



PAONIA HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND HOUSING ACTION PLAN

Housing Task Force Meeting 1 - Summary

Wednesday, May 24,
2023

5:00 – 6:30 pm

Town Hall

Introductions

In attendance: Patty Kaech, Dave Knutson, Bobby Reedy, Alisha Michelsen, Marissa Mommaerts, Linda McCone, Paige Smith, Mary Difranco, Andrew Coburn, Shay Coburn

Top housing issues: housing affordability in general, people wanting to maximize sale prices/rental income, lack of good jobs, aging housing and residents, need for housing upkeep/maintenance, high utility costs, short term rentals, water moratorium, health impacts, out of town investors, and more.

Project Overview

This project includes using data to identify the housing needs and issues in the community (Needs Assessment) and developing a plan to help meet that need and address issues (Action Plan). Please visit www.urbanruralcontinuum.com to see examples from other Colorado communities. While this project will not solve all issues related to housing affordability, it will create a path for the community to address the issues. Although the Town Board plays a key role, keep in mind that this is a community-wide project and the public, private, and non-profit sectors have a role to play in the solutions.

Project Principles

- No surprises: regular Board updates and community participation
- Strong coordination with Master Plan efforts
- Avoid going to the well too many times: don't exhaust public participation
- Don't reinvent the wheel: use past plans and studies when applicable
- Be realistic: see Paonia as it is and plan within its capacity
- Keep it simple: documents will be clear and concise

Role of the Task Force

You are project advocates and champions of this effort for your community. We want you to help connect the community to this project and connect us to the community. We hope you can attend three more Task Force meetings and the housing-specific open house, review draft documents, and provide guidance and input. Trustees Smith and Knutson are the project's Board liaisons.

What Has Been Completed and What is Coming Up

Completed: Kicked off the project, reviewed background docs, worked on forming the Housing Task Force and planned first meeting, started data collection, created list of existing housing resources that will be refined throughout the project, drafted employer questionnaire, created page on Town's website about the project and to collect email addresses for project updates.

We are working on: Finalizing the Housing Task Force, publishing the employer questionnaire, preparing for interviews/focus groups, conducting interviews and focus groups, data analysis, and developing an initial list of strategies.

Monthly updates are being provided to the Town Board for the first meeting of each month. Please see the updates for more information.

For Discussion

- Schedule
 - Task Force meeting #2 for the week of June 19 – *Planned Wednesday, June 21, 5-6:30pm*
 - Open house for the week of July 10 – *Planned for Thursday, July 13, 5:30pm, location and other details to be determined.*
- Terminology – affordable housing, community housing, etc.
 - What term(s) should we all use and not use?
 - Affordable housing is typically defined as housing that costs no more than 30% of a household's gross income. This way it is a simple math problem that is applied the same way whether a household's income is \$25,000/yr. or \$250,000/yr.
 - *"Affordable housing" can be a problematic term and is mis-used by many. We will use the definition that housing is affordable when the monthly payment (rent or mortgage, plus utilities) is equal to no more than 30% of a household's gross income (i.e., income before taxes). This definition is industry standard and used by federal and state housing programs. This applies across the income spectrum, from minimum wage to six figures and above.*
 - *"Housing for the Community" is the Task Force's preferred term and it means, dwellings occupied by residents who live and/or work in Paonia. This concept is sometimes referred to as "workforce" or "attainable" housing. The intent is that community housing meets the full range of rental and ownership housing types and prices needed to support household changes over time and ensure Paonia remains a complete and vibrant community.*
 - *The consultant team will be sure to define any technical terms used. Terms can be revisited with the Task Force later in the project if needed.*

- Employer questionnaire – what is this and why is it helpful? Please review. What is the best approach for us to publicize this to local employers?
 - *The consultant team hopes to learn from employers about the demand for housing, commuting patterns, impact of housing on operations and housing issues and needs. This is data that is not available elsewhere.*
 - *This questionnaire will first be shared with the Task Force for their input. Then it will be shared with businesses in and around Paonia, not employers solely in other towns.*
 - *The Task Force expressed concerns that the Paonia residents who employ themselves through one or more cash jobs will likely not fill out the survey which may leave a gap in the data.*
 - *The Task Force will help spread the word to employers and those self-employed to fill out the questionnaire.*
- Interviews/Focus Group – we need to connect with local realtors, property managers, builders, and others to help inform the Needs Assessment. Discuss who might be helpful to connect with.
 - *The group brainstormed a list. The Consultant team will connect with those identified.*
- Project goals.
 - *The group brainstormed what people were not yet represented by the Task Force. Those identified will be contacted with an invitation to the Task Force.*

What the Task Force Should Do After This Meeting

- Save the date and plan to attend the next Task Force meeting and Open House. *See dates above.*
- Complete a test run of the draft employer questionnaire and send comments to andrew@urbanruralcontinuum.com by end of day on Friday, May 26. Also help us get local employers to fill it out. *Link to be provided via email.*