

THE HOUSING WE NEED

10 Priority Recommendations

On December 11, 2019, the Saint Anselm College Center for Ethics convened its second annual roundtable discussion of stakeholders trying to solve New Hampshire's housing shortage. Unlike the first roundtable discussion in 2018, which was aimed at state-level policy solutions, the purpose of this forum was to come up with solutions to local-level barriers to housing supply.

Advocates, business leaders, policymakers, and scholars met in small groups for organized discussion of the issues at stake and to brainstorm solutions. The Center for Ethics has collated the recommendations that emerged from these discussions under ten headings, and the Center's Housing We Need Task Force has vetted these recommendations for coherence and accuracy.

While some of these recommendations speak directly to policy, many of them are initiatives that civil society advocates can undertake immediately. We commend them to the notice of everyone in New Hampshire trying to be a part of the housing solution.

1. **Educate communities:** Use visual examples, personal narratives, models, and data to dispel myths about affordable housing and developers, and to convey to residents the need for, and benefits of, a diversity of housing for their community.
2. **Educate community decision-makers:** Provide local elected officials and land use board members with education and training to learn about the benefits of diverse housing and the costs of regulation.
3. **Launch promotional campaign:** Launch an effective multi-media promotional campaign at the state and local level to influence and change attitudes about affordable housing.
4. **Facilitate roundtable forums:** Using charrettes, community forums, or dialogue circles, provide opportunities for residents, business owners, and community leaders to collaborate on housing solutions for their community.
5. **Expand housing advocacy:** Engage, train, support, and mobilize community members, including local businesses and employers, to vocalize support for affordable housing at the state and local level, to advocate for new housing and regulatory change at meetings and hearings, and to serve on planning, zoning, and other land use boards.
6. **Regionalize processes and infrastructure:** Encourage consistency in the permitting processes and coordination between municipalities to share infrastructure to support housing (e.g. water, sewer/septic, and public transportation).
7. **Revise ordinances and regulations:** Revise land use ordinances and regulations to enable communities to achieve their master plan housing objectives, and to facilitate the construction of the housing we need.
8. **Create bonding and funding mechanisms:** Incentivize affordable housing by providing municipal bonding or housing trust funds to support new housing within communities.
9. **Adopt design guidelines:** Assist communities in developing guidelines and expectations for more dense residential housing options, to be communicated to developers and community members so as to ensure any new development fits with the character of the neighborhood.
10. **Solve the septic problem:** Explore new technology, research, and new legislative policies on septic systems that might safely support more dense residential housing options.

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