

**Health, Human Services & Housing Committee
Special Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: March 29, 2022 – 5:00 PM
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meetings, Meeting ID: 835 6739 8317
By Phone Dial (646) 558-8656
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Eve Walter
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit & Uchitelle
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Commissioner Iapocce – UC DSS, Dr. Smith – UC DOH, Director Doyle – UC Planning, Director Dawson – UC Youth Bureau, Amy Borden & Liz Provenzano – UC DSS, Commissioner Smith – UC Health Department, Director Koppenhaver – UC Office for Aging, Deputy Executives Contreras & Rider – UC Executive’s Office, S. Deacon Bill Mennenga – New Paltz Redeemer Lutheran Church, Judith Karpova – HV Air Quality Coalition, Barbara Hill – City of Kingston Alderwoman/CSB Chair, Kathleen Maxwell, L. Goldman, Daniel Woodham – Ulster Immigrant Defense Network, Anthony (Junior) Tampone, Robert Gelbach – Kingston Land Trust, Rashida Tyler – Kingston Tenants Union, Rebecca Sauer, Alexandria Wojcik, Bartek Starodaj – City of Kingston Director of Housing Initiatives, Beetle, Cindy Beisel, Conor Gillis, Danial Atonna – For the Many, Donna Schlachman – For the Many, Jackie Brownstein – UCAct Chair of Housing Committee, Marjorie Leopold – Ulster Immigrant DSeference Network/UC Coalition for Housing Justice, Susan Denton, Tobi Erner, Noé Del Cid – RUPCO, “Alexandria’s Shellphone”

Chair Walter called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

She welcomed the 40 + attendees and thanked them for their interest in discussing housing in Ulster County. She briefly explained the history behind calling the special meeting and the goals moving forward. Legislator Erner asked if the attendees could be afforded a few minutes to introduce themselves and explain their interest in the meeting. Chair Walter stated that there was limited time for the meeting, and it would be unfair for the individuals who were continuing to enter as they could not keep interrupting the meeting for introductions. Due to a technical difficulty, audio of the initial few minutes of the meeting was not recorded.

She asked the committee members to introduce themselves. Discussion ensued. See attached transcript

Chair Walter thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting

Adjournment

TIME: 5:57 PM

Respectfully submitted: Deputy Clerk Mahler
Approved: May 4, 2022

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She asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

Chairwoman Walter

Phil? And also because people keep coming in more and more. Go ahead, Phil.

Legislator Phil Erner

Okay. Hi, I'm Phil Erner District Six.

Chairwoman Walter

Thank you, Thomas. Tom

Legislator Corcoran

Tom Corcoran, District 11, Marlborough

Chairwoman Walter

Great, yeah, if you can mention what towns not everyone knows what your district is. So,

Phil Erner

City of Kingston Wards 3, 5 & 9.

Chairwoman Walter

Thank you, Kathy.

Legislator Nolan

Kathy Nolan, Ulster County District 22, which is the four western most towns of Ulster County Olive, Shandaken, Denning and Hardenburgh.

Chairwoman Walter

Thank you. Legislator, uh Abe

Legislator Uchitelle

Abe Uchitelle, Legislator five, which is Kingston's wards one, two and four.

Chairwoman Walter

Thank you, Laura.

Legislator Petit

Hi, Laura Petit. I'm district 8 Esopus.

Chairwoman Walter

Great. Craig

Legislator Lopez

Craig Lopez, district 14, Shawangunk, Wawarsing

Chairwoman Walter

Great, thank you. I don't think I missed any Legislators. So there's a lot of people I mean, so far, we're on 40, 36 participants, which is great, I imagine more people will be coming along. So, again, if you're new, or just joined on, we're asking that you put in the chat, where you, who you are, where you're from, or why you're here or who you're representing anything you want. And Jay will make a point of copying it all at the end, so that we have that all documented. And so with that, we're gonna start with a presentation from Dennis Doyle, from the Department of Planning for Ulster County to talk about the housing work that the county has been doing to date. Dennis.

Dennis Doyle

Thank you, Chair I for the committee's sake and in respect for the Chairs request, we'll we'll try to be as brief as possible. I was going to ask if I could share the screen Jay?

Jay Mahler

All set.

Dennis Doyle

Can everybody see where I'm at now?

Legislator Nolan

Yes.

Dennis Doyle

Is that a yes?

Legislator Nolan

Yes. Ulster County Housing Action Plan

Dennis Doyle

Thank you, Kathy. I will try to run through this as quick as possible. I know we have a lot on our agenda. Ulster County began and we've been in the housing, at the planning department. We've been in the housing game since probably 1974. Working through a number of things. The county Legislature back in 2020 asked us to focus more of our efforts on housing. We began by looking at what statistics that were available in terms of what housing was out there we we produce something called a housing action plan. We released it in January at the end of December and into January of 2021. And had been working on some of those actions in that plant since that time. Just see if I can get this to get down. So we I just just on the goals, we wanted to provide a comprehensive data on the housing area, we wanted to try to give you a sense of what understanding of some of the data that was out there with respect to housing to give you an idea of the breadth of the problem. And also we wanted to identify strategies both at the local at the county level and quite frankly, at the state level as well. That could be used to address some of our housing shortage and housing shortages and housing affordability issues. So that it was literally to try to kick off a county wide conversation. And we've been engaged in that since the plan was since the plan was adopted. We formed a housing Advisory Committee.

I wanted to thank the Legislature and and the executive team who worked together to get come up with the members of that committee. The committee has in a sense disbanded because it completed his efforts, but we've reconstituted a substantial portion of it as an advisory committee for our ongoing work. key insights in the plan, obviously the county's population is aging. Incomes are relatively stagnant. You're going to see a brief slide on this. Prices, housing prices and rents continue to rise, we're going to try to give you the most recent understanding of where we are in terms of rents looking at what they call HUD section eight rents or Housing Choice Voucher rents in median and median fair market rents. nearly 1/3 of the homeowners and more than half of the renters live in unaffordable homes. What we mean by unaffordable is more than 30% of their income is devoted to housing.

And as we all know, COVID has exacerbated these trends. It not only in terms of the cost of homes, the cost of rental but also the availability of the availability of both. Here's a here's a brief chart just wanted to show this. If you don't quintiles being you take the population a divided into five areas, takes a look at 2010-2018 in terms of what happened to income. And it's, it's clear, you can see that the lower third of the population have essentially experienced a much more difficult situation as a relates to 2018, where they were in numbers. And that has also continued on into the COVID work as compared to the highest, the highest income levels. And it's important to recognize that because it starts to suggest what strategies and where you need to reach in terms of income levels in order to make in order to make housing affordable in the county.

This this looks at the village of elegant we have statistics and within the plan for all the communities in Ulster County. I'm sorry, this looks at the statistics of New Paltz. I apologize. Key takeaways here is essentially, incomes are not going up as fast as values and nor as fast as nor as fast as rents. I'm going to stop any questions? Okay, hearing none, I'll move on. This is median single family home prices, it again shows us a similar a similar relationship. And this takes a look at what fair market rent is for a two bedroom apartment versus what incomes are. And there are we've taken a look at income levels in terms of by job description and by category. And what you can see is is that you're really finding that rentals renters need to make a lot more money in order to afford incomes.

And when you translate it out into hourly wages, you need to work 67 hours a week or you need a two person income in order to afford most most rents in the county itself. This takes a look at the air with we tried to map this in terms of where areas are severely cost burdened in terms of household income versus percentage of the renters that the households that are severely cost burdened with respect to with respect to their their housing costs. And there's some anomalies here, you would expect this to occur in the City of Kingston. But Gardiner comes out as an anomaly where essentially the housing costs have essentially gone up faster than the income levels itself. So it's not it's not the key takeaway here, it's pretty much county wide. And it's not necessarily reflected in terms of looking at the urbanized areas within the county as well. So this takes a look at what's happened to single family home prices, they have continued to increase even since this work has been done. And you can see that now the median average sale price is now \$318,000. That was 2020. It's it's past 325 or 330 right now, I'd have a chance to pull that data down. We'll pull that data down for you as we go forward. Any questions? Okay.

I wanted to give you some information that that a lot of the affordable housing groups use in terms of making sure that they can reach areas that are supported by the federal government subsidies, these are HUD income and fair market rents. So you can see in 2021, the the average the median family income in Ulster County was \$90,000. That drops when you look at for income levels, as it relates to low income limits for Section Eight housing work or Housing Choice Voucher work, it drops to \$30,700 For one, and it continues to rise up through there. But you can see for an average family of 4 \$43,900 is a low income is a low income number for Ulster County. And then if you take a look at the fair market rent, which is down below it on the studio, fair market rent noster County, this is 2022 data is \$938 for a studio, and for a single family or for a two bedroom. It's about one, it's about \$1,364 rises up to four bedrooms, if you can find them to over \$2,000.

Chairwoman Walter

Dennis, we have a question about how rent numbers are determined. I think it's like a few slides back. How did you figure out what that average rent?

Dennis Doyle

It's done by HUD, HUD has a methodology they use what something called the 40th percentile. They survey that they do survey work. So it's not done at the county level. It's done by HUD. And what that does is it sets a lot of the income levels for providing subsidies relative to HUD, HUD programs. So in order to reach these in order to reach this, you're starting to look at subsidies to reach income levels on the first graph on the on the number of persons those are the those are subsidies you're going to you're going to look at in terms of reach those income levels. So figure 30% of \$30,750. That's going to be the average rent. The other thing that ends up happening if you're in the housing Choice Voucher Program. Housing Choice Voucher essentially means that you can go out and the government will pick up your your rent up to that level. And you have to pay 30% or 35% of your income or towards towards that towards that number. So if you're out looking for if you're out looking for apartments and you're a single person, you can you can and you can get a studio for \$938 or, or, or a one a one bedroom for \$1,060.

And I will tell you that anecdotal evidence suggests that those folks that actually have housing choice vouchers cannot find housing units that are available at the at these numbers. So even though you have a housing choice voucher, your housing choice voucher that the government will basically pay a portion of your rent, they can't find them with this income levels. And then what ends up happening is they even though they have vouchers, they're literally still looking to try to find housing. Does that answer your question?

Chairwoman Walter

I, well, it was Anthony's. But back to that. There's a follow up. But I think you said it of what percentage of the area median income? Did you say 30? Was that?

Dennis Doyle

30% is is a standard for affordability.

Chairwoman Walter

Right. And they want to point out ...

Dennis Doyle

The includes all of your, that includes all of your costs, that includes your heat, electric, all of those other costs as well. It's not just your rental costs.

Chairwoman Walter

Right. Okay

Rebecca Sauer

Yeah, sorry Can I jump in? I just want to clair, clarify a little bit better.

Chairwoman Walter

Of course, sure, go ahead

Rebecca Sauer

Thank you. Um just to clarify, I understand that 30% of a tenants income is what they're required to pay when they're on Section Eight. But that's not exactly my question. My question is, what percentage of median income is shown in this chart, because if the median income is 90,000, 80%, of the median income is defined as low income, and 60% is defined as low income 50 and 40 gets defined as like very low income and 30% of the median income is extremely low income. So I'm not clear in this chart. This looks like extremely low or very low income to me, and I believe

Dennis Doyle

No, it's

Rebecca Sauer

eligibility goes higher than this.

Dennis Doyle

That's correct. This is low income, I understand what you're talking about. With with eight. This is further divided up when you look at it in terms of income levels into 30%, low income and higher incomes. This is actually the 30%. This is actually the low income numbers. Does that answer your question?

Rebecca Sauer

No, we can follow up after the meeting. No, I don't want to take up too much time.

Chairwoman Walter

Thanks Rebecca. Go ahead Dennis.

Dennis Doyle

So one of the drivers of housing affordability is a very low inventory. Everybody, if you've talked to real estate agents, both anecdotally and otherwise, you realize that there's not a lot of housing out there for inventory. We haven't built a lot of housing in the past, that changes and COVID in terms of demand has, has really looked at and change the time on the time on market. And you've all heard the stories about the bidding wars for homeownership. The same is true for apartment units as well. There's a mismatch of homes being built compared to income. Because there's because of the difficulty in essentially getting approvals and going through the process as well as the cost of materials now, no one is building into the middle. They're all building high end homes, or they're building subsidized homes.

So there is a missing middle here that we're seeing in terms of the availability of homes. In here, there is some discussion about the high cost of development. And then the other thing that's out there is is that there is a lengthy and uncertain approval process. And one of the things that the recommendation here is to try to streamline that. And then in general, there has been a community opposition to new construction and in that occurs that occurs across all levels of affordability from, and all types of housing, from townhomes to condominiums, to apartments as well as to high end homes in the county, we are seeing an uptick in building permits, and an uptick in subdivisions at a county at a county basis. But still getting through the approval process is not as simple as you would think it'd be in a can last years. Any questions?

So one of the things that we wanted to do in the housing study was make sure that we educate and engage the community and the role housing plays on the economy and our neighbors. We're literally finding ourselves in a discussion where the people that are having a discussion about housing are the people that are most familiar with the struggles of people that are trying to find housing because their agency is committed to that mission. And we don't see out at the community level, a lot of the people that are complaining about the fact that they can't find workers or they can't, or they can't, the workers that they're trying to attract can't afford housing here. They don't come to the meetings, they don't show up and, and, and make their voices heard at the various meetings.

So it's the idea of trying to talk about this in a little bit different way. And we've we've looked at one of the things that we've looked at is trying to define affordable housing in a different way, having some discussion about about the language that the lexicon has entered our entered our vocabulary with respect to COVID. And that's what we used to, we are calling the essential worker, we're beginning to identify zoning and regulatory changes, and I will tell you that communities are responding to this. We're proactively identifying sites for new development, the county has done that with respect to its program on Golden Hill. We've also explored scattered site redevelopment, although there's not a lot of opportunities for that, because there's not a lot of properties in large enough clusters to make scattered site redevelopment effective, and then obviously, the streamlined approval process.

And then the work that we've been doing with with the county executive and the Legislature with respect to purchasing and moving through to try to get more supportive housing, whether it be permanent, or emergency housing, that is available, that's available to us. That's the projects that have been funded through ARPA funds and the most recent legislative actions that have been taken. Any questions?

Chairwoman Walter

Yeah, so I'm gonna ask

Dennis Doyle

Yep, to skip through this.

Chairwoman Walter

Yeah, because we want to stop this at 5:30.

Dennis Doyle

Yep, I just want to skip through this. We are looking at housing smart communities. We are this is modeled after the climate smart community program. And we are working with we are working with municipalities and in discussions with respect to what a housing smart community will be. This is a this is a look at the actions that can be taken by communities to become a housing smart community. The question that gets answered in terms of what the county can do with respect to housing smart communities are incentives and disincentives with respect to with respect to housing, the county can provide and other counties do this, they can provide incentives for communities to essentially engage in a program of housing smart communities, they can also provide disincentives with respect to communities that decide not to engage.

We are working on a website right now with respect to this. And you can see above the green lines up here you can see the certification process the housing, smart community actions, we're also working with patterns that essentially provide a provide a look at all of these properties, all of these criteria, and all the things that

communities can do through that certification process. And you can see what we have here in terms of this is a this is a outline of what the website would look like. The county has engaged in housing since 2020 since 1995, we've engaged in something called a community development block grant program. It's a federal program, the county is not an entitlement County, we have to compete annually for these programs. The Legislature has been very supportive of these applications. You must be in a low and moderate income level to do that we do pre two basic kinds of programs. One is housing rehabilitation, and one is homeownership.

Since 2002, we have we have gathered about \$9.2 million in funding. That's direct federal funding from the state for this program. And we've leveraged about a total of about \$22.6 million of additional funds, primarily mortgage funds from banks and HOME funds and other NYSEDA funds that are available with respect to that. The county planning department through through its sub recipient RUPCO is currently working on an \$800,000 housing rehab grant that we hope the Legislature will add funding to to do deep energy improvements to these houses. And we're also working on a \$600,000 homeownership grant. Any questions on those? We the county also has a continuum of care, which is a HUD required a process for getting homeless funding. We have a small contract to essentially make sure that we handle the administration of that program with CARES which is an Albany based outfit nonprofit, as well as RUPCO. We get about 1 million to 1 million 2 funding on an annualized basis for homeless services.

The 2021 program funding was just allowed was just announced. We have about \$1.5 million in homeless housing programs that are split across strengthening programs. Major recipients of these are usually Family of Woodstock, Gateway, the Department of Social Services plays a major role here in terms of making sure that we have a single point of entry and a single point of contact, so that we can access these funds, major functions of a continuum of care are outreach, intake, and assessment for homeless people, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing.

Chairwoman Walter

Dennis, hold on

Dennis Doyle

Any questions on the continuum?

Chairwoman Walter

Oh, sorry. Rashida.

Rashida Tyler

Yes, I just want to go back to the slide about options for homeowners, um, right now I actually have a homeowner who is purchased her home from RUPCO in 2004. The banks would not work with her because so she's part of the original folks who went through the housing crisis of 2007 through 2009. And I believe that it was Deutsche Bank, so she should have been eligible for something covered in anti displacement funding. But she's currently actually going through the process of her home's about to be auctioned. But she started out purchasing it for \$89,000 and now owes \$400,000 on it, because the bank wouldn't work with her. So I'm wondering from those funds that the county received, is there anything to help folks like her?

Dennis Doyle

The Community Development Block Grant funds are not designed to help people that are underwater with respect to their mortgage payments, there are other funds that are available. And I think you mentioned one. In addition, I don't know where this homeowner is, but because of the funding source, and because Kingston has its own community development block grant program, the county is is we're prohibited from funding projects in the City of Kingston with this money, because the city has its own block grant program. Okay, moving on,

Chairwoman Walter

can we get to the end there? How much further do you have?

Dennis Doyle

Now, I'll be very quick, this is a list of the funding that was was provided through the continuum of care, you can see about 1, \$1.5 million, these are the programs that are currently going to be funded, the contracts should start this year. And then I just wanted to give you a look at the major funding resources that are out here in terms of the agencies, Housing and Urban Development, New York State Office of Community Renewal, OTDA, for it's the office of temporary disability assistance, NYSERDA programs, Mental Health Office of Mental Health, the Empire State supportive housing initiative. And then here are the programs that are on the other side that that that are available for housing, this is literally a very, very, very small snapshot of the programs that are available for funding for housing.

And I will tell you, you need a degree in housing in order to in order to essentially navigate some of these programs. And it, it becomes a it becomes a very, it's very competitive, and in many instances, particularly low income, low income housing tax credit program. And, and you really are finding, we're finding ourselves that in order to fund local housing, low income, Housing Tax Credit finance projects, the county or someone has to have a local share to contribute. Otherwise, at the state level, you get you get overlooked in these programs. And that's some of the work that we're putting in front of the Legislature this this month has to do with that, that that needed funding. And that's it. I'm done.

Chairwoman Walter

Thank you. Okay. So there were a couple of questions. And then hopefully, we can start making a plan because again, we're not going to have, we're going to try to use this time before you all have to go at six to have a game plan for how we're moving forward with this, because this is a conversation that's just starting. And it's there's a lot to it. And there's going to be a lot of work to do that we appreciate everybody being a part of. So I have Jackie, and then Marjorie.

Jackie Brownstein

Uh Eve, I didn't know if you're going to address this. You mentioned that you might but I was wondering, Dennis, what are the incentives or disincentives that the county can offer to municipalities to be part of the housing smart community? Because what some of our frustrations are that there are so many different issues in each municipality that block the development of low income and affordable housing.

Dennis Doyle

So just Just quickly, there's a there's a list of them within the housing action plan. We're actually looking at more. But the other, the things that come to mind is number one is to actually help fund communities to do updates to

their zoning statute and updates to their comprehensive plan that have a particular focus on housing. And we would control the scope of services for those plans with the idea that they actually look at areas where they want housing to be built, and create changes in their zoning statutes to essentially streamline that process. That's the first thing we can do. And that's an incentive that essentially, will probably reach the communities that are interested in providing housing.

The other thing that ends up happening is the County, the county has a number of programs that it's considering, an infrastructure program, or another type of program, sales tax sharing, or something of that. So the disincentive or you could either make it a disincentive or incentive, you could start to think about the share of those how that sales tax is distributed. And or it could be a bonus, or it could be a disincentive that says unless there's a housing program within your community, let's not have a conversation with us about investing in your infrastructure or investing or giving you sales tax to move forward. Yeah, there are other things that I can think of as well.

Chairwoman Walter

So yeah, so the the reason why I said that we would talk about that is because I think part of what this group will be doing is really exploring whether there, they want to make recommendations to the Legislature to offer certain incentives or disincentives. So there's the ones that exist now. But what I'm hoping is that part of the work that we do is explore what other ones we might want to have considered. The other. There was I also want to say that there was a question about more statistics and data.

And I want to just speak to that and say, you know, the work that our this group is going to also have to work on is not just the data that we have, and we make sure that report gets generated, please put your email in the chat so that we have your emails if we don't have it. So you can see that information. But also there's probably there might be more data that we feel we need. And and that's one of the pieces that we're going to have to work on is like what data is missing that we need to fill in. So Marjorie, do you have a question?

Marjorie Leopold

Yes. My question is, Dennis, are there incentives to communities to assist in creating more accessory dwelling units?

Dennis Doyle

That is a that's a The short answer is there could be I will tell you that since the since the discussion that was started back in 2020. And moving in to where we are now. We are seeing community after community re and also there has been proposed state legislation which is not included in the budget. But the we have seen community after community begin to amend their zoning statutes to provide a more flexible accessory a what they call ADU zoning statute we have, I think we I think we've reviewed four of them in the past in the past year, with respect to changing how ADUs are ADUs are accepted, with a lot more flexibility. I'd also say that the communities are also examining short term rentals with the idea that to look at caps, or some way of dealing with non owner, non owner occupied short term rentals, because there are a significant amount in some communities, there's a significant amount of short term rentals that are eating into housing stock as well.

Chairwoman Walter

Thanks, um Marc

Deputy Executive Rider

really quick on if anybody just googles the housing, Ulster County Housing action plan that takes you through a lot of the initiatives and the recommendations and promoting the development of accessory dwelling units as part of that incentive, that will be part of the housing smart communities initiative. And I would encourage everybody who's in this meeting to read the housing action plan, if you haven't

Chairwoman Walter

Yes, I mean, that's excellent. And and very true. And, you know, with two pieces, one is it's important to know what work has been done, at least on the county level. But the other important part is to recognize that that's, that's the floor, not the ceiling, right. So this is a very creative, diverse group. And so there might be ideas that this group comes up with that go, you know, extend even further from what those are. Um, so with that in mind, you know, one consideration I had from my, you know, from as I process this is, I know, I feel like one of the challenges in really identifying solutions, in, in community kind of conversations to is that it's a very It's such a complex the word housing means a so many things to so many different people. And the needs are very different depending on where people are at.

And so what I felt, and I, feel free to push back on me if you want, I'm good with that. But that maybe one of the first pieces we do is recognize that it might be a very slightly, not completely, but a slightly different conversation. When we're talking about how do you deal with what do we need to do for emergency transitional housing? What do we need to do for the people who are either homeless or home unstable, and that the the short term and the long term solutions for that population might be a slightly different conversation to what do we do for those people who, you know, are, there may be housing unstable, but at a slightly higher level, where there's just no access to affordable rent affordable homes, you know, apartments and homes for them given how high the rental costs with the last lack of rental rentals? And what do we want to do in order to improve that, which might be a slightly different conversation for what do we do about housing for young families who want you know, families or individuals who may want to own a home but can't possibly be buying these houses for \$400,000?

And, and, and, and so the thought was that if we divide those three areas a little bit, then we might be able to sort of identify within each bucket, what kinds of different data we need, what kinds of different solutions we might want, all recognizing, of course, it's a continuum, right? I mean, that anyone who's currently homeless, we would love to see in a stable home of their own one day. But, but that's, you know, if we build it, we're building each section up. Um, but again, my sense was that when we lump it all together, it becomes harder to find clear solutions. And so I'm going to make that suggestion of sort of seeing these somewhat stratified in our conversation. Legislator Erner. And then I have Nolan. And then I have Dawson

Phil Erner

Uh, Legislator Nolan hasn't spoken yet.

Chairwoman Walter

Okay sure

Phil Erner

And neither has director Dawson.

Chairwoman Walter

Okay, thank you.

Legislator Nolan

Thank you, Phil. Um, yeah, I think the idea of separating the categories can help us. Um, but I also think one of the factors we need to consider is where the county has the ability to take action. And that may be different in those different realms.

Chairwoman Walter

Absolutely

Legislator Nolan

So I think we have to keep them on the page, if you will, even though I think we can focus on them at different times. Because we may get have to push something, when we just reach a point, though, where the if the county has, doesn't have a good way to take effective action, then we have may have to shift to a category where we can

Chairwoman Walter

Right

Legislator Nolan

And identify who it is that, you know, the idea that municipalities can play a big role here. And then the county with incentives, I think is is a real breakthrough idea here, because we've known that municipalities can do this and should be doing it, but they haven't been doing it. So

Chairwoman Walter

Right. Yeah, that's great. thank you. And it also reminds me so you know, in this conceptualization, in my mind, you know, not only is it a, you know, a slightly different conversation, again, the data is a little different, the solutions are a little different for those three groups. But the other thing that was very helpful that, you know, Dennis, sort of illustrated in his presentation, is we're talking about what the county Legislature can do, right, or the county can do. And so there's three different areas that we can do something, we can do something alone as a county, you know, we could invest in something, just us alone, and just build something or, you know, we could do something in a partnership with an organization. And so there's those kinds of things.

Oh, I'm sorry, back to county alone. We can create policies, we can create an expectation for the whole county that we would, you know, create a certain number of emergency housing by a certain year, you know, we can create policy. Or we could also just build and do things that way. We can do partnerships, and then we can think of incentives and disincentives. And so what I'm hoping speaking back to what Legislator Nolan said is that within each group, whether you're working on thinking about emergency transitional, then you're thinking, what can the county do alone? What can it do in partnership, what can it do and its incentives and decent if disincentives the same thing for the affordable, what can they do alone? What can they do in partnership. And so I think that that's that will be a model that should be along each with the idea that eventually we have a bunch of potential resolutions that this team this group produces that the Legislature can then consider. Nina.

Nina Dawson

Thank you, Legislator Eve. I just want to say I agree with everything you just said. And I also agree with what Legislator Nolan said, as well. Um remembering to put so many different things on the page, when we're when we're actually thinking this through, um, I. And that will, you mentioned policies, Eve, and that that to me is very, very important. And that's how we can make sure that the, there's a there's a message from Rashida, I believe, that says if we divide the conversation in the most vulnerable populations, I think that's very thoughtful to make sure that we remember that. Which brings me back to sort of what Rashida mentioned, but elderly, there are a lot of elderly people that are in housing, that have these old mortgages that are not really well thought out. So policies will become very, very helpful in us being able to help situations like that, as well as vulnerable people that are in situations where they don't need a home. But they need housing they need they their need is more immediate for housing as opposed to buying a home. So I think that all of your points are very well taken. Thank you Eve.

Chairwoman Walter

Thanks. And, you know, I see, I hear your point, Rashida, I also think that that's up to us. I mean, if we don't, if we make sure our most vulnerable people are not on the backburner, then they won't. And so I'm actually I get concerned that when it the conversation is too broad, we often miss our most vulnerable. And so you know, I could see it could see it going both ways, but I think that it's up to us to make sure that we're considering not just the most vulnerable overall, but within each, you know, area, just like Nina pointed out, like, you know, there are vulnerability, people are more vulnerable, and at all levels as well. But, you know, I think that I think that the people who are in this room, Zoom Room are probably pretty committed to making sure that the most vulnerable people's needs are, are, you know, attended to. Phil, is your hand still up? Or are you? Okay, so do you want to go now?

Phil Erner

Oh, yes, please. So we, I sent an email to folks who are pre registered, if you will, for this. But basically, I want to hear us talk more about displacement and preventing that form of violence in our communities. I want us to talk about the fact that housing is seen as a market and how that really doesn't serve most of us and contributes to that displacement. And finally, I just want us to be following impacted individuals, and they are who should lead these conversations.

Chairwoman Walter

Yeah, sounds great. I mean, I think, again, this just points out to what a big conversation this all is, and why we are, this isn't the, this isn't the last, this is just the start. And, you know, ideally, because I also respect all of your time, you know, it's, I want to make sure that before we end at six, we have a clear plan of what's next. That, you know, I've had, we had other successes, you know, some of you who are on this, we're on the criminal justice reform task force, it's like, this is a process that over time, we will come to some real strong, you know, some some actions that we can take and and these conversations should be had, but I want to make sure there's space for those conversations that they really actually can unravel and not and we can't hold everybody for hours and hours and hours in meetings near the end of the day. So but they are going to happen.

We're just gonna, I'm just gonna ask the for you all to be you know, consider this fact that at this meeting, we're going to set the path forward and and divide up a little bit and have subcommittees so that we can get into those deeper conversations that that Legislator Erner talked about and that Rashida brought up like I these conversations should be happening but they I, you know, we're, we're gonna have them like just this is the start of this whole

process. So um Rashida, I'm gonna let, gonna go to you, but then afterwards I'd like to really kind of break down with you all kind of what our next steps should look could look like. So that we actually leave this meeting with a plan and not just a conversation, I want to keep going forward and have a, you know, set an agenda for what's next. So go ahead, Rashida.

Rashida Tyler

Thank you so much. Um, and I'll be brief, because I totally understand this is just the beginning, you know, of the conversation. But I did want to expand on kind of the reasoning of not breaking and segmenting conversations up. Um there's a great book out there called the Undeserving Poor. And it's looking at how particularly policymakers look at different populations as being deserving and undeserving of assistance. And so those judgments, whether we're aware of them or not do sneak into the process. And when you have a continuum, where you're looking at, say, emergency housing, middle housing, or housing for young professionals and housing for retirees and families, when you look at it as a spectrum, one broad spectrum of housing, you're not really segmenting up who is deserving, or what types of assistance, you know, people are deserving of based on their economic situation. So I think those kinds of conversations are helpful. And I hope to see that, but I'll again, be brief. Thanks.

Chairwoman Walter

Thank you Rashida. And you know, let me just clarify that the intent of dividing it is also, we it's impossible to have a functional meeting with 40 people. And so, you know, Another consideration is that we can divide it in according to those three elements, we could divide it where one, one group works on policy statements, policies for the county, while another one works on partnerships. And another one works on incentives and disincentives, but somehow that that we're not going to move forward with having ideas as a as a as a committee of the whole of 40. And I want to always, there might be more people who we want to have involved in these conversations who aren't even here yet. And so the the intent to divide is not to create a social structural division, right, the intent to divide is to have efficiency and be able to have smaller meetings that can get come back to these bigger meetings in some reasonable manner.

So if someone wants to suggest a better way of dividing us into smaller groups, I'm happy to take it I mean, we could just do alphabetically divide by smaller groups, but then we might be duplicating efforts. And we might be, you know, asking for the same thing. So in my mind, while I get I, I hear what you're saying Rashida and others are saying, the idea of the division is a practicality but knowing that we always have to bring this back to the whole group also. So if there is a better way of splitting us up, I'll hear it, but if not, I'm, I'm gonna continue with that, that initial process. Nina?

Nina Dawson

Eve, really quick, I just want to piggyback on what you're saying, I think we have to break it down, because there's no way that I think I like the idea of coming back together. My suggestion is that those that are in the group of 40 right now or whomever joins, that they get the opportunity to to be with a group that is about whatever their passion or whatever their interests are, like. So for instance, I'm worried about solutions for homeless teens, homeless youth, and also elderly, and so on and so forth. So Phil Erner pointed out a lot of good things, he should be able to have the opportunity to be in a group that's going to address those issues. That's the first step

Chairwoman Walter

Yeah, by all means. It's not I have no desire to decide who's in which group. I want you all get to pick your own for sure. Yeah, Jackie.

Jackie Brownstein

I would just urge to sign all of us are in other groups that meet regularly that whatever we do, I, I, for instance, couldn't connect to a group, a smaller group that's going to meet often, we have to really think about a process that is going to be able to be practical for the people who are here.

Chairwoman Walter

Absolutely. Yeah. Yes, no, that's an excellent point. Many of us have many, many meetings as it is. And I think using communication back and forth for emails, really having clear tasks. So in my mind, you know, the I outlined in the agenda some considerations of how the group can work where it starts off. Each group starts by figuring out relevant stakeholders like is anyone missing from their group that might that wasn't in this 40, that might want to be in these conversations, that there is some team leader, that you figure out what kind of knowledge you still need, what kind of information and we can sort of, it could get segwayed through me so that it's not just bombarding, whether it's Dennis or whoever, so that we get the information you need, and then really coming up with some ideas.

So I'll just ask one more time, is there another suggestion of how to divide us. And if there's not, I will continue with this original idea. So I don't know. I mean, not to put you in the place and on the, you know, Rashida or Phil who, but if you have an idea of how we could break up into smaller groups, I'll be happy to hear them.

Legislator Nolan

The only thing that I can think of Legislator, Chair Walter is that if we maybe we should take some of the actions we're already working on, and use them as jumping off points. Um, it could also be the list of things that the planning department has proposed, and that hasn't worked. Um, because I think if we work from proposed actions, then we're less likely to get that splitting off of that can happen if you're going by either age or economic status, or geographic area. Um, the three pies that you proposed a policy and incentives, and I'm not sure what the third one was

Chairwoman Walter

partnerships

Legislator Nolan

Partnerships, those can be helpful, but that I am a little worried that they do go in though they spread us out instead of keeping us focused on action items. So I'm not, maybe we need to do some further thinking about it, or maybe start with what you propose, and then see how it works.

Chairwoman Walter

Okay, Rebecca?

Rebecca Sauer

Yeah, my thought was just rather than segmenting it out by population and type of person or family that needs assistance, maybe looking at policy interventions and splitting it up that way, like look at zoning and land use in one group and look at, you know, tax incentives in another group or, you know, just, I'm not sure exactly what the categories are, right. It's hard to come up with in a few minutes. But, but I do worry about segmenting it out by by, for lack of a better word, like population or type of household that needs assistance, because I I agree with what Rashida is saying about the dynamic that creates

Chairwoman Walter

right. No, I appreciate it. I mean, it's really again, about figuring out an efficiency. So I, you know, I think that that's, that opens up a possibility, what you just suggested, and as you said, We need time to think about it. So here's what I'm proposing. One, if you have not put your email in the chat, put your email in the chat, just so we don't lose any of you. Two, what I'm going to suggest is that you take time and think about this question of how do we divide and conquer, so to speak, um probably a bad choice of words right now. Um, but But what what would be the most efficient and effective approach so that we really, you know, I do not believe in meeting for meeting sake, right, I want us to be meeting and come up with some actual real actions that we're proposing to the Legislature.

And so. So, what I'll ask you to do is you have, you should have my email, and if not, well, when I have this email, I will send out a minutes and, and have my email, and any idea you have of a reasonable thoughtful way for us to break up and, and, and have these discussions in small groups knowing we can always come together and we will come together, but to allow us to do work groups, please share them. We'll explore what the different ideas are. And, you know, there's enough of diverse Legislators here to sort of have this conversation at our committee meeting, of which which way and this also allows at that point, for us to be able to prepare it to the executives office, whoever if we're being asking for data or anything else we're asking so that they understand, you know, and also we have our DSS commissioner here and how you know, to so that they'll know how we're going to need their resources and information. So does that sound like a reasonable plan is that you really all think very hard about a reasonable way to break this apart, again, knowing we will all come together, also. Send them to me. And we'll discuss them as a committee and kind of select a stratification of some sort to, for lack of a better word. And then we'll reach out to all of you again, and give you an opportunity to sort of sign up for which group you're on.

As far as how often you meet and what you're giving. I mean, this is going to be on you, if you're on a committee, and the committee decides to meet once a week, and you can't come every time you won't. I mean, you know, we're gonna just do our best all of us as we can. So does that sound reasonable to everybody? Okay, um, I really appreciate it, you know, I want to, I hope that the next time we all meet as a group, it's not even 40. It's 80, like, I hope you all stay with this. And, and, and, and you bring other people into this. And even when we have these groups, it's not like, it's just us and no one else's. You know, you can bring people once we know how our breaking up. We want to hear from everyone. And I hope that those groups that really give the time that I know, Legislator Erner really wanted of letting people lend their voices, that I think those groups will give that opportunity for people to really talk about their experiences in their voices. And then it'll have just more, it'll have more space. It's harder to do with 40 people.

So with that, thank you all for taking this time here. Please. We're, this is just the beginning. We have a lot of work to do. And I hope you all are remain committed to it. Legislator Erner, you have your last word. Our last word? Yeah. We just had a question from Anthony tampon here about the next meeting or next. Any specific thing about when we're going to decide on this the next step? Yeah, so our committee meeting, so ideally, thank you for bringing that up. So our next committee meeting, just one of the Legislators have the date of our Health, Human Services, and Housing meeting.

Deputy Clerk Mahler

April the 11th

Chairwoman Walter

April 11. So if you have an idea for how we divide, you must please give it to me before April 10. And then at our April 11, meeting, we'll go over them. And then we will communicate back to all of you what they are and give you you know, a Google sheet or something that you can sign up for which one you want to be on. Does that sound good? Okay, so by April 10, please think about it long and hard. Any thoughts you have, um, I'm excited to see the ideas. And then we'll talk about them as a committee and share them back with everybody and everything we do in terms of next meetings, but it'll all will, we'll share it with everybody. You know, a suggestion of when the committee should meet, we'll probably, I'll start with making one Legislator, committee head for each subcommittee just for the first meeting. And then once you guys all meet, you can figure out how you want to manage that. But just so that there is a first meeting of each of those subgroups. Okay. Thank you all have a wonderful evening. I appreciate that you all took this time, and I look forward to continuing this conversation over the next several months, at least.

Legislator Nolan

Thank you, everybody.

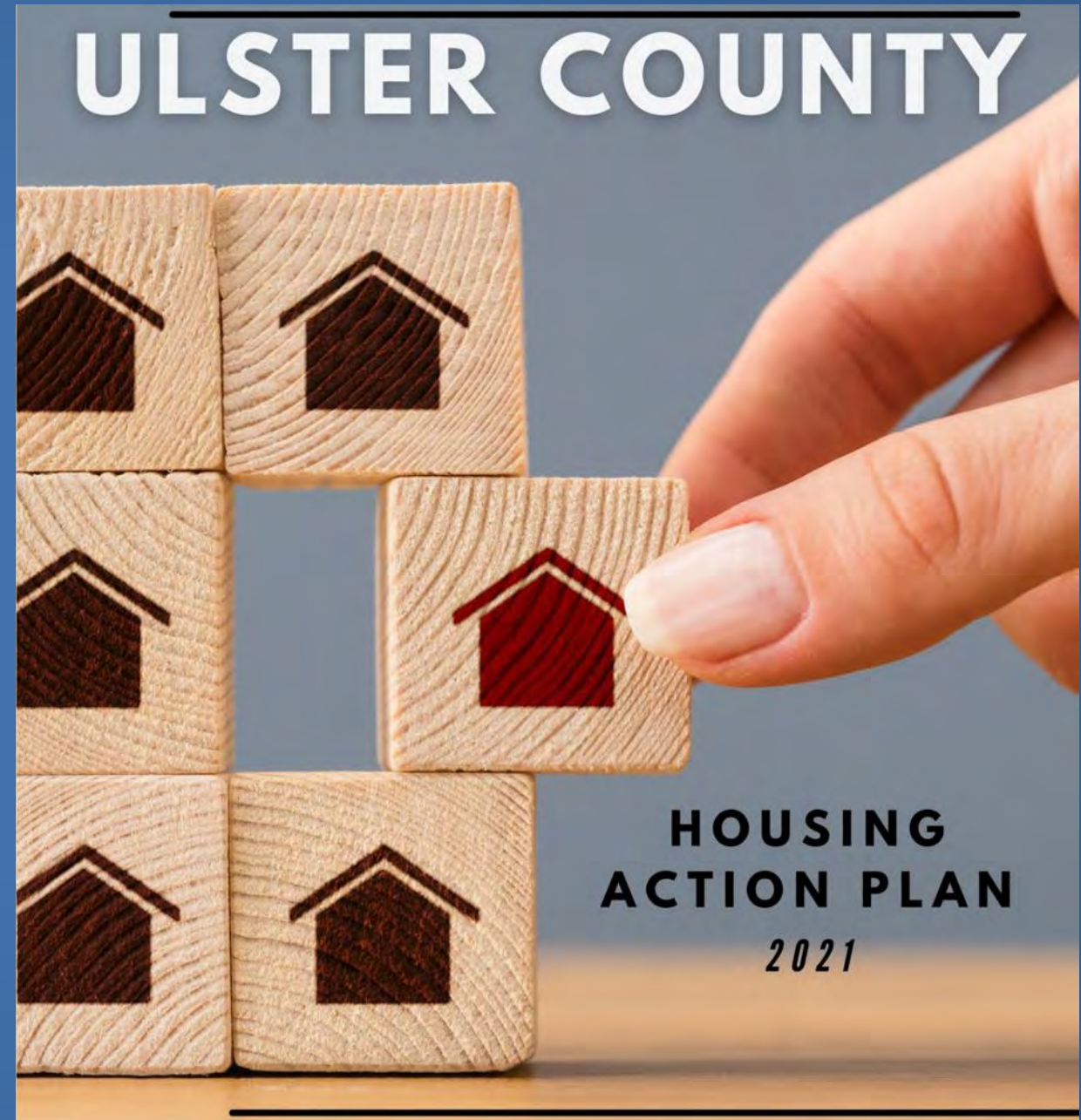
Ulster County Housing Action Plan

Ulster County
Health, Human Services & Housing
Committee

March 29, 2022



Ulster County Housing Action Plan



Ulster County Housing Action Plan Goals

- Provide comprehensive data on housing issues in Ulster County
- Broaden understanding of the factors that influence housing affordability
- Identify strategies to increase housing supply
- Kickoff a community-wide conversation about working together to address our housing crisis



Ulster County Housing Advisory Committee

- Kathy Germain, Vice President of Housing Services, RUPCO
- Rick Alfandre, CEO, Alfandre Architecture
- Hayes Clement, Real Estate Broker, Berkshire Hathaway
- Tom Smiley, CEO, Mohonk Mountain House
- Richard Parete, Supervisor, Town of Marbletown
- Laura Petit, Ulster County Legislator
- Deb DeWan, Woodstock Housing Committee
- Erica Brown, Community Outreach Coordinator, Radio Kingston
- Debbie Briggs, VP, Human Resources and Community Relations, Ellenville Regional Hospital



Key insights from the data

- Ulster County's population is aging
- Incomes are stagnant or declining, except for the highest earners
- Housing prices and rents continue to rise
- Nearly one third of homeowners and more than half of renters live in unaffordable homes
- COVID has exacerbated these trends



Incomes have fallen for all but the highest earners

Ulster County Income Quintile Means 2010 and 2018

	Lowest Quintile	Second Quintile	Third Quintile	Fourth Quintile	Highest Quintile	Top 5 Percent
2010	\$16,521	\$40,736	\$66,269	\$99,466	\$196,856	\$327,798
2018	\$14,161	\$36,687	\$63,283	\$99,037	\$208,946	\$358,098
% change	-14.3%	-9.9%	-4.5%	-0.4%	6.1%	9.2%

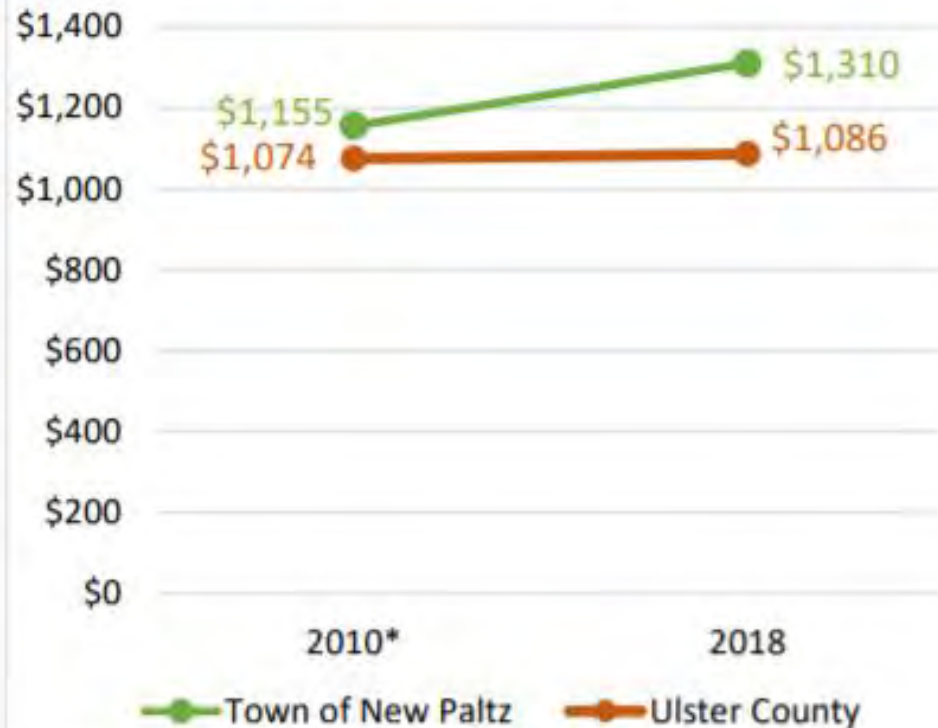
*2010 Income adjusted for inflation

Source: U.S. Census - American Community Survey 2010 to 2018



Rents are up more than renter incomes

Change in Median Gross Rent
(Village of New Paltz included)



Change in Median Household
Income of Renters
(Village of New Paltz included)

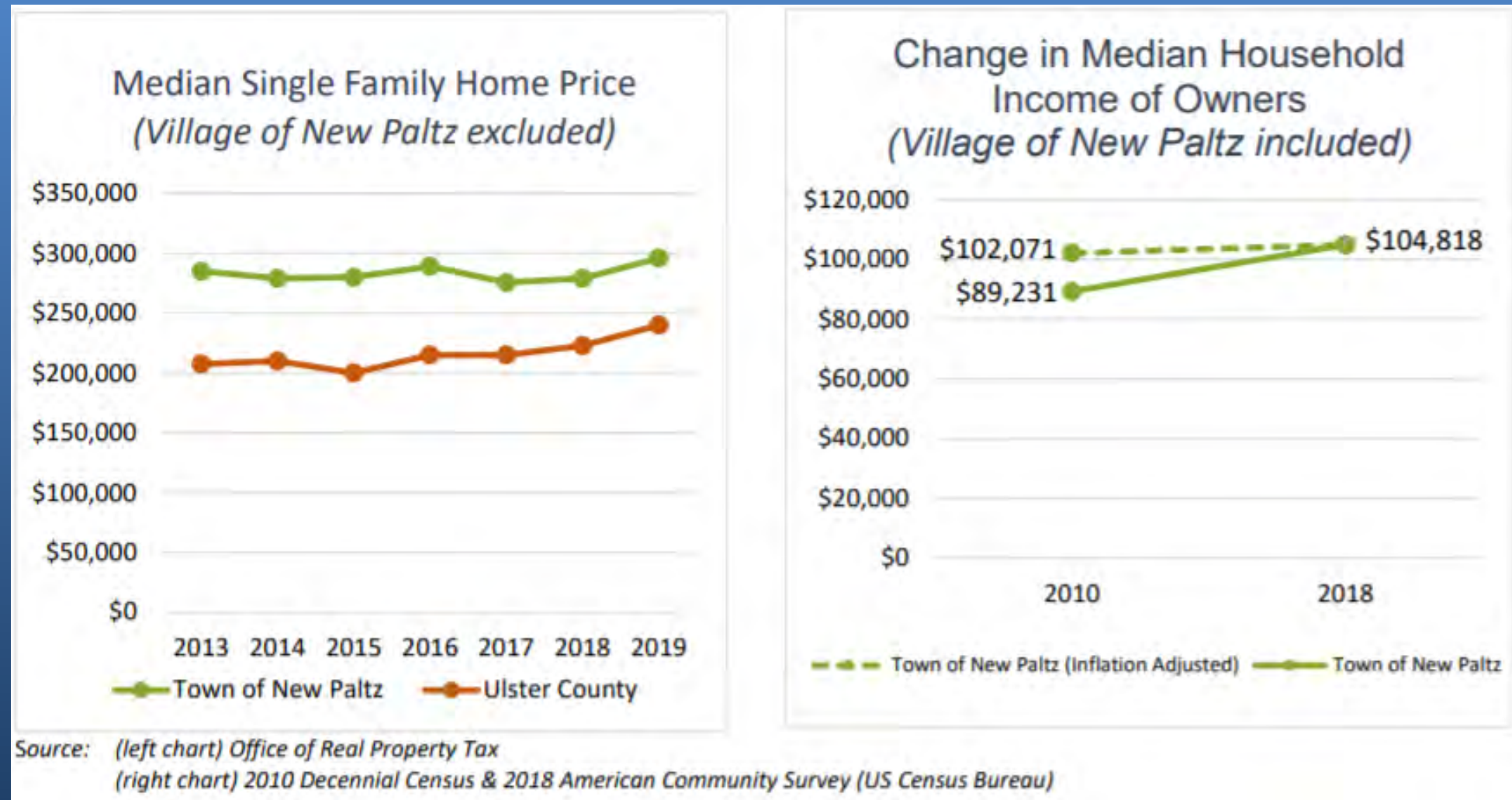


Source: 2010 Decennial Census & 2018 American Community Survey (US Census Bureau)

*2010 median rent is inflation adjusted to 2018 dollars



Homeowner incomes are stagnant while home prices increased

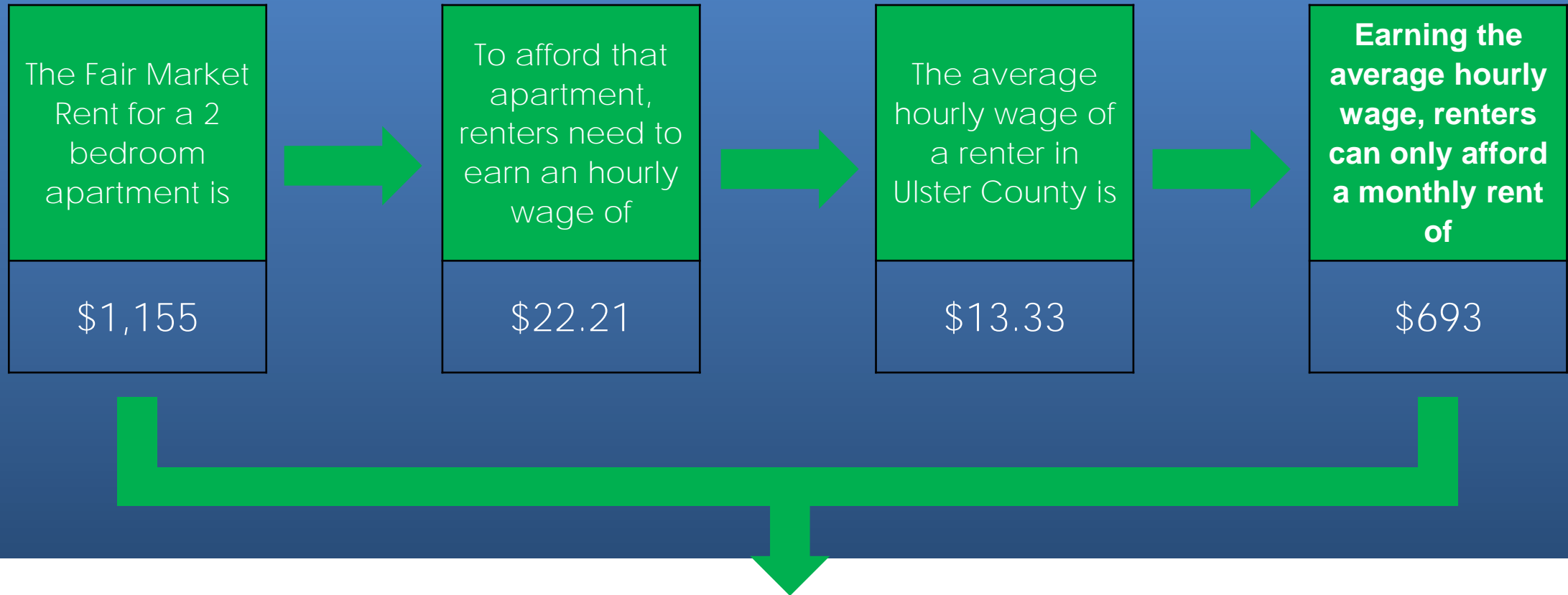


Salaries in our top employment sectors are insufficient to carry housing costs

Sector	% of Ulster Jobs	Average Wage
Government	21.5%	\$60,291
Healthcare Care and Social Assistance	16.3%	\$43,258
Retail	14.2%	\$30,475
Accommodation and Food Services	12.3%	\$22,288
Manufacturing	5.5%	\$50,121



For many, housing is Out of Reach



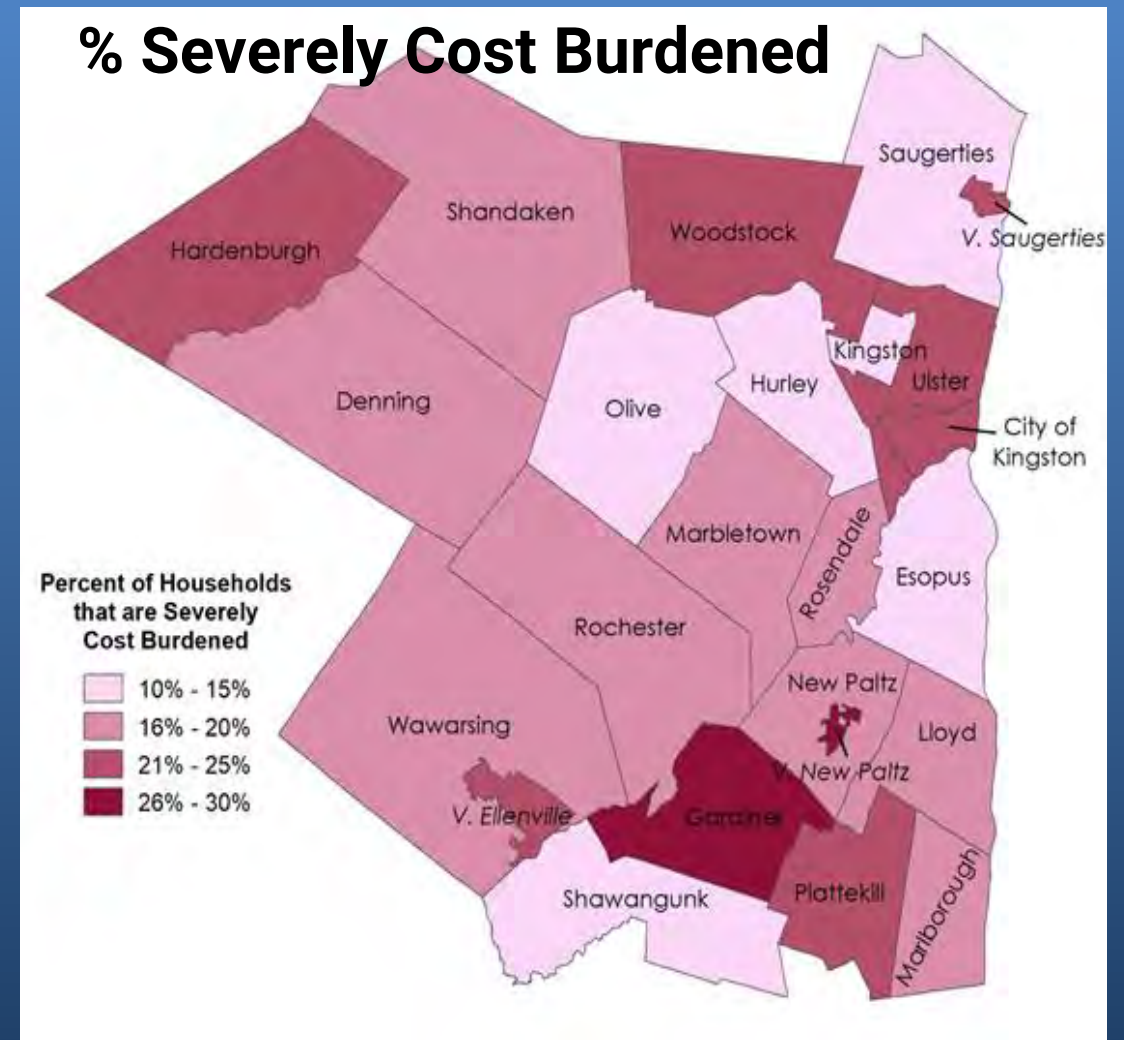
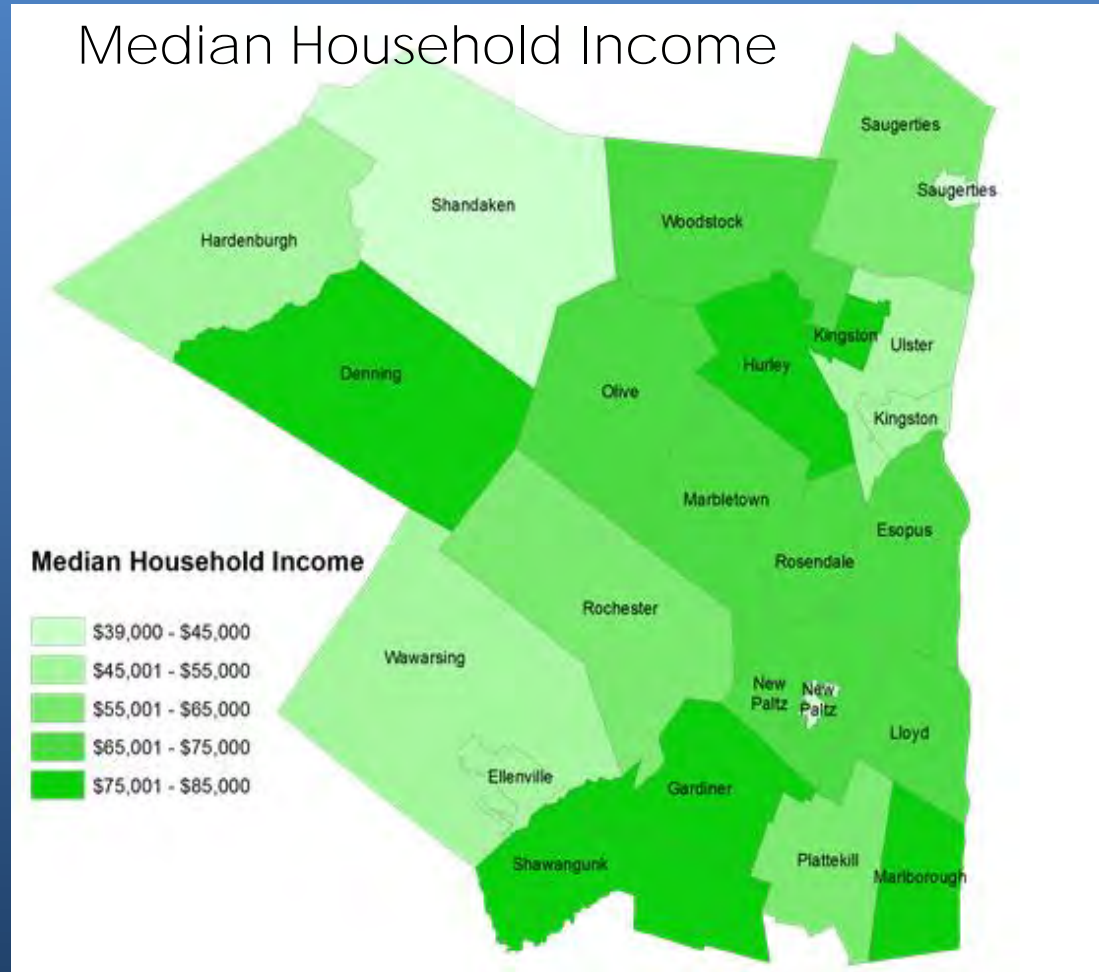
To afford the Fair Market Rent, someone earning the average wage would need to work

67 hours per week

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition



Affordability challenges vary across the County



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey 2018



COVID has only exacerbated these trends

Single Family Homes								
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Count	1,123	1,284	1,379	1,609	1,672	1,649	1,701	1,496
Median Sale Price	\$209,000	\$210,000	\$200,000	\$215,000	\$215,135	\$224,500	\$242,050	\$266,550
Average Sale Price	\$237,236	\$245,206	\$236,028	\$245,080	\$249,043	\$255,400	\$278,357	\$318,037

**Through October 2020*

Source: Office of Real Property Tax Services



HUD Income and Fair Market Rents

HUD 2021 Low Income Limits Defined by number of persons

Median	Persons							
2021	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
\$90,100	\$30,750	\$35,150	\$39,550	\$43,900	\$47,450	\$50,950	\$54,450	\$57,950

HUD 2022 Fair Market Rents defined by number of bedrooms

Studio	1	2	3	4
\$938	\$1,060	\$1,364	\$1,794	\$2,018



Drivers of housing unaffordability

- Very low inventory
- Very little new construction, except on the very high end
- Mismatch in homes built and demand - the “missing middle”
- High cost of development - raw materials, labor and land, infrastructure
- Lengthy and uncertain approval process
- Community opposition to new construction



Strategies to increase housing supply

- Educate and engage the community on the role housing plays in our economy, our neighbors' well-being, and the health of our communities
- Identify zoning and regulatory changes that can increase supply
- Proactively identify sites for new development
- Explore scattered site redevelopment, in addition to larger projects
- Streamline the approval process
- Increase the supply of supportive and transitional housing



What can municipalities do?

- Join the county's **Housing Smart Communities** program: take the pledge, engage the community, work through the menu of actions, and receive County incentive support
- Create a municipal **Housing Action Plan**: assess the needs specific to your community, identify barriers to housing development and ways to address them, map out where to build and where to preserve
- **Designate sites** for housing development and release Requests for Qualifications to seek developers
- **Above all, lead**: engage residents and business and community leaders on the urgent need to tackle the crisis that is reshaping our communities



Housing Smart Communities Initiative

- Modeled on the Climate Smart Communities program
- Municipalities choose from a menu of actions
- Certification in the program opens access to County Open Space and Infrastructure funds

Join the Program and Engage the Community	Establish a Community Outreach and Educational Campaign on the Importance of Developing a Range of Housing	Create a Municipal Housing Action Plan
Implement Upzoning and Mandatory Affordability	Adopt an Affordable Housing Overlay District	Streamline the Approval Process
Issue Municipal Term Sheets	Issue Request for Concepts (RFC) for Selected Sites	Implement Expedited Permitting for Energy Efficient Housing
Adopt and Enforce High Efficiency Building Codes	Implement a Housing Rehabilitation Program	Adopt Short Term Rental Regulations
Promote the Development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	Adopt Existing Real Property Tax Laws	Create Innovative Housing Solutions



Housing Smart Communities Initiative



Ulster County Housing Action Plan



Ulster County
Housing Smart
Communities Initiative

[Community Login](#)

ABOUT ▾ WHY GET CERTIFIED CERTIFICATION PROCESS HOUSING SMART ACTIONS ▾ PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES ▾ CONTACT



Headline Here


What is the Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative?

The Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative (UCHSCI) is an Ulster County program that supports communities across the county to meet their housing needs. Through the UCHSCI, Ulster County provides incentives, guidance, and support for local communities that are tackling their housing supply and affordability challenges. Municipalities receive UCHSCI Certification after a completion of a certain number of weighed actions toward the creation, preservation, and support for housing for all members of the community.

Housing Smart Communities Initiative




Ulster County Housing Action Plan




CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

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BENEFITS OF INITIATIVE

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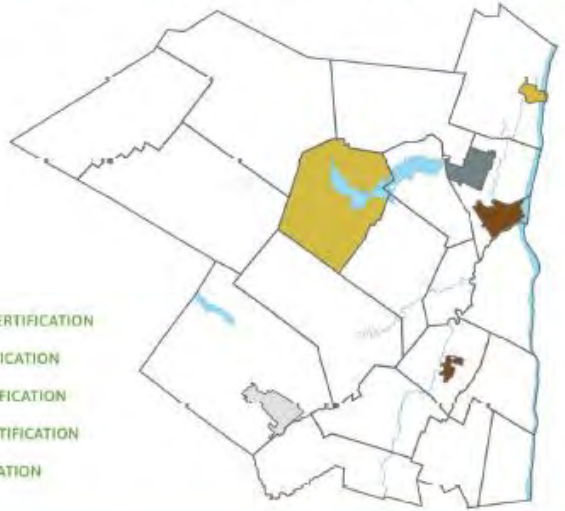


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Ulster County Municipalities Certification Levels


Hover over a municipality to view certification level.
Click to visit that municipality's progress page.




- PLATINUM CERTIFICATION
- GOLD CERTIFICATION
- SILVER CERTIFICATION
- BRONZE CERTIFICATION
- NO CERTIFICATION



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



TBD



KEY STATISTICS

Ulster County Community Development Block Grant Program

- Ulster County is a non-entitlement municipality - compete annually for CDBG Funds
- Must be low and moderate income to receive benefits
- Since 2002 \$9.2 million in funding and leveraged \$22.6M in additional funds
- Assisted 332 households

Scatter Site (county wide N/I City of Kingston)

1. Homeownership Program

Low- Moderate Income eligible
gap financing

Zero interest loans with automatic
reduction in principle every year.

– Fully paid back in 5-10 years

2. Housing Rehabilitation Program

Low- Moderate Income eligible
financing for major system repairs
and code compliance



Ulster County Continuum of Care

- HUD required self directing collaborative body that coordinates housing and services for funding for homeless families
- Sponsored by the County Planning Department through a contract with CARES and RUPCO
- 2021 (Just Announced) Award \$1.55 M over 13 programs. UC Department of Social Services

Major Functions:

- Outreach, intake, and assessment in order to identify service and housing needs and provide a link to the appropriate level of both;
- Emergency shelter to provide an immediate and safe alternative to sleeping on the streets, especially for homeless families with children;
- Transitional housing with supportive services to allow for the development of skills that will be needed once permanently housed; and
- Permanent and permanent supportive housing to provide individuals and families with an affordable place to live with services if needed.



Ulster County Continuum of Care

NY-608 - Kingston/Ulster County CoC

FOW Adult CMS Families (2021)	CoCR	\$166,300
FOW Adult CMS SRO (2021)	CoCR	\$289,621
FOW DV CE (2021)	CoCR	\$15,000
FOW HUD DV BONUS (2021)	CoC	\$141,994
FOW MidWay (2021)	CoCR	\$91,667
FOW RRH DVS (2021)	CoCR	\$91,495
FOW RRH Families (2021)	CoCR	\$111,096
FOW SHP Families (2021)	CoCR	\$171,241
GCI Ulster - Family Supported	CoCR	\$47,981
People Home again Project FY21	CoCR	\$269,210
Ulster CoC HMIS (2021)	CoCR	\$70,350
Ulster CoC Planning Project (2021)	CoC	\$39,353
Ulster County Coordinated Entry Project (2021)	CoCR	\$43,988

NY-608 Total :	\$1,549,296
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Major Funding Resources

Agencies

- Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- NYS Office of Community Renewal (OCR)
- NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)
- New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
- NYS Office of Mental Health
- Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative

Programs

- Housing Choice Voucher Program
- HOME Program
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative
- Community Development Block Grant Program
- Multifamily Building Performance Program
- Tax Credits – Historic, New Market, Brownfields

