

Help Your Community Thrive

Busting the Myths Surrounding Mixed-Income Housing in Your Community



Mixed income housing with affordable units in thriving communities contributes to the richness and vibrancy of neighborhoods. Despite this, myths about affordable housing persist. Here are the facts about affordable housing!

Myth: Affordable housing developments are high-rise buildings filled with residents who don't work.

Fact: “Affordable housing” means different things to different people, but its essence is that it is housing affordable to people on the lower end of the income spectrum such that they are not spending more than 30% of their salary on rent or a mortgage. Residents of affordable housing include seniors who have downsized, people just beginning their careers, and working families and individuals who simply work in the lower wage jobs that are central to our economy.

Affordable housing can also be “mixed income” and include some units that are affordable to people earning 70% of the average local income or more and some units that are reasonable for people earning 50% of the local salary – and everything in between.

Many affordable and mixed-income housing developments are beautifully designed and in keeping with the character of their community. When affordable housing is paired with other types of development, like retail or community facilities, it can bring even more benefits to a community.

Myth: Affordable housing will bring more crime to my neighborhood.

Fact: The addition of affordable housing units does not increase crime rates in a neighborhood when poverty levels are below 20%.



Myth: Affordable housing will lower the value of my home.

Fact: A multitude of studies have found that affordable housing developments had no impact on the value of homes near the development when compared to homes in other parts of town. In fact, mixed-income developments can provide attractive homes that blend in well with surrounding neighborhoods and can potentially have a positive effect on surrounding property values.

Myth: Affordable housing will bring lots of children and increase the costs of school, therefore increasing taxes.

Fact: Affordable housing developments do not directly cause an increase in the costs of the schools. This is explained by a few reasons. First, only larger homes tend to bring children, such as those with 3 or more bedrooms, which are only a portion of affordable housing developments. Families with children that do move into a town through affordable housing are few in number and tend to be spread across multiple grades, thereby not having a significant impact on the school system. Furthermore, school enrollment is dropping across Connecticut, so any increase in students would merely maintain current enrollment levels, at most. Where school budgets are increasing the cause is most often the natural cost of living increases of employment and other expenditures.

Additionally, affordable housing brings money to local communities, through the creation of jobs in construction, profits for local businesses resulting in more jobs, and tax revenue on the new homes.

Myth: Affordable housing will bring too much traffic to my neighborhood.

Fact: People living in affordable housing actually own fewer cars and are more likely to use more public transportation.

The reality is that mixed income housing with affordable units benefits thriving communities by:

- Generating a diverse student population that is “more culturally sensitive, deal better with diverse work situations, and are less likely to apply racial stereotypes,” preparing them better for their future lives.
- Providing true housing choice for hardworking families who would otherwise have few housing options outside of high crime, poverty-concentrated neighborhoods.