



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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Overview

- What is Affordable Housing?
 - How to define
 - Looking at the local data
- Some current trends
- Land use tools and strategies to encourage affordability
- The future
- Resources

Decent, affordable housing should be a basic right for everybody in this country. The reason is simple: without stable shelter, everything else falls apart.
Matthew Desmond, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*

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A State and Nation in Crisis?

F Forbes

Inflation, Soaring Rents, And The Housing Crisis

Of course, the lower the household income, the worse the problem. The National Low Income Housing Coalition found that the combination of rising...

2 weeks ago



F Fingerlakes1.com

Housing crisis: Americans are overpaying for homes, affordable housing is gone

The housing market is on fire. Mortgage rates are still low, even as interest rates begin to rise. Many say a housing crisis is imminent.

G Governing Magazine

Record Inflation Deepens America's Affordable Housing Crisis

A January Pew survey found that almost five in 10 Americans consider the lack of affordable housing in their communities to be a "major problem,..."



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AFFORDABLE HOUSING: THE BASICS

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What is Affordable Housing?

Commonly used definition:

- Housing units where the occupant pays no more than 30% of gross income on housing costs, including taxes and utilities
- Families that pay more than 30% of their income on housing are considered cost-burdened; those that pay 50% or higher are “severely cost burdened”
- Affordable Housing covers housing within the means of households that may occupy middle, moderate, or low-income housing. Covers sales price or rental amount

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Federal Terms

Lower income people make up 40% of the nation's population

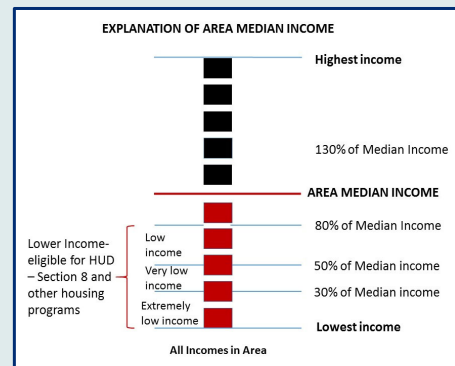


Percentage of median income

Lower Income:

80% or less of median income

- Low Income:**
50% - 80% of median income
- Very low Income:**
≤ 50% of median income
- Extremely Low Income:**
≤ 30% of median income



Area median incomes (AMI) - calculated annually by HUD
Income is adjusted for household size

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HUD's Area Median Incomes (AMI)

Area Median Income (AMI) - \$99,500

Household Size	30% of AMI	50% of AMI	80% AMI
	extremely low income	very low income	lower income
1	\$20,500	\$34,100	\$54,600
2	\$23,400	\$39,000	\$62,400
3	\$26,350	\$43,850	\$70,200
4	\$29,250	\$48,750	\$78,000

The area median income (AMI)

- Calculated annually to determine Section 8 income eligibility limits
- Based on the estimated area median family income (MFI)
- <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html#year2024>

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Homeowner Housing Expenses

	Onondaga County	Syracuse MSA
Percentage of Owner-Occupied Households	65.70%	68.30%
Median Home Value for Owners w/ Mortgage	\$190,100	\$182,800
Median Monthly Housing Expense	\$1,594	\$1,560
Median Real Estate Tax	\$5,141	\$4,796
Median Household Income for Owners	\$110,615	\$107,653
Owner Households Spending More Than 30% of Income on Housing	20.0%	21.1%
More Than 50% of Income on Housing	7.6%	8.1%

Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

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Renter Housing Expenses	Onondaga County	Syracuse MSA
0 bdrm at Fair Market Rent (FMR)	\$828	\$828
1 bdrm at Fair Market Rent	\$916	\$916
2 bdrm at Fair Market Rent	\$1,126	\$1,126
3 bdrm at Fair Market Rent	\$1,381	\$1,381
4 bdrm at Fair Market Rent	\$1,600	\$1,600
Median Renter Household Income	\$40,023	\$39,548
Income Needed to Afford 0 bdrm at FMR	\$33,120	\$33,120
Income Needed to Afford 1 bdrm at FMR	\$36,640	\$36,640
Income Needed to Afford 2 bdrm at FMR	\$45,040	\$45,040
Income Needed to Afford 3 bdrm at FMR	\$55,240	\$55,240
Income Needed to Afford 4 bdrm at FMR	\$64,000	\$64,000
Renter Households Spending More Than 30% of Income on Rent	45.1	44.3
More Than 50% of Income on Rent	25.4	24.7

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Trends: State of Housing

- **Persistent unaffordability**
 - Even before COVID, the nation was facing crisis-level housing affordability issues
 - In 2019, 30.2% of households were housing cost burdened; 1 in 7 spending 50% or more of income on housing
- **Widespread housing insecurity**
 - Economic fallout of pandemic, combined with ongoing housing unaffordability has put millions at risk of losing their homes
 - Renters & homeowners of color & low-income households disproportionately lost income following onset of pandemic; many still struggling to make housing payments
- **Growing racial disparities**
 - Racial gap in homeownership grows
 - In 2019, black homeownership remained virtually flat at 42.8% compared to 73.3% for white, 46.3% Hispanic, 57.3% Asian households
 - Housing cost burdens were greater for households of color, especially renters
- **Major barriers to homeownership**
 - Supply shortages, down payment barriers, tighter credit continue to pose challenges for renters seeking homeownership

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Does Affordable Housing Deflate Property Values?

- Not generally. However, there are strategies to minimize the negative effects of opposition
- Design
 - Housing that is attractively designed & fits in with surroundings may be more likely to have no effect or a positive effect on nearby property values
- Management
 - Well-managed & well-maintained housing is more likely to have a neutral or positive effect on surrounding properties
- Revitalization
 - Rehab of distressed property for affordable housing has proven beneficial to neighboring home values
 - Neighbors likely to prefer quality housing over vacant lots or dilapidated buildings
- Strong Neighborhoods
 - Locating housing in neighborhoods with high home values & low poverty rates unlikely to have adverse effects on nearby property values

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Challenges of Affordable Housing

- Rising new housing costs
- Regulations
- Extended development time
- Increased pricing for construction materials
- Older housing surplus not “filtering down”
- Leadership changes
- Consumer patterns/beliefs
- Exclusionary housing practices

TOP REASON U.S. RENTERS DO NOT CURRENTLY OWN A HOME

Not enough saved for a down payment

SHARE OF MILLENNIALS WHO CAN'T AFFORD TO BUY A HOME

74%

Conclusion: Affordable housing needs are not adequately addressed in the marketplace

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LOCAL LAND USE TOOLS & STRATEGIES

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The Comprehensive Plan

- Create a housing inventory to examine current and future housing needs
 - Current demographics
 - Existing housing (types, age, condition)
 - Financials (home prices, rental prices, cost burden analysis)
 - Assessment of need (current and future)
- Evaluate sewer/water infrastructure opportunities
 - Critical to affordability is the ability to build on smaller lots and at a higher density
 - Identify issues that could be solved with municipal systems
 - Recommend locations
- Evaluate land use regulations and make recommendations



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Housing Needs Assessment/Market Analysis

- Knowing your local housing market is key!
- A needs assessment should help identify the current and projected housing needs of a region and individual communities
- Provides the context in which housing solutions can be investigated/proposed
- Market studies used to attract developers

Locally:

- Onondaga County Comp Plan:
<https://plan.ongov.net/the-plan/>
- Onondaga County Housing Needs Assessment:
https://plan.ongov.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/OnondagaHousing_JUNE2024_FINAL.pdf

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Cluster Development

- Planning Board needs authorization to review
- Zoning may designate districts where cluster is authorized
- Cluster lots may not exceed number of lots if developed conventionally
- Lower site development costs
- Lower building costs presents opportunity to encourage addition of affordable units
- Incentivize affordable units with a density bonus



Allows units to be clustered on small section of the property

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Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)



- Allowed as of right, or by special use permit
 - SUP: can address design, density, and health and safety issues
- Cost-effective affordable rental housing
- Older persons can stay in neighborhood
- Common in larger, older houses, in existence for many years

ADU: second residential unit contained in single family home or garage; aka “in-law apartment”



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Accessory Dwelling Units

- ADUs are being increasingly promoted as a means of providing affordable housing in high-cost markets
- California implemented state-level ADU laws to make it cheaper, faster and easier to develop ADUs in communities
 - Owner occupancy not required
 - Homeowners' association restrictions overruled
 - Size, lot and setback requirements eased
 - More financial aid; fees removed
 - Faster and easier permitting
 - Reduced parking requirements

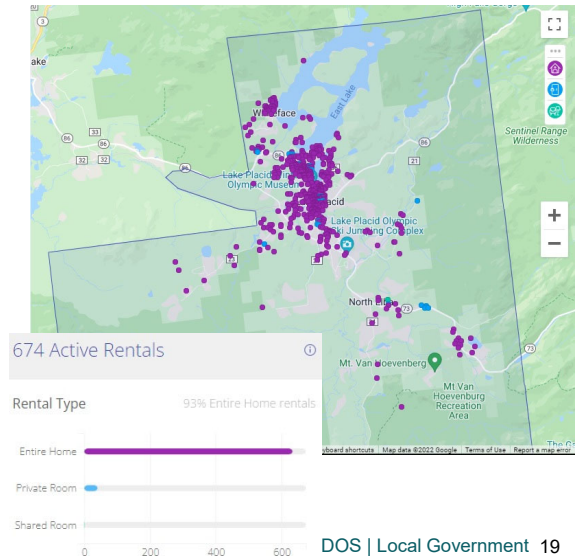


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Short-Term Rental Pressure

- STRs routinely yield 30% more profits for investors than long-term leases; presence increases surrounding property values and long-term rent costs, sometimes further pricing out locals
- Especially difficult to house lower-income employees in tourist hotspots
- Municipalities sometimes lose out on occupancy taxes, hard to track
- See the STRs in your community: <https://www.airdna.co/>



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Addressing Short-Term Rentals

- Reduce the number of homes no longer available for rent or owner occupancy due to short term rentals
 - Use zoning to prohibit or prohibit in certain locations
 - Cap the number of nights an STR can be rented to limit the profitability
 - Limit number of STRs in the community; how many an entity can have
 - Establish a rental registry for safety and nuisance issues and better track occupancy tax collection
 - Require on-site host
- Encourage long term leasing through regional/local programs in tourism areas with financial incentives to deed restrict or rent to locals/local workforce

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Manufactured Housing

Levels of Regulation:

Federal

- Construction and Safety

State

- Installation Standards
- Uniform Code
- Manufacturer's Manual
- Sanitary Code Part 17

Local

- Location, lot size, setback
- Home site development

- Freestanding; permanent chassis
- 20-30% less expensive than site-built homes
- Privacy and amenities associated with home ownership



Across-the-board exclusion from municipality prohibited (*Town of Pompey v. Parker*)

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Manufactured Housing Laws

N.Y. Executive Law, Article 21-B, Title 2, § 616, § 617, effective November 20, 2015

- A manufactured home that is affixed to a permanent foundation and conforms with the identical development specification and standards, including general aesthetic and architectural standards, applicable to conventional, site-built single-family dwellings in the residential district in which the manufactured home is to be sited, **shall be deemed to be a conforming single-family dwelling** for purposes of the applicable local zoning law or ordinance

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Senior Housing Needs

- Building affordable housing for seniors is generally less controversial
- Providing that housing can be difficult because many seniors live on fixed incomes
- Difficult for some senior homeowners to age in place
 - Rising tax burdens
 - Energy costs
 - Accessibility modifications to remain safe
 - Routine maintenance & repairs
- Aging population demographics; demand for affordable senior housing is higher than supply available



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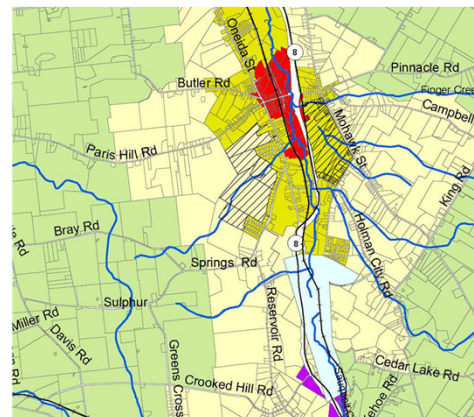
Zoning for Senior Housing

District or Zone

- Diversity of age restricted housing permitted in zoning districts
- Retirement Community District permitting residential and other compatible uses
- Planned development district/ planned unit development

Means of Implementation

- Overlay district
- Floating Zone
- Dedicated Zone



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Missing Middle Housing

- A range of house-scale buildings with multiple units, compatible with detached single-family homes in walkable neighborhoods
- “Missing” because they were typically illegal to build since the mid-1940s and “middle” because they sit in the middle of the spectrum of houses from single-family to mid/high rise buildings
- Often serve as a transition to higher-density and main street contexts



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Zoning for Missing Middle Housing

- Increase development flexibility on small lots
 - Reduce or eliminate minimum lot size and lot width
 - Reduce side and rear yard setbacks where appropriate
 - Rely on setbacks/build-to lines to address compatibility
- Allow attached single-family homes (row houses and townhouses)
 - Allow for a zero setback on one or both sides



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Zoning for Missing Middle Housing

- Support two- to four-family dwellings
 - Incentivize by increasing the permitted building envelope and stories for 2+ family dwellings through density bonuses (lot coverage and height)
- Allow small apartment buildings
- Reduce off-street parking minimums; support shared lots
- **Incorporate basic architectural standards to achieve compatible, neighborhood-scale character for all residential and mixed-use building types**



City of Buffalo, NY Uniform Development Code

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Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)

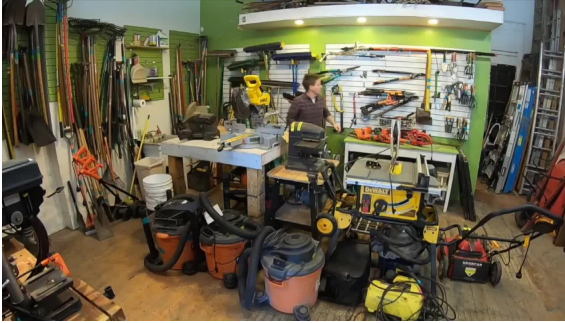
- Existing single and multifamily rental properties that are affordable without public subsidy to low-income households
- Constitutes the largest supply of affordable units in US
- Greatest risk of being lost due to market speculation and upgrades that result in higher rents and lost affordability
- Not well-tracked



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Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing



- Partner with local housing agencies or community loan funds to offer low-cost repair loans
- Connect landlords with local resources for assistance
- Tool libraries and repair workshops
- Partner with utilities to offer energy efficiency improvements

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Adaptive Reuse

- Adapting old structures or sites for housing presents unique challenges for redevelopment:
 - Zoning (does it allow residential conversion?)
 - Environmental remediation
 - Building code issues
 - Physical development costs, often too high for local governments to take on
- Partner with local housing agencies that may be able to utilize funding programs for these sites



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Adaptive Reuse and Zoning

- Permit more uses within existing structures for adaptive reuse than might be allowed for new construction
 - As of right or with a Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review
 - Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review process allows for evaluation of impacts to mitigate potential impacts associated with more intense uses
 - Might include requirement that architectural features of exterior be maintained
 - Examples:
 - Multi-family housing; live/work
 - Mixed-use
 - Maker space, light industry



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Community Land Trusts and Land Banks

Community Land Trusts

- Membership-based nonprofits
- They own/control land to create community assets, including permanent affordable housing
- CLTs retain ownership of land in a trust and offer long-term leases to tenants, which allow them to keep an eye on condition and affordability

Land Banks

- Quasi governmental entities that return vacant/abandoned and tax foreclosed property to productive use
- Can acquire and hold property tax free, clear title and back taxes and dispose of property intentionally, not just to highest bidder
- After sale, they lose rights to it

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SEQR and Affordable Housing

18. Consistency with Community Character

The proposed project is inconsistent with the existing community character. NO YES

(See Part 1. C.2, C.3, D.2, E.3)

If "Yes", answer questions a - g. If "No", proceed to Part 3.

	Relevant Part I Question(s)	No, or small impact may occur	Moderate to large impact may occur
a. The proposed action may replace or eliminate existing facilities, structures, or areas of historic importance to the community.	E3e, E3f, E3g	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The proposed action may create a demand for additional community services (e.g. schools, police and fire)	C4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The proposed action may displace affordable or low-income housing in an area where there is a shortage of such housing.	C2, C3, D1f D1g, E1a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The proposed action may interfere with the use or enjoyment of officially recognized or designated public resources.	C2, E3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The proposed action is inconsistent with the predominant architectural scale and character.	C2, C3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SEQR: The Full Environmental Assessment Form, Part 2 has a question on Affordable Housing needs of the area of the proposed project

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New York Pro-Housing Community Program

- Localities that achieve "Pro-Housing Communities" designation receive priority in certain funding programs including:
 - Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), NY Forward, Regional Council Capital Fund, Capital projects from Market New York, New York Main Street program, Long Island Investment Fund, Mid-Hudson Momentum Fund and the Public Transportation Modernization Enhancement Program
- Send a letter of intent to prohousing@hcr.ny.gov; Program page: <https://hcr.ny.gov/phc>
- Municipalities must share permitting documentation that you have approved either:
 - Permits increasing their housing stock by 1% (downstate) or 0.33% (upstate) over the past year OR
 - Permits increasing their housing stock by 3% (downstate) or 1% (upstate) over the past 3 years
- If you haven't achieved these targets, you can still be certified as a Pro-Housing Community by submitting your data and the municipal governing board passing a Pro-Housing Resolution

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Trends Affecting Housing

Economic Trends

- Land scarcity in
 - Most desirable locations
 - Urban areas
- Complex government funding programs; subject to change
- Regulations slow development process
- Energy concerns
- Greater economic divide
- Financialization of housing
- Economy slow to recover
- Aging housing stock
- Stress from short term rentals
- “Durational stipulations” on some housing

Demographic, Geographic & Environmental Trends

- Supply shrinking; demand increasing
- Demographic shifts; losing or growing population; Aging population
- Movement back to the city and along urban waterfronts
- Many urban areas are located in 100-year floodplains
- Job types and locations may change; work from home; post-COVID recovery
- Fluctuating construction material costs

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Overcoming Neighborhood Opposition

- **Craft the message carefully**
 - “Affordable housing” can conjure images of crime-ridden public housing complexes; instead talk about the need for housing for your own community
- **Leverage what you got**
 - Personal stories from community members who need affordable housing can be incredibly powerful
- **Think bigger and encourage neighbors to do so, too**
 - Think about ways to encourage housing development by making it easier and faster for developers
- **Be proactive**
 - Neighborhood opposition typically occurs very early in the development process
- **Use respect, not stereotypes**
 - Show respect for residents and their anxieties
- **Activate supporters**
 - There might be a base of support that isn’t the loudest group

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Housing Preservation

- Preservation has economic and social benefits
 - Prevent loss of existing affordable housing
 - Ensure future affordable housing remains affordable
- Tools
 - Spatial mapping programs for comprehensive view
 - Preservation compacts- a collaborative & multipronged approach to affordable rental housing preservation
 - Analyzing data for at-risk properties
 - Facilitating partnerships across levels of government; reduce costs



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Conclusions

- Address housing needs in Comprehensive Plan, understand your market
- Educate public officials and constituency
- Promote a **variety** of housing types and sizes
- Use land use tools to attain goals; consider addressing in zoning
- Foster regional partnerships and equality
- Partner with housing experts in your community

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Resources

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- Offers a low-rent apartment search for those who qualify for HUD housing assistance
- https://www.hud.gov/states/new_york/renting

NYS Homes & Community Renewal

- Main phone number: 1-866-ASK-DHCR (1-866-275-3427)
- Resources for Municipalities: <https://hcr.ny.gov/community-renewal>
- Housing search: <https://nyhousingsearch.gov/>

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Resources: Manufactured Housing

- Manufactured Home Tenant's Bill of Rights: <https://hcr.ny.gov/summary-new-york-state-manufactured-home-park-tenants-rights-under-section-233-real-property-law>
- HCR Manufactured Home help hotline: 1-800-432-4210
- Mobile & Manufactured Home Replacement Program: <https://hcr.ny.gov/mobile-manufactured-home-replacement-program-mmhr>
- James A. Coon Technical Series: Municipal Regulation of Manufactured Housing: <https://dos.ny.gov/municipal-regulation-manufactured-homes>

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Resources: Senior Housing

NYS Office for the Aging

- The Livable New York Resource Manual – goal is to help local officials, professionals and residents plan, zone and develop for livable communities, aging-in-place and sustainable neighborhoods – stressing future-based planning on evolving demographic trends
- Manual addresses housing, transportation, mobility, green buildings, energy alternatives and including planning:
<https://aging.ny.gov/livable-new-york-resource-manual>
- Senior Housing Regulations – Two Model Laws:
<https://dos.ny.gov/senior-housing-regulations-two-model-laws>

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Other Resources: Housing Agencies & Organizations

- National Low Income Housing Coalition - <https://nlihc.org/>
- National Housing Conference - <http://www.nhc.org/>
- NYSAFAH - NYS Association for Affordable Housing - www.nysafah.org
- SHNNY - Supportive Housing Network of New York - <http://shnny.org/>
- NY Housing Conference - <http://thenyh.org/>
- Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of NYS - <http://npcnys.org/>
- NYS Rural Housing Coalition - <https://ruralhousing.org/>
- NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development - www.nyc.gov/hpd
- The Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy - <http://furmancenter.org/>
- National Center for Assisted Living Report - <https://www.ahcancal.org/Assisted-Living/Pages/default.aspx>
- Senior Housing Network - <http://www.seniorhousingnet.com/>

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Department of State
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**Division of Local
Government Services**

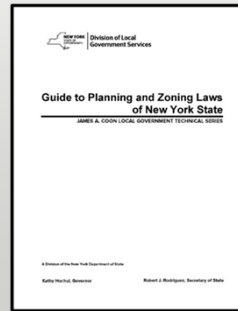
(518) 473-3355

localgov@dos.ny.gov

<https://dos.ny.gov/training-assistance>

Publications:

<https://dos.ny.gov/publications>



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