



UNLOCKING
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
IN THE LEHIGH VALLEY

A COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

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A BRIEF RECAP:

Bringing Together Stakeholders Across the Lehigh Valley

The summits aim to bring together policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders to work together and develop solutions to the affordable housing crisis.

Developing Solutions

We seek to create a platform for dialogue and collaboration to identify solutions across the Lehigh Valley to address the affordable housing crisis.

Final Deliverables

The summits aim to create an action plan with concrete recommendations to local and state leaders, landlords and other key stakeholders; and craft an advocacy strategy to sustain momentum in tackling the affordable housing crisis.



MARCH SUMMIT



- Update from Becky Bradley from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
- Shared concerns regarding affordable housing.
- Defined what affordable housing is now and what it should be
- Established priorities
- Shared short- and long-term goals

PRIORITIES AND DISCUSSION TOPICS



Quarterly summits focus
on top three priorities

Rank and discuss short-
and long-term goals

TOP PRIORITIES

IMPROVE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

CREATE AFFORDABLE AND ATTAINABLE UNITS

CHANGE LOCAL POLICIES/ORDINANCES AND ADVOCATE



SHORT TERM GOALS

1. Opportunities to improve existing housing units:

This goal aims to upgrade current housing stock to make it available for affordable housing. Also involves restoring homes that are uninhabitable to increase the supply of affordable housing options.

2. Redevelopment of existing buildings versus building new and Redevelopment of vacant or underused retail centers to mixed use:

This involves evaluating the potential for converting existing structures into affordable housing units as opposed to constructing new ones. Transforming spaces that are not fully utilized into residential areas.

3. Home Maintenance assistance:

Offering support for homeowners who need help with maintaining and repairing their homes to keep them habitable and affordable.

4. Public Advocacy for Housing Needs:

Raising awareness and support for affordable housing initiatives through public engagement.

5. Identify how to get municipalities and entities in the region to collaborate across jurisdictions and maximize public funding with partnerships:

Fostering regional cooperation while leveraging public funds through partnerships to address housing challenges collectively.

Short Term Goals

1. Opportunities to improve existing units
2. Redevelopment of existing buildings and vacant or under used retail centers
3. Home Maintenance Assistance
4. Public Advocacy for Housing Needs
5. Collaboration across jurisdictions and maximize public funding



BREAK OUT SESSION

Discuss short term goals



LONG TERM GOALS

1. Build Less Apartments and develop and/or Rehab More Single-Family Detached Homes

This aims to shift the focus from apartment complexes to single-family homes, which may provide more space and privacy for residents.

2. Restoring Properties for Homebuyers

Similar to renovation, this goal focuses on making existing properties viable for homeownership.

3. Rebuild Public Housing with a Focus on Mixed-Income Sites with Amenities and Social Services

Advocating for the redevelopment of public housing to create inclusive, resource-rich communities.

4. More Funding for Local Municipalities to Address Owner-Occupied/ Rehab Affordable Housing Units

Securing additional resources for municipalities to rehabilitate existing housing stock.

5. Change Local Ordinances to Hold Landlords Accountable

Implementing policies to ensure landlords maintain the quality of living conditions in their rental units.

Long Term Goals

- 1 Build less apartments and develop and/or rehab more single-family detached homes
- 2 Restoring Properties for Homebuyers
- 3 Rebuild public housing with a focus on mixed-income sites with amenities and services
- 4 More funding for local municipalities to address owner-occupied rehab of affordable housing units
- 5 Change local ordinances to hold land lords accountable



BREAK OUT SESSION

Discuss long term goals



CONCLUSION

Collaboration is Key

Working together is essential. It requires collaboration between government, private sector, and non-profit organizations to develop and implement effective solutions that make affordable housing a reality for the Lehigh Valley.

-  **Affordable Housing Summits Continue:**
Friday, September 13 and Tuesday, December 10
8:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Ben Franklin Tech Partners: 116 Research Drive, Bethlehem

**COMMUNITY
ACTION** LEHIGH
VALLEY

