

CRCOG Regional Housing Strategy
Summary of Key Group Discussion Points
 May 20, 2025 Advisory Committee Meeting

The following is a broad summary of the discussion among the Advisory Committee members at an in-person meeting on May 20. Each group worked through four questions and then reported out key points to the full Advisory Committee.

Q1: What are the current difficulties of housing development?

Group 1: Housing Developers/Providers	Group 2: Human Dimension	Group 3: Municipal Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project financing • Skilled labor • Limited infrastructure • Zoning impacts project feasibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of housing do not always meet needs • Rental barriers for people without bank accounts, credit score • Lack of flexibility in leases • Lack of accessibility (ADA) • Lack of affordable housing near transit increases household expenses, limits mobility • NIMBYism • Zoning restricts new housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boomers in larger homes lack options to downsize • Existing smaller (starter) homes are old, need maintenance • Cost of rent • Zoning & approval processes – restrictive, long time to obtain permits • Limited infrastructure • Escalation of cost to build housing, bidding wars



Q2: What are some of the **misconceptions** you have heard relating to housing development?

Group 1: Housing Developers/Providers	Group 2: Human Dimension	Group 3: Municipal Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change is bad • The levels of traffic, school children due to development • Notion that renters are transient, not invested in community • Bias regarding low-income households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That “affordable” housing is affordable • Who is actually unhoused • Being employed does not mean one can afford housing • Housing needs of marginalized people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That town council / board of selectmen members have direct role in approving developments • That developers are taking advantage of the town • Any affordable housing = nightmare scenario • That you can’t protect open space & provide housing • The levels of traffic due to development



Q3: What's currently working in the area of housing development? What isn't working?

Group 1: Housing Developers/Providers	Group 2: Human Dimension	Group 3: Municipal Government
<p>Working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State support, programs <p>Not Working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline for missing middle housing • Making connection between housing & economic development • Engagement with youth, other stakeholders 	<p>Working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative use of federal funding to address rent issues • Building relationships with landlords • Communal housing • Section 8 program <p>Not Working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need government assistance assuming financial risk for homeownership • Not enough housing near transit 	<p>Working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some communities have successfully shown you can preserve open space & produce housing • Local examples of focusing on form of housing rather than density. • When developers reach out to residents prior to submitting application <p>Not Working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we analyze traffic impacts of development (too focused on capacity) • Tax incentives – towns reluctant to approve them for housing

Q4: Is there anything else you would like to share?

Group 1: Housing Developers/Providers	Group 2: Human Dimension	Group 3: Municipal Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more funding for land banks • Lack of gap financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could focus state incentives on adding housing near transit • Luxury units driving up prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cost of development, such as “cottage communities” • Seeing multifamily housing attracting both gen z and boomers

