

## Affordable Housing, a Bad Dream

Making a case against affordable housing is not popular. Certainly, no politician would dare do it. An affordable place for everyone that wants one has a generous, if naive, ring to it.

And election results indicate voters don't want more public housing; they see an emperor with no clothes. Most of us are not convinced government-provided workforce housing is a noble aspiration, or even an achievable pipe dream. We are not unsympathetic to those priced out of Jackson. It is tough to make a life here. It always has been. For all of us.

Many homeowners had to struggle and save to get where they are. Many more continue to do so. All of us must make trade-offs: more room, longer commute, higher mortgage, etc.

And the majority is not without compassion, many are generous givers. They just see the go-along housing crowd as misguided. And they equate the zealous pursuit of affordable housing with reckless growth.

There are good reasons not to jump on the affordable housing bandwagon:

#1: In Jackson Hole, filling the gap between our 3.5% job growth rate and 1.1% housing inventory growth rate is ridiculously impossible. If the land were available (it isn't) the money is not. It would take over \$1-billion to build 280 units a year for the next decade. Excessive commercial growth is the culprit.

#2: Even if the money were there (it isn't) building enough dormitory apartments for every seasonal employee is impossible. Instead, the businesses that employ the workers should

build employee housing, not the taxpayers.

#3: Most of us pay our own mortgage or rent. We may not have a penny to spare for someone who just arrived in the valley last week expecting government to build them a house.

#4: There is no guarantee regarding who gets the subsidized housing or whether they are truly living in it. They could sublease it for a profit or let it stand empty until they can sell it on the open market. Our affordable housing system is rife with abuse and our electeds have already proved they won't enforce the rules.

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*Affordable housing  
attracts more residents*

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#5: Affordable housing doesn't house the homeless. It attracts more residents, more traffic and all the other headaches of overcrowding.

#6: If government did eventually solve their decades old housing abuse problems and enforced the rules, the unintended consequences would remain. More housing attracts more people. More people demand more retail stores, restaurants, police/fire, roads, sewer/water, schools, teachers... The more you build, the more you need to build.

Public housing makes the problem worse, not better. The so-called crisis exists because we've over-built hotels and commercial space. Building more subsidized housing results in still more hotels and commercial. All the while natural resources suffer. Wildlife pays the price.

This is about overcrowding, making a city where a quaint, livable small town used to be. Do we need affordable housing so bad we're ready to ruin the small town we can never get back?