



Town of Westbrook

Affordable Housing Plan: Executive Summary

Westbrook Planning Commission

Adopted April 11, 2022

Introduction

Overview:

The Westbrook Plan acknowledges that the pathway to the further development of affordable housing will be dependent on an active municipality that creates policies, initiates zoning changes, and leverages existing agencies and partners to move forward. The plan conducted an extensive public participation process that revealed that the town desires to encourage housing diversity as a key initiative for the community in the coming years. The recommendations offered in the plan are comprehensive and include a multilayered approach focused on regional collaboration, education and utilizing funding mechanisms to support development. The plan structured their recommendations around public input, creating a priority structure that lays out a clear path forward while also identifying the various key stakeholders who must be involved. The impact that zoning has on development was also highlighted and the plan identifies what has worked to date and what will need to be potentially changed to facilitate further expansion of affordable housing.

Local Recommendations:

Level 1 - Increase Town Capacity to Address Affordable Housing

- Establish / Maintain Organizational Capacity by collaborating with RiverCOG to share an experienced person with other member municipalities.
- Establish / Fund A Housing Trust Fund
- Create / Maintain Standard Documents for Deed-Restricted Units

Level 2 - Increase the Number of Affordable Housing Developments

- Increase The Number of Assisted Housing Units
- Increase The Number of Deed-Restricted Housing Units
- Maximize Effectiveness of Deed-Restricted Units
- Increase The Number of Other Types of State-Defined Affordable Units

Level 3 - Review/Address Specific Provisions in The Zoning Regulations

- Allow two-family, cottage court, three-four family, multi-family, tiny homes and work force housing in appropriate residential districts.
- Allow multi-family, mixed use, townhouses and cottage court housing in business districts.
- Review a variety of specific use, design and development related standards for accessory dwelling units and multi-family construction.

Level 4 – Additional Strategies

- Educate / Collaborate
- Continue To Help People Aging in Place

Town of Westbrook Affordable Housing Plan

- Tax Incentives
- Consider Ways of Improving (Where Needed) The Health And Safety Aspects Of Existing Mobile Manufactured Home Parks

Regional Housing Plan Alignment:

Westbrook acknowledged the importance of a regional approach to addressing housing affordability and RiverCOG welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively with the municipality. The Regional Housing Commission would support many of the efforts outlined in their multi-tiered approach including educational opportunities and even the funding of a Housing Trust Fund. The recommended Toolkit would also provide many opportunities to educate leaders on strategies to expand options and increase buildout.