

**Community Matters: Housing & Homelessness in Amador County  
Virtual Meeting Questions & Answers**

*Session #1*

*April 29, 2020*

*6:00-8:00 pm*

1. What types of projects are being considered in Amador County?  
While no decisions have been made yet, a variety of options are being considered, which include: acquiring an existing structure, such as an old motel or apartment complex and rehabilitating it; building a new, but smaller size project which is 100% supportive housing units; building a new, somewhat larger project that is 100% affordable housing and includes some supportive housing units as part of the project. Right now, the County's consultant, Housing Tools, is completing a site feasibility assessment for the County and that will help to inform the ultimate decision.
2. In Amador County right now there are emergency shelters, rapid re-housing, homeless prevention, permanent supportive housing, and veteran housing.  
This is correct, there are a number of housing programs being operated by the County, Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA) and other nonprofits, such as Victory Village, which are providing housing and homeless services. These are all described in the County's Plan to Address Homelessness, which will be available to the public very soon.
3. Is there any likelihood of housing being built here in the next 5 years?  
Yes, there is a good probability of this. There is currently more funding available to develop affordable housing from the State than has been available in a decade or more, like the No Place Like Home funds. This funding makes it much more feasible for developers to build housing and work in smaller communities such as Amador County.
4. Does the success of No Place Like Home\* hinge on the willingness of the County Board of Supervisors to vote and agree to access these funds?  
Yes, the Board of Supervisors must vote to approve a project application in partnership with a Development Sponsor in order to access the No Place Like Home funds.
5. For No Place Like Home, how much competitive funding can Amador County apply for? How much non-competitive funding is there for Amador County?  
Competitive application funding limits are dictated by a per unit subsidy maximum which is established by the State of California in each funding round, so it depends upon the number of units in a project and how other funding sources could be used to support those units. In general, the maximum funding any one project can receive from competitive funds is \$20 million, subject to the per unit limits. Amador County is eligible to receive \$500,000 in non-competitive funds.

6. A housing project that would incorporate more than just supportive units, maybe workforce housing and a few Fair Market Rent units would work well for Amador County. Is there a possibility of leveraging additional housing funding sources along with No Place Like Home to make this type of project obtainable?

Yes, absolutely. A developer will access other funds, such as other State funding sources, and largely, tax credits available through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program. Tax credits will likely be the most significant source of funding. This is a funding source that experienced developers are very familiar with and used to applying for.

7. What percent of the cost of building affordable housing are fees and regulations?

That is dependent upon the particular details of a given project such as its size, location, property acquisition costs, the costs of construction at the time it is being built, etc. Fees vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

8. It seems so hard to imagine the Board of Supervisors voting in our favor on this. I want to believe it's possible. What can we do to help encourage the Board of Supervisors on the No Place Like Home project?

Attend community meetings, the Homeless Taskforce and Board of Supervisors meetings, to speak on and support this type of housing. Elected officials are interested in hearing from their constituents and their viewpoints. Let them know why you think this is important to the health of the community as a whole, because healthy, safe, affordable housing impacts everyone and everything: the economy, education, and people's physical and mental health. Everything relating to a community's well-being is tied to adequate and safe housing. Speak to these issues.

9. How successful was low-barrier housing in El Dorado County?

Housing Tools staff is not familiar with any housing projects in El Dorado County, so we are unable to comment. Note: after the meeting, a community member forwarded more information which clarifies that El Dorado County had a low barrier emergency shelter. Housing Tools will follow up to find out more about this shelter.

10. How do you avoid affordable housing becoming the "projects"?

Subsidized affordable housing is highly regulated and monitored. The funding sources that provide the subsidy want to ensure the project is attractive, well maintained and properly operated over a long period of time. In addition, tax credit investors depend upon this type of oversight and monitoring to ensure they are able to receive their credits, per the IRS code. Modern affordable housing is typically the most attractive housing in a neighborhood, due to these requirements. In addition, another requirement is that money is deposited up front and then budgeted each year for reserve accounts for capital improvements and to cover any operating revenue shortfalls. This ensures there is always a "savings account" to draw on to pay the costs of maintenance and replacement of items such as roofs. Unfortunately, there are rental

units in many communities that do not charge high rents, but they are not subsidized and regulated, so the property owner is under no obligation to maintain and operate them properly. These are properties that may come to mind as examples of what is not desirable, but are vastly different from subsidized and regulated affordable housing.

\*definition of No Place Like Home: No Place Like Home (NPLH) is a funding source being provided by the State of California to counties in order to support the development of Supportive Housing units for homeless individuals with a serious mental illness. The NPLH program includes the requirement that the County provide all needed support services to the NPLH residents, including mental health services.