

Housing, Demographics, Institutions Focus Group held June 27, 2017

In attendance: Cheryl Daniw, Merit Properties; Jed Backus, Backus Real Estate; Robert Roscow, Hamden Planning & Zoning; Sandy Leubner, State Dept. on Aging; Anne McKeon, North Haven Housing Authority; Susan Rubino, Hamden Youth Services; Dagmar Ridgway, Branford Senior Center; Amy Casavina Hall; Erik Johnson, New Haven Housing; Carl Amento, SCRCOG; Eugene Livshits, SCRCOG; Rebecca Andreucci; Nick Armata, MMI; Rebecca Augur, MMI

Discussion Summary:

- Improvements to walkability / public transit in the region are needed
- Suburban/rural communities lack transportation services for low-income, elderly populations - isolated populations, limited access to amenities, recreation, employment
- Elderly population is living longer – affecting types and levels of need in housing assistance
- The Region needs a diverse housing supply that provides housing suitable to all stages of life
- Affordable housing and densification needs to occur in opportunity areas where housing, employment and transportation amenities can be expanded synergistically
- Local housing authority model is unsustainable – regionalization and diversification of portfolios needed
- Greater assistance needed for households at 61% to 100% of AMI – underserved by current federally funded housing programs
- Use alternative terms to discuss “affordable housing” to reduce social stigmas
- Encourage and explore unconventional, lower-cost housing options, such as micro units and apartments with shared common areas
- Densification within the region needed to make development projects financially viable, to attract and maintain businesses, and to serve the new workforce that tends to change employers more frequently

- Acknowledge and embrace location in close proximity to Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington D.C. - design transportation networks that support such collaboration
- The South Central Region needs to continue to invest in its excellent school systems – and work on maintaining students in state beyond graduation
- Adapt and adjust to new outreach methods that will allow for greater engagement of Millennials in planning processes
- The SCRCOG area (and State) need to continue to encourage regional cooperation for shared services
- The State’s tax policies are no longer sustainable with towns competing against one another
- SCRCOG could foster greater cooperation among anchor institutions, housing, workforce development, and philanthropic agencies on addressing housing, employment and transportation needs, and advocating for appropriate local, regional and state policies
- Encourage apprenticeship programs in collaboration with local community colleges, local manufactures and corporations - in accessible locations