

Coos County Comprehensive Plan – Housing (Proposed Replacement Language)

5.17 HOUSING

Problem/Opportunity Statement

As a result of the loss of extractive resource industries in Coos County in the 1980s and the inability the region to transition to a new economic structure, wages have decreased significantly and the unincorporated areas of Coos County have gradually declined in population. There has been very little investment in housing infrastructure and the cost to develop housing in the County remains high due to a lack of qualified trades people and high transport costs for building materials to the region. More recently, most of the housing that has been constructed is unaffordable to all but the wealthiest 1/3rd of households or is primarily dedicated to the vacation rental market. Workforce housing, attainable to households earning less than 100% AMI, is not being constructed due to high construction costs and low wages in the County.

ISSUES

1. Coos County has not been able to recover from the loss of resource intensive industries. Population is declining in rural Coos County; an issue that is complicated by an aging residential base.
2. The cost of housing has increased significantly in the County. This is not the result of increased demand but rather limited supply; relatively, very little housing has been built or replaced over the past couple of decades.
3. The cost of housing is more than the median household in the County can afford.
4. New housing has been curtailed by the loss of the local construction industry and the high cost to transport construction materials to the County.
5. The vacation rental market is growing and its economic lure is driving homeowners to transfer primary homes or long term rental housing to meet the demands of this emerging market.

GOAL

Coos County must begin to look at housing as community infrastructure and invest in this infrastructure to ensure workforce housing (affordable to households earning 100% of AMI or less) is built within the County.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Create and Monetize a Housing Trust Fund (HTF)
 - a. Consider a County bond to support workforce housing development
2. Negotiate a Development Agreement with potential large developers to ensure the Construction of Long-term Workforce Housing

3. County Policy and Zoning/Land Use Approaches to Allow or Incentivize Workforce Housing:
 - a. Work with sanitation and water utilities to accept deferred payments for Service Development Charges;
 - b. Develop an ordinance to restrict Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) from being used as short term/vacation rental units.
 - c. Enact a Transient Lodge Tax (TLT) with a minimum of 50% of the funds used to monetize the proposed Housing Trust Fund
 - d. Review appropriate tax laws and when found appropriate, clean up properties that have been foreclosed upon by the County and donate to a Community Land Trust (CLT) for workforce housing construction.
 - e. Enact a construction excise tax in the amount of 1% to fund workforce housing projects and/or the proposed Housing Trust Fund.
4. Support an Employer Funded Housing Program
5. Support Indian Initiatives for Community Housing