



GLOSSARY OF HOUSING TERMS

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) / Casitas

Smaller, independent residential units located on the same lot as a single-family home, often used as rentals or for extended family.

Adaptive Reuse

The process of repurposing old or underutilized buildings, such as warehouses or factories, into housing or other new uses.

Affordable Housing

Housing that is considered affordable when the occupant is paying no more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage, including utilities.

Average Median Income (AMI)

The midpoint of a region's income distribution. Housing programs often use AMI to determine eligibility for affordable housing.

Cost Burden

When a household spends more than 30% of its income on housing costs, leading to financial strain and difficulty affording other necessities like food, transportation, and healthcare.

Density

The number of housing units per unit of land area, such as units per acre. Higher density often refers to more compact development, like apartment buildings.

Eviction

The legal process by which a landlord removes a tenant from rental property, typically for non-payment of rent or violation of lease terms.

Fair Market Rent (FMR)

The estimated amount that a property in a given area can command in the open market, used by government programs to determine rent subsidies.

Gap Financing

Additional funding needed to cover the difference between the total cost of a housing project and the amount covered by primary financing and other subsidies, often provided by government or nonprofit sources.



Housing First

An approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness before addressing other needs like employment or health.

Housing Insecurity

A situation where individuals or families face challenges in maintaining stable and affordable housing, often due to financial strain or the risk of eviction.

Housing Trust Fund

Created in 1988 with revenues from thirty-five percent (35%) of the state's unnamed, unclaimed property fund increasing to fifty-five percent (55%) of the fund in 1998. It invests in affordable housing development, homelessness prevention, rural housing projects, emergency home repairs, supportive housing, and rental assistance.

Inclusionary Zoning

Local policies that require or incentivize developers to include a certain percentage of affordable housing units in new residential developments.

Low-Income Housing

Housing that is affordable to households with incomes at or below a certain threshold, often subsidized by government programs.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

A federal program that provides tax credits to developers of affordable housing projects, reducing their tax liability in exchange for creating and maintaining affordable rental units. Some states also offer additional tax credits to further incentivize affordable housing development.

Middle Housing

A range of housing types between single-family homes and large apartment buildings, including duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and small apartment complexes, often used to increase housing diversity and density in neighborhoods.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Housing that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to help people with serious, chronic health issues, including mental illness, substance abuse disorders, and disabilities.



Public Housing

Housing provided by the government for low-income families, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities at reduced rent levels.

Section 8

A federal program that provides vouchers to low-income individuals and families to help pay for private rental housing.

Set-Back

The minimum distance that a building must be set back from a property line, street, or other designated area, often determined by zoning laws.

Subsidized Housing

Housing that receives financial assistance from government programs to lower the rent for low-income tenants.

Transitional Housing

Temporary housing that helps individuals and families transition from homelessness to permanent housing, usually combined with supportive services.

Voucher Program

Government programs that provide financial assistance to low-income families or individuals to help them afford private rental housing.

Zoning Laws

Local regulations that determine how land can be used, including what types of housing can be built in certain areas. These can impact the availability of affordable housing.

