

Creative and Varied Housing Solutions

OBJECTIVE: We need new and creative housing solutions to solve the housing affordability crisis and development regulations that support this. These solutions should serve a diversity of needs, income levels, family structures, and lifestyle choices, prioritizing residents with the greatest barriers to affordable housing. We need varied housing with a range of heights, units, and densities designed to respect and fit into existing neighborhoods.

BACKGROUND: Current regulations get in the way of innovation and community solutions to housing access, such as creating small homes, cooperative housing, and co-living options. Many residents feel that regulations are written to benefit developers who can afford to assemble land to build housing for higher-wealth people. This results in new subdivisions built with one type of low-density housing at unaffordable prices, contributing to unsustainable growth patterns and high housing costs. Due to the history of suppressing Black home ownership, in part through government regulations, these higher-wealth people are predominantly white. Those with lower wealth, many of whom are people of color, do not benefit from these regulations and instead are often harmed by development in their neighborhood, resulting in gentrification and displacement. Additionally, existing regulations make it difficult to create supportive housing options for transitioning populations, including those who are justice-involved, experiencing homelessness, or escaping violent circumstances.

We want the freedom to explore new ways of imagining how houses, neighborhoods, and communities can be designed and built to allow more residents to have a variety of options for affordable rental housing and paths to home ownership.

Quotes from Durham Residents

“Affordable Housing desperately needs new options”

“This needs to be more specific about providing housing for poor and marginalized people. We don't need "diverse" housing in the form of more large homes or expensive condos.

“More affordable housing with unique approaches like co-living, small homes, rent control, etc.”

“Reformed zoning laws to broaden housing options”

“New housing plans for public housing residents or move these residents into the greater community”

“Has the City considered implementing tiny house communities to address homelessness?”

“As long as the RULES don't bring harm to black and brown people.”

“More housing options for the homeless that are long-term and outside a shelter.”