



Affordable Housing – Are we attacking the project or the problem?

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Affordable Housing projects continue to be a hot topic as our City and County continues to evolve.

Acknowledging the housing challenges at hand

We are blessed that we are a community that is attracting significant investment. We are also blessed with a community that has concerned constituents who want to ensure that Lancaster is for all, and not just the wealthy. This is most evident almost every time a project of significant scale is introduced. While we can all agree that we need additional housing, and that there needs to be a concerted and intentional effort in securing affordable, low-income and mixed-income housing;

The challenge is we tend to attack projects versus the problem; we tend to identify targets versus tactics to affect change and we tend to punish those who want to invest in Lancaster versus pushing for tools to achieve our affordability goals.

At risk are important projects (many by right) to not only meet demand, but to support the tax base and local businesses. In terms of housing, with the market so tight, additional inventory is badly needed to assist in stabilizing housing costs. We are already seeing significant housing cost increases due to the lack of inventory. More importantly, this is happening across Lancaster. The more projects we stop, the more pent-up demand is created, the higher the pricing of existing inventory can go.

Recognizing that housing is the foundation for a thriving community

Housing is a basic human need, and when this need is not met, it doesn't just affect the individual, it affects our entire community. It is critical that our City and County's housing supply include options for all income levels, as this is an accelerator for our economy, contributes to the varied needs in our workforce, enhances the diversity in our schools, closes the wealth gap and expands access to affordable healthcare.

Limiting housing options results in unfavorable effects on every single person in our community whether you are a business owner, landlord, tenant, homeowner, homebuyer or seller. Housing is interconnected with the essential characteristics of a thriving community, to ensure employers can fill all levels of jobs within their business, people have access to transportation to get to their job, and all people have the choice to live in the neighborhood of their choosing.

Working together to drive solutions and affect change

The Coalition for Sustainable Housing is a diverse group* of organizations and individuals who collaborate, advocate and educate for housing solutions for everyone through the lens of sound planning and a long-term view toward our County's prosperity.



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More specifically, the Coalition is committed to:

- Raising awareness of our City and County's need for housing that is affordable across the spectrum of household incomes (both rental and for-sale housing)
- Advocating for state and federal tax subsidies so our affordable housing providers have financial support in building these critical homes
- Supporting planning initiatives and development projects that promote housing that is sustainable for our City and County's families and households, our economy, our business community, and our unique quality of life
- Advocating for increasing our housing stock in a way that promotes density, while preserving open space and farmland.
- Working with YOU, the public, to be FOR the next project or affordable housing build so we can unite together in the belief that all members of our community deserve a place to call home.

While the community is seeing progress, especially in Lancaster City, we know we have a long journey ahead. This is a complex issue that requires the attention of each and every person who can contribute their ideas, expertise and advocacy to identify tactics and deploy tools to activate productive change to ensure Lancaster County is thriving for future generations.

As our community continues to grow and evolve, it is critical that we engage in this conversation, understand more about the critical issues at hand, unlearn certain myths about affordable housing that are simply unfounded, and step up to be part of the solution so each and every person can work, live and play in our thriving Lancaster community for generations to come. Interested in joining us? We invite you to connect with us by visiting the Lancaster Coalition for Sustainable Housing's Facebook page.

***The Coalition for Sustainable Housing includes:**

- Housing non-profit organizations (Tenfold, HDC, Habitat for Humanity, etc.)
- Neighborhood Revitalization (SoWe)
- Affordable Housing Developers
- Architects
- Realtors
- Municipal officials
- Elected officials
- City Government
- School District representatives
- Healthcare organizations
 - County Planning

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