

A shortage of housing affordable to workers of low-moderate-, and even above-median-incomes, is imposing substantial and harmful costs upon Ashland and increasingly Jackson County as a whole.



When people can't afford to live where they work, the entire community suffers.

Moderate income families are forced out of the area to lower priced regions. This has an impact on neighborhood stability and on our school systems. Lack of young families with children living in the community adversely impacts schools. As communities lose families with children, schools lose their funding base. Ashland has already experienced this directly having to close two elementary schools.

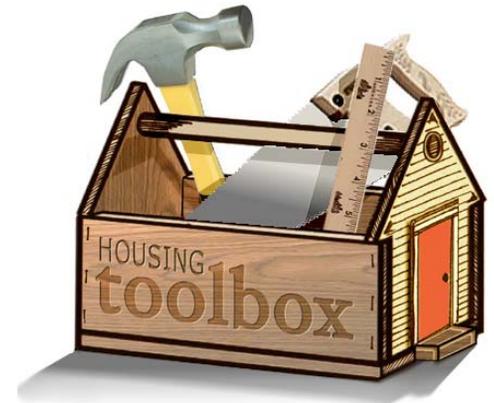
Business/economic development is impeded: Increased difficulty recruiting new employees; Increased difficulty retaining existing employees; Competitive disadvantage in recruiting new businesses to the region.

Safety personnel, such as police and fire, living out of the area experience an increased response time to emergencies or to provide back-up in a disaster

Residents have less disposable income to spend locally. Utilities, gas, and healthcare costs have all increased and wage rates have remained static. As housing costs escalate, trade-offs are made and health insurance and nutrition are usually sacrificed.

Children born in the region today aren't likely to remain in the region and buy a home here as adults. Those of us who are homeowners here may not have our children and grandchildren living nearby as prices make it prohibitive for young families to raise their families here.

Community Forum On WORKFORCE HOUSING



Date: May 4th, 2006

Time: 7:00-9:00pm

Location:

Ashland High School Library

Sponsored By:
**Save Our Schools and
Playgrounds
&
Ashland Housing
Commission**

Questions: Brandon Goldman at 552-2076 or
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When the cost of housing forces workers to live outside of Ashland, the sense of community is weakened. There is less community involvement and participation in community organizations as employees, who live far from their workplaces, are less likely to get involved in community organizations and activities.

Community involvement to address Ashland's Workforce Housing needs is vital to retaining the sense of community which is so highly valued by all of Ashland's residents.

Individual commitment to a group effort; that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work. – Vince Lombardi

Questions

The following questions will be addressed during the forum. With a focus on attendant participation this Community Forum will allow us to share solutions with one another to gain a better understanding of the challenges ahead.

How big is the problem?

What can the City do?

Where can we find the land?

How can employers help their workers live in Ashland?

Where can we find the money?

How can we build the political will?

What can each of us do to help?

“Workforce housing” has come to mean the gap facing those who may earn too much to qualify for affordable housing subsidies, but not enough to afford a home or an apartment.

“Workforce” housing can be targeted to low, medium or even relatively high income households depending on the community needs.

