



## Community Forum on Workforce Housing May 4, 2006

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Save Our Schools  
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Ashland Housing  
Commission

At this event participants worked to collectively come to an understanding of how the lack of Housing available to Ashland's workforce is impacting our community. To examine this complex issue six questions were asked of all participants. The following represents the raw comments received by the participants on one of the six questions. For the complete listing please go to [www.ashland.or.us/sospforum](http://www.ashland.or.us/sospforum) for links to each of the questions and all the comments received.

### Focus Group Question # 2:

#### What can the City do?

Listing of comments received:

- Rental Housing is ok, Denmark example
- Cost to build rentals is too high
- Limit lot size-reduced for smaller units
- City land available
  - parking lots
  - Utility yards
- \*Invest in people and families directly , those that are invested in the community
  - reduce utility taxes for low income
  - direct subsidy to individuals as opposed to housing projects or land
- Land availability
  - expansion of UGP with provision of land for affordable housing
  - INCREASE supply of land
  - School district land
- City could reduce service charges
  - Electric tax
  - Infrastructure
  - address very low income
- Clear set set of Goals (council)
- Accountability for performance
- Improve city/employer relationship
- Tax credit initiatives
- Zoning to allow higher density or increased height in all zones
- Set a goal, ie 1% of total housing stock
- City manager MUST introduce programs to create workforce housing. (not deep subsidy)
  - Ashland have its OWN HOUSING AUTHORITY or non profit entrepreneurship
  - partner with HAJC
  - FUND a vehicle for Development

- City mandate certain employees live in the City of Ashland
  - employ locals for city positions
- City property tax credits for the subsidy of affordable housing – for reduced rents (a break)
  - [for example a reduction in the property taxes for a % of rent reductions]
- Limit house sizes (maximum city wide)
- START A HOUSING TRUST FUND
  - -property tax benefits for donations/estate planning
- Waive System Development Charge for affordable housing (see existing program)
- City coordination with other political bodies, or private property owners, to develop available land
- Living wage ordinance expanded
- City supplied (owned) housing
- Promote industrial development
- Tax incentives for local businesses that provide assistance to their employees
- Community Development Grants
  - City could seek private and government grants.
- City could put on forums for residents – ie ABCs of home-buying
- Goal – diversity of housing choice (when asked whether rental or ownership was preferred)
- Offer incentives for newly employed residents to become invested in the community
  - low cost rent and assistance for first time homebuyers
- Incentives – reduce property taxes to promote young families with children
  - diversity of Ages is healthy
- Family friendly amenities (a culture of improved schools and parks) – people will sacrifice to be here.
- All new housing development has to be rentals (no single family residential)
- Do not permit condo-conversions
- Limits on demolitions – housing be replaced at the same income levels
- Co-Housing opportunities
  - zoning permissibility and flexible zoning to promote smaller units
- Air-rights
- Requirements for commercial annexations to provide property (air-rights) for affordable residential development.
- Aggressive recruitment of employees from higher cost markets.
- Shared equity ownership
  - Private investment pool where Individuals could buy into a affordable unit and capitalize on their percent of ownership
  - Create a mutual fund for individual investing in housing

- City owned small apartments with shared amenities (green-space, laundry, workout facilities etc) –inexpensive with the idea that people can save for future housing – or an eventual ownership of the apartment.
- Attract federal funding with creative programs
- Issue with those on the edge being priced out with city costs
- Economic development grants (OSF) could instead go to non profits that develop housing.
- New fee on businesses or rental property managers that goes to affordable housing)