

Tools for municipalities to address housing needs

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First steps:

- Conduct an analysis to determine need for housing
- Draft a robust and accurate housing component in the town plan
- Develop a vision for development and update zoning and subdivision bylaws to implement it

Non-Regulatory Tools

- Participate in Regional Planning – know what neighboring towns are doing
- Help identify important land within the community and identify opportunities for housing development or redevelopment.
- Consider donating or selling municipal land for housing development
- Strongly support housing projects throughout the development process
- Apply for VT Community Development Program funding for developers
- Promote accessory dwelling units (ADU)
- Create an active housing commission within the town charged with continual attention to the issue
- Create Housing Trust Fund
- Promote affordable homeownership through Shared Equity Model (via Community Land Trusts)
- Apply for state designation (Downtown, Neighborhood, etc.) to trigger incentives for the housing developer
- Help the community visualize density
- Set targets for the number of units or portion of housing stock affordable to low and moderate income households.

Regulatory Tools

When reviewing permit applications:

- Abide by stated density or “as of right development” in locations suitable for housing

When updating bylaws:

- Create/expand a density bonus for affordable housing or offer lot coverage and height bonuses
- Look closely at total local permitting costs for housing development and the impact on the price of housing
- Same with infrastructure requirements (roads, lighting, recreation, curbs)
- Consider timing of high cost plans and reviews
- Waive/reduce impact fees
- Be as flexible as possible with parking for housing and update outdated regulations
- Consider housing replacement/retention requirements
- Consider creating local rental codes, or local enforcement of state codes
- Adopt “on the record” review to reduce the cost of appeals for the developer
- Adopt Inclusionary Zoning (IZ)