



Implementation Plan for the Blueprint for Affordable Housing

The initiative called “A Place to Call Home” is intended to implement the recommendations put forth in The Blueprint for Affordable Housing, a recently completed study of affordable housing needs in the Fox Cities. Specifically this initiative is intended to implement the following action steps:

- 1. Engage area businesses in the creation of affordable housing at all income levels for the sustainability of our workforce, a healthy community and economic prosperity.*
- 2. Facilitate the production and development of 100 units of affordable housing in each of the next five years to help meet the needs of our workforce.*
- 3. Increase understanding, and obtain public, government and key business leader support of workforce housing in the Fox Cities.*
- 4. Create a sustainable funding source that will be a catalyst in the development of a wide range of housing options and related services for a balanced community.*

Key Messages for the Initiative

1. Everyone who works or lives in our community needs a place to live so that they can be stable, productive employees, students, and community members.
2. There is NOT ENOUGH housing for those households of lower income, and the gap is widening.
3. If we want our community to experience economic development and be a healthy place to live, we need to create the housing necessary for ALL households.

The three key steps of the initiative are:

1) ***Building awareness..... of the need for affordable housing among area businesses, governments and political leaders in the Fox Cities.***

- Completion of the third housing huddle on October 21st. “What can you do to promote affordable housing?” Highlight what businesses have done to meet the need for housing in the community by: (1) providing a list of area business activities to promote affordable housing, and (2) have some selected businesses present what they have done to get involved.
- Continue to educate and share information about the connection between business and housing.
- Explore effective methods to implement a regional awareness plan (small breakfast meetings, roundtable discussions, other).

2) ***Building cooperation..... regionally among non-profit community-based organizations, businesses and governments.***

- Establish a *Business Council for Workforce Housing*—The Council would be an arm of the FCHC. It would include a representative business member from the Board of each of the non-profit agencies in the FCHC and other key business leaders. Their broad charge would be to promote and engage employer involvement in the development of an affordable housing stock. Specific activities would include:
 1. Awareness—by attending specific FCHC Meetings, these business leaders would become aware of activities across the entire continuum of care and take this information back to the Boards they represent and use it to better inform their peers of what is available in our community.
 2. Gain an Understanding of Community Needs—As part of involvement in the FCHC, these business leaders would assist in the FCHC annual effort to determine and prioritize affordable housing needs in our community.
 3. Advocacy—These business leaders would ADVOCATE for housing projects across the continuum of care.
 4. Develop a Plan to Involve Employers in Affordable Housing efforts—This could include education about employer-sponsored housing programs, involvement with agencies, dissemination of information on housing, etc. This activity would be done as part of the overall FCHC effort.

3) *Building housing and services....so that everyone who lives and works in our community has a place to call home.*

- Focus on retaining existing supported and subsidized housing in our community.
- Focus on the development of housing—encourage support for all agencies and for-profit builders to develop a variety of housing options. For example:
 - a new transitional shelter for women,
 - development of the wire works building into a mixed-use development,
 - development of a larger, traditional, neighborhood housing project.

Involve the Business Council in this advocacy.

- Focus on the expansion and development of housing-related services. For example:
 - life skills programs for homeless households,
 - case management services for families at risk of losing housing,
 - development of a housing resource center to provide information about the range of housing options in our community.
- Focus on other future initiatives/priorities of the FCHC.
- Focus on the development of a sustainable funding source for both housing development and supportive services.

