

Making Ends Meet:

The Path to Sustainable & Equitable Housing



A New Kind of Campaign for Affordable Housing

To realize a vision of thriving communities for all, we need broad-based, sustained efforts that drive local change. The Partnership for Working Families is a national network of leading regional advocacy organizations who find solutions to our nation's economic and environmental problems. Our affiliates have deep roots in their communities, and bring together community, labor, faith, and environmental partners to build coalitions and campaigns that create and sustain local change that lasts. These organizations pioneered policy tools for new development — such as community benefits agreements — during the real estate bubble. Now, four Partnership affiliates are focusing their capacity for coalition organizing and policy work on building housing campaigns that fix the affordable housing shortage in major urban areas. Read about these campaigns on the reverse side. ►

Coalitions of labor, community, faith, environmental, and housing organizations are creating national change through local policy campaigns that will deliver affordable housing to low-income families. Responding to a critical need in their communities, many campaigns are building off the work of cities to harness private investment to meet the broader community need for affordable housing. Some are advancing inclusionary housing policies that reserve affordable units in new market-rate developments. Others are pursuing innovative paths for new resources for affordable housing development. At the forefront of this effort, Partnership for Working Families' affiliates in Seattle, San Jose, Denver and the Twin Cities are combining strategic research, innovative policy work, and coalition organizing to win affordable housing for those who need it most.

Growing Demand for Affordable Housing

Across the country, families are struggling to find affordable housing. The housing market has begun to rebound and cranes once again tower over city skylines, bringing much needed investment and growth to urban areas. While this growth can lead to economic opportunity, it can also create challenges, including:

- **Significant affordable housing shortages.** Of the 9.8 million low income households in need of affordable housing, only 5.5 million units are available to them.¹
- **Housing costs that continue to rise as household incomes drop.** Since 2000, housing costs have increased 44% while household income has only increased 25%.²
- **Rising housing costs that are felt most by low-income families.** Approximately 81% of low-income families are severely burdened by housing costs compared to 14% of moderate-income families.³

We know from the experience of the previous decade that it will take strong local leadership and smart policy work to guard against gentrification and displacement. Not only that, policymakers must leverage private investments for affordable housing, ensuring that renewed development creates more sustainable and equitable cities.

¹ Housing Spotlight February 2012, National Low Income Housing Coalition.

² Housing Landscape 2013, National Housing Conference.

³ Ibid.

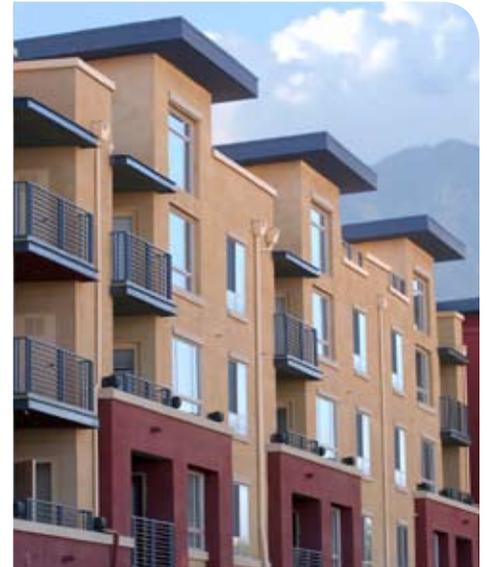
▶ SEATTLE: Stronger Fees for Affordable Housing

Puget Sound Sage is leading a campaign to strengthen Seattle's inclusionary housing ordinance in order to generate more on-site units and more resources for affordable housing in the city. Broad consensus exists on the need to improve the effectiveness of the ordinance. First, the ordinance only applies to a subset of new development and only a portion of any one building. This results in only 4-6% of units in projects falling under the ordinance's requirements of affordability. Second, a very low in-lieu fee has resulted in few on-site units. With the downtown alone poised to add 100,000 new jobs in the next 20 years, creating even more demand for affordable housing, the time is ripe for Seattle lawmakers to fix the ordinance.



The campaign began in 2012 by focusing on zoning regulations for a Seattle neighborhood called South Lake Union. The campaign, which pulled labor and environmental organizations into a new housing coalition, sought to raise the in-lieu fee for housing projects and shift the frame of the debate from the "lack of affordable housing" to one of sustainability and equity. Together with City Councilmember Mike O'Brien, the coalition won a 43% increase in the in-lieu fee for residential buildings and a 33% increase for commercial buildings, dramatically improving the likelihood of on-site units and raising the overall level of funds available for affordable housing in the area.

Now, the campaign turns citywide. After successfully moving local elected officials to agree to a comprehensive review of citywide housing policy, Sage has positioned itself as a key partner in the process.



▶ SAN JOSE AND SANTA CLARA COUNTY: Dedicating Funds for Affordable Housing

Working Partnerships USA is putting in place new sources of dedicated funding for affordable housing in San Jose and Santa Clara County. In 2011, Governor Jerry Brown eliminated the state's redevelopment program, which cut close to \$1 billion earmarked for affordable housing development, and forced city-based redevelopment agencies to return unallocated funds to counties and other taxing entities. Prior to this cut, San Jose had the second largest redevelopment agency in the state and was a leader in creating affordable housing units. Leading a broad-based coalition, Working Partnerships is using a savvy media strategy and effective policy advocacy to push San Jose to create a new revenue source and Santa Clara county to replace lost redevelopment funding.

WORKING PARTNERSHIPS USA

Working Partnership's advocacy efforts led San Jose to take the first step toward applying an impact fee to new housing developments. The city is currently conducting a study to assess the appropriate fee amount and will present proposals in the coming months. The coalition's efforts also resulted in the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors dedicating 20% of ongoing redevelopment funding to affordable housing and to devote entirely to affordable housing any funds received from city redevelopment agencies that those agencies would have had to spend on affordable housing. This decision will provide up to \$14 million for affordable housing efforts.



PARTNERSHIP
for
Working Families

 forworkingfamilies.org

 facebook.com/
PartnershipforWorkingFamilies

 @P4WF

▶ DENVER AND THE TWIN CITIES: Building on Victories

In Denver, FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities is building a broad-based coalition to call on the city to provide funding for 3,000 affordable housing units. The city is currently reviewing its inclusionary housing ordinance for ownership units, and FRESC is working with allies in city council to expand the measure to reach rental units. Similarly, in Minneapolis ISAIH's deep community organizing and statewide and regional advocacy is laying the groundwork to not only create policies for affordable housing, but also address the many lingering effects of the foreclosure crisis.

