



Reform Land Use

Strengthen the Zoning Enabling Act and Provide Guidance to Municipalities in Preparing Required Affordable Housing Plans

Amend CGS Section 8-2 to:

- Require zoning regulations to affirmatively further the purposes of the federal Fair Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, familial status and disability. Connecticut is one of the most racially and economically segregated states in the country. Exclusionary zoning practices have fostered this segregation for decades, hurting our residents, communities, and economy;
- Eliminate the phrase “character of the district” from zoning regulations. Section 8-2 already authorizes objective factors that reflect character of the community, including consideration of historic preservation, environmental impact, scale, height, bulk, setback, location, use and similar standards. The phrase has too often been used to prevent housing diversity when evidence of these objective factors is lacking;
- Require municipalities comply with the existing law’s affordable housing planning requirement by January 1, 2023; and
- Require zoning regulations to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and small scale multifamily housing as of right.

HOMEConnecticut acknowledges the historic and ongoing role of systemic racism in creating and perpetuating inequitable housing outcomes in Connecticut.

The policies outlined here work to expand housing choice in Connecticut, and actively remove barriers to housing opportunity in order to advance more equitable outcomes.

Mandate Training on Housing Issues for Local Planning & Zoning Commissions

Require planning & zoning commissioners meet a minimum standard of five (5) hours of training per year by 2023. Develop a state training curriculum for local planning & zoning commissioners to include education on a variety of housing types.

Unlike several neighboring states, Connecticut does not offer a training curriculum, or require training, for commissioners. Planning & Zoning commissions make decisions that have long term effects on their communities. The state must provide a training curriculum to ensure they are provided with the educational resources needed to make important land use decisions. By January 1, 2023, all new commissioners should be required to meet the minimum standard of five hours of training per year, two hours of which must relate to multifamily housing and one hour must relate to fair housing.



Invest in Affordable Housing

Continue Necessary Strategic Capital Investments in Affordable Housing

Authorize at least \$100 million each year for the Affordable Housing FLEX Fund (including \$30 million for preservation of State Sponsored Housing Portfolio units), and at least \$50 million each year for the state Housing Trust Fund.

Helping rent-burdened families and families experiencing homelessness obtain and maintain permanent, affordable housing as quickly as possible is critical to stabilization of families and economic growth. Building new and rehabilitating existing affordable homes generates millions of dollars in new economic activity, creates jobs, and broadens the state's tax base. We must continue making critical capital investments in affordable housing to expand housing choices for families across Connecticut, preserve existing affordable rental homes at risk of loss, and support the state's economy.

Stabilize the Rental Market for Tenants and Landlords

Provide Necessary Rental Relief Funding in Response to Harms Caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic

Invest at least an additional \$100 million in state funding to provide relief to tenants before and during eviction proceedings, stabilize landlords' operating budgets and the private rental market, and prevent evictions and the resulting displacement of individuals and families.

Connecticut families at greatest risk of losing their homes due to COVID-19 owe an estimated \$400 million or more in rent. An additional investment of \$100 million in rental relief is an important step toward minimizing the impact on these families.

Persistent job losses due to COVID-19 have increased the risk of families becoming unstably housed or homeless. Historically, families of color are disproportionately impacted by healthcare crises, and COVID-19 is no exception, infecting and killing people of color at higher rates. Similarly, families of color are disproportionately impacted by housing discrimination and eviction.

Invest in on-going rental supports – Rental Assistance Program

Expand rental assistance supports through the addition of at least \$20 million per year to the Rental Assistance Program (RAP).

The RAP program should be expanded by at least \$20 million per year to support 2,000 more of our lowest income households. Prior to COVID-19, 120,000 renter households spent more than half of their income on housing costs. The RAP program serves as a flexible tool to address housing insecurity and assist severely cost burdened renters as the assistance adjusts with changes in household income.