



Plan Launch Press Release

SOUTH HADLEY—Do you, your family, or your friends face challenges with housing in South Hadley? Do you want to help shape housing in your community? Do you want housing that can serve all our needs? The Town of South Hadley asks for your help to plan for a better housing future. We need your help to craft a “Housing Production Plan” that will set the course for residential development and housing policy. This plan will be driven by the community. The process will include opportunities for the public to weigh in on housing goals, specific housing policies, locations for potential residential development, and more. We need YOUR input to make this plan work.

This fall there are two opportunities to get involved:

**Community Forum on the town’s housing goals and the future of development –
December 12, 2022, 7–9 PM, at the South Hadley Public Library, 2 Canal Street, South Hadley.**

Survey on housing in South Hadley, giving people who can’t attend the forum a chance to weigh in. Visit links.shhousingplan.org/survey to participate.

Housing is a real issue for South Hadley residents:

- According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 30% of South Hadley households pay more than is reasonable for housing and are considered “housing cost-burdened.”
- An estimated 40% of South Hadley households would be considered low-income and qualify for housing support if that support was available.
- Housing prices and rents have risen dramatically in the last ten years, making it difficult for new families, seniors, and young people to find homes that fit their needs, and increasing tax burdens on existing homeowners.
- The demand for housing affordability is high, but the supply of deed-restricted affordable homes and homes affordable at market prices is very low.
- Likewise, the supply of homes that are accessible to South Hadley’s seniors, the supply of starter homes, and the supply of workforce housing is limited.

To address these issues and more, the Town has begun a process to update our Housing Production Plan (HPP) which will guide housing policy for the next five years. HPPs are regulated by the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development under M.G.L. Chapter 40B. Communities can use HPPs to proactively address housing issues, rather than only reacting to proposed developments. An

HPP must include a housing needs and demand assessment, analysis of development constraints and opportunities, the community's housing goals, recommended strategies to meet those goals, and a target for new Affordable Housing development. To conduct the process, the Town is working with planning and design firms Outwith Studio and Utile, who will provide technical assistance and help draft the plan's content. The process will run through May 2023.

According to Director of Planning and Conservation Anne Capra, who is overseeing the process, "The plan will explore the existing housing shortage within South Hadley and ways to create a range of housing types within existing neighborhoods while meeting community goals for equity, sustainability, and the protection of natural, cultural and historic resources."

Engagement activities will include public workshops, meetings, and surveys. In addition to these opportunities and future events, the plan has convened an Advisory Committee of residents, local officials, and local housing experts, who will guide the process, promote engagement by the public, and help synthesize public input into a final document. Ultimately, the Selectboard and Planning Board will review the document, and if adopted, send the document to the state for approval.

To stay informed, visit www.shhousingplan.org, and sign up for email updates at links.shhousingplan.org/email. Please direct any questions about the plan to Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation at acapra@southhadley.ma.gov or (413) 538-5030 x6128.