nationally, is two years.

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Severe Housing Problems- As used by HUD in defining priorities, severe housing problems are homelessness, displacement, housing cost burden above 50 percent of income, occupancy of housing with serious physical problems. Data on severe housing problems drawn from the American Housing Survey measures only cost burden and physical problems.

Shelter- Housing, usually with services, for homeless persons. Emergency Shelter is usually thought to last for 6 months or less, although among the chronically homeless population, there are some persons who reside in "emergency shelter" for years.

Shared Housing- a living situation in which housing costs are shared between roommate(s).

Special Needs- The primary populations include the elderly, persons with severe mental illness, the developmentally disabled, the physically disabled, persons with alcohol and/or drug addiction, and persons with AIDS/HIV.

SPMI—Severe and Persistent Mental Illness. Persons who have a mental health diagnosis that meets the criteria for disability. For the most part, but not exclusively, these are psychotic mental illnesses. These are mental illnesses that significantly interfere with an individual's ability to negotiate daily living functions.

SRO—Single Room Occupancy. Permanent housing, usually in efficiency apartments. Similar to old style boarding houses, though usually with services available. (Bathrooms and kitchen facilities may or may not be shared.) Is frequently a successful housing model for single persons.

SSDI—Social Security Disability Insurance.

SSI—Supplemental Security Income. Monthly financial payments to persons with disabilities. Currently, the benefit is $674 per month. For most persons on SSI, this is their only source of income and thus, severely limits housing options.

Subsidized Housing—Housing that has financial support to make it more affordable to lower income households. That financial subsidy may come in the form of funds to off-set development or pre-development costs, or assistance to pay for rental or operating subsidies.

Subsidy-A financial incentive provided in the form of a direct payment or tax relief to the housing developer, property owner, or individual renter.

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Substandard Housing- Housing units that lack complete plumbing, kitchen facilities, or have at least five basic maintenance problems, as defined by the US Bureau of Census.

SuperNOFA- HUD's yearly Notice of Funding Availability, announcing the annual competitive funds available for programs serving homeless persons. These funds include Shelter Plus Care (rental assistance for persons with disabilities), Supportive Housing (permanent or transitional housing development for families or persons with disabilities) and SRO Moderate Rehab (rental assistance to assist with financing renovation of facilities to be used for single room occupancy units). North Carolina drew down roughly $11 M in these funds last year.

Supply-side- Policies- seek to increase the supply of affordable homes. Government agencies may either add to the housing stock directly, such as by building public housing, or may provide incentives for private developers to produce more homes – for example, through the low-income housing tax credit. Efforts to reduce regulatory barriers to the development or rehabilitation of housing also operate on the supply-side of the equation; such efforts promote housing affordability by freeing the market to better respond to increases in housing demand. (from Housingpolicy.org, Glossary of Terms)

Supported or Supportive Housing- Permanent housing with services. The type of services depends on the needs of the residents. Services may be short term, sporadic or ongoing indefinitely. The housing is usually "affordable," or intended to serve persons who are on an SSI income – which is $674/month.

Supportive Services- Services such as case management, medical or psychological counseling and supervision, child care, transportation and job training provided for the purpose of facilitating the independence of residents.

TA- Technical Assistance.

Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF)- Block grant to states administered under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which established a new welfare system. The TANF block grant replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The chief feature of TANF was the abolition of a federal entitlement to cash assistance. TANF was due for reauthorization in 2003, but as of early April 2004, such reauthorization had yet to be enacted.

Tenant Based Vouchers- These are housing vouchers that travel with the household. A household with a tenant-based voucher can use that voucher in any qualified rental property with a willing landlord.

Title- A legal document evidencing a person's right to or ownership of a property.

Glossary
OF TERMS

Title Insurance- Insurance that protects the lender (lender's policy) or the buy (owner's policy) against losses arising from defects in the title not listed in the tital report or abstract.

Title Search- A check of the public records to ensure that the seller is the legal owner of the property and to identify any liens or claims against the property.

Transitional Housing- Usually thought of as temporary supported housing – housing with services – where individuals or families live for between six months and two years. During that time they receive intensive case management services that prepare the household for independent living.

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)- The federal agency which administers the majority of federal housing programs and which develops national housing policy.

Very Low Income- Household income below 50 percent of area median, as defined by HUD.

Voucher- A government payment to, or on behalf of, a household, to be used solely to pay a portion of the household's housing costs in the private market. Vouchers are considered tenant-based assistance because they are not typically connected to a particular property or unit (although they may be "project-based" in some cases) but are issued to a tenant.

Worst-Case Housing Problems—Unsubsidized very low-income renter households with severe housing problems. HUD is required to submit a periodic report to Congress on worst-case housing problems.

Zoning Codes- Local codes regulating the use and development of property. Zoning ordinances typically divide a community into land use districts or "zones," represented on zoning maps, and specify the allowable uses within each of those zones. For example, some communities divide land into industrial zones, commercial zones, and one or more residential zones. Some zones also may permit a mix of uses. Zoning codes establish development standards for each zone, such as minimum lot sizes, maximum heights of structures, building setbacks, and yard sizes. Overly rigid zoning codes that don't allow for multifamily homes or higher density development may present obstacles to affordable homes. (from Housingpolicy.org, Glossary of Terms)