

# Affordable Housing

## What Should We Do Differently?

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'Affordable housing' in the Bay Area is hard to find by those who really need it. Housing costs have stayed high, even through a serious downturn in the economy. Most families still need two good jobs to afford the purchase of a house. In addition, welfare reform in recent years has created a situation where many more families with marginal jobs are on their own in an unstable rental market. Families just want a decent and affordable place to live. What should we do differently to make this possible?

### Approach 1: Create Jobs and Train Workers

Housing is affordable to people with good jobs. We need to create more jobs. Increase job training for unemployed and under-employed persons.

- ✓ Support a 'Living Wage' for all city and county employees and contractors
- ✓ Extend job training to the under-employed as well as the unemployed
- ✓ Provide incentives to businesses with entry-level jobs on Mare Island
- ✓ Streamline the permit process for new, entrepreneurial businesses

### Approach 2: Strengthen and Coordinate the Safety Net

The 'affordable housing' system is complex—it's difficult for some people to navigate on their own. We need a more effective safety net in housing issues.

- ✓ Distribute a clear 'map' of the housing process to all agencies and clients
- ✓ Create more transitional housing for entry and re-entry into housing market
- ✓ Provide a 'Housing Ombudsman' to work with agencies and clients
- ✓ Create more partnerships between government and non-profit agencies for project development, education, grant writing and case management

### Approach 3: Reform the Planning Process

'Affordable housing' has too few advocates among housing planners. We need to reform planning processes to include a wide range of housing options.

- ✓ Support the development of 'Smart Communities' where shopping, public transit, schools and affordable housing are all easily accessible
- ✓ Customize planning to significantly decrease the waiting list for Section 8
- ✓ Provide sliding-scale incentives to developers that integrate affordable housing into their plans
- ✓ Provide regular, direct access to community housing planners for non-profit affordable housing agencies and foundations