



Let the Conversation Begin!

In order to move towards solutions, it's time to start a community-wide conversation at home, with co-workers, at church, and with friends. We must talk about what we can and cannot do as individuals, agencies, organizations,

and governments to deal with this crisis now and in the future. The purpose of our conversations will be to better understand the crisis; consider different approaches to it; identify common ground; and explore next steps, individually and as a community.

Provided by
**Community Conversation on
Napa's Housing Crisis**

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Through the Roof!

How Can We Deal With Napa's Housing Crisis?

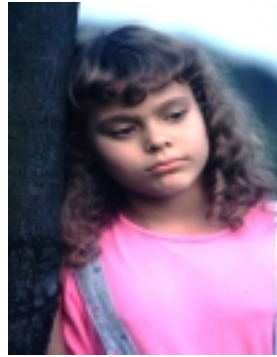
- Can we live with significant traffic increases as more and more workers commute into Napa County?
- Can we live with more individuals and families living in more shelters?
- Can we live with a shrinking diversity of individuals and families as income alone defines who lives here?
- Can we accept mothers and their children living on the streets?
- What can we live with?

"Every day I hear of a new family that has lost, or is at risk of losing its housing. They come to Health and Human Services as a last hope and we have little to offer - there is no more slack in the system. There is no housing available and the rents are going up at a dramatic pace. We are not just talking about homeless adults - we are talking about children and families, the frail elderly and the disabled. We have to do something different and it needs to be dramatic and soon. We need a community response for this community crisis."

Terry Longoria, Director
Napa County Health and Human Services Agency

Close to Home

In a recent 30 day period, all individuals using *Napa County Health and Human Services* were asked about their current living arrangements. Of 1,033 individuals and 714 families surveyed, over 600 children and adults met the definition for homelessness. That is, they do not have employment or adequate income to meet basic housing needs.



Who Among Us Is Facing this Crisis?

There are at least five groups of citizens who are currently or will soon face a housing crisis in Napa County:

- **Single Parent Families.** Those families who cannot afford the rent to live in their own home.
- **Underemployed.** Those individuals and families who work one or more jobs at low wages and cannot afford rents.
- **Seasonal Workers.** Those individuals and families who work in agriculture and may live in crowded and unsafe situations.
- **Service Industry Workers.** Those individuals and families who work in Napa, but are priced out of the housing market and must commute from other communities.
- **Unemployed and Without Housing.** Those individuals and families who live on the streets or in shelters.

Other Faces*

“I am a single parent with one child and I am employed by the County of Napa. I am living with my parents because I cannot afford even a one bedroom apartment on my income. The rent here is astronomical.”

“I have lived in Napa all of my 72 years and raised my children here. If I had to do it all over again, I would not be able to afford it. I feel Napa County is very short sighted when it comes to its citizens, young and old. Those who decide these issues should walk in the trenches often, it’s a hard world we live in today.”

“I have two children and I work at a large retail store in Napa. We have recently been told that our house is going to be sold and we will need to move. We need affordable housing that will accept a housing certificate.”

“I have a good job as an executive assistant. I have lived here all of my life and have rented the same house for over 10 years. I just got a letter from my landlord. He’s going to raise my rent \$600 a month at the end of my lease. I’ll have to move to Solano County to make ends meet. That means bigger gas bills and a commute through Jameson Canyon every day, but it’s what I have to do.”

“We make sure that visitors have a good time in the wine country. I hope we’re not just here for the tourists, at least we shouldn’t be. Let’s face it, we have a major problem with housing in Napa County.”

* These comments from Napa County citizens have been altered to protect the anonymity of the authors.



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