

Meet Our Community's Housing Needs (Theme 4)

Statement of Ideal

Remain a community first and resort second by ensuring that at least 65% of the community workforce lives in Teton County, Wyoming.

What does this theme address?

- 4.1 – Housing for Diverse Population
- 4.2 – Requirements for Workforce Housing (Redevelopment and Development)
- 4.3 – Preservation of Workforce Housing
- 4.4 – Construction of Workforce Housing

As noted in the 2007 Housing Assessment, the social and economic vitality of the valley depends on a strong local workforce.

Workforce Housing means “all housing occupied by people working in the community regardless of whether the unit is deed restricted or not.”

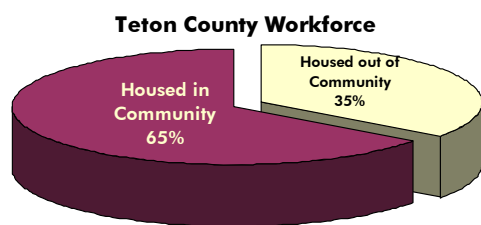
Why is this theme addressed?

Jackson and Teton County have historically been characterized by a socially and economically diverse population united by a common community commitment to a strong environmental and social ethic. The preservation of this community characteristic is threatened by high housing prices in Jackson Hole. In 2005, about 32% of the valley's workforce commuted from neighboring communities; and existing market workforce housing was worth six times what a member of the workforce could afford. If external demand continues to increase housing prices, only the wealthy and transient service workers will be able to afford to both work and live in the valley.

The loss of a resident workforce has a number of environmental, social and economic effects on the community. A workforce that commutes adds traffic to Teton Pass, Snake River Canyon, and Hoback Canyon, which reduces safety for both humans and wildlife. Moreover, the impacts of development are displaced to adjacent valleys; and the additional vehicle miles traveled increase carbon emissions, reduce air quality, and require new transportation infrastructure. As commuters leave the valley each day, so does their social and financial capital. The more time people spend commuting, the less time they have for civic engagement. They are more likely to volunteer and shop in the community in which they live. This trend has been documented in other mountain resort communities. Therefore, relying on a

commuter workforce will diminish Jackson Hole's unique sense of character and export the impacts of our growth to neighboring jurisdictions.

The 1994 Plan identified a clear need for affordable housing, but did not determine how much of the workforce should be housed locally. In response to the pitfalls associated with reliance on a commuter workforce, the community has committed to housing at least 65% of its workforce locally. Many feel that this metric is just above the "tipping point" for a viable local workforce; anything less will significantly diminish our sense of community. The 65% goal will be achieved through a mix of market and affordable housing and is not a suggested mitigation rate.



The community is committed to housing 65% of its workforce.

Fulfilling the commitment to house 65% of the workforce locally requires a variety of tools and cooperation from many community groups. Although new development increases the demand for commercial and civic services, developers cannot legally, fairly, or realistically be expected to supply all of the workforce housing that will be needed as the community develops and redevelops. Assurance that units historically occupied by a member of the local workforce will remain in the pool of workforce housing is the most efficient way to address the issue. Denser market and restricted workforce housing reduces infrastructure investment and related financial subsidies. Development of restricted housing at the same density as surrounding market housing requires larger subsidies but preserves neighborhood character. The appropriate tool for the provision of workforce housing will vary according to area and situation. It will be important to pursue a comprehensive mix of strategies to meet this goal.

What the community has said about this theme

The community's views on workforce housing are mixed. Most members of the community identify the cost of housing as a major issue, but opinions vary about the causes and the solutions. In light of recent resort and high end commercial development, many members of the community believe that employers should shoulder a larger responsibility for housing their workers. A number of citizens believe that construction of restricted workforce housing will never catch up with the demand and that it comes at the expense of community character. The community generally agrees that development of restricted single family housing cannot be the only strategy, and that the location and density of workforce housing should be predictable. While most members of the community acknowledge the need for local workforce housing, they also recognize that this need can conflict with other community values such as preservation of wildlife habitat and natural resources, reductions in traffic, and preferred development patterns.

2008 polling indicated that:

- A large majority of the community prioritizes the provision of deed restricted workforce housing over additional commercial or resort development.
- A large majority of the community agrees that new development should be required to build a higher amount of deed restricted workforce housing.
- A majority of the community believes we should not depend on the provision of workforce housing in neighboring communities in exchange for limited development in Jackson Hole.
- A majority of the community agrees that the town and county should continue to use incentives, rather than requirements, to encourage more deed restricted workforce housing in new development.

Principles and Policies

Principle 4.1—House a diverse population in a variety of housing types

Everyday interaction among members of the community across all income levels is a unique characteristic of Jackson and Teton County that the community is proud of and seeks to preserve. Losing the local workforce to neighboring communities threatens this way of life. The community desires to preserve a spectrum of social and economic classes while maintaining a predictable development pattern.



Single family housing is one component of housing within the community.

Policy 4.1.a: House all members of the community

Our commitment to house at least 65% of the workforce within Teton County, Wyoming refers to all members of the workforce. Every member of the workforce employed within Teton County from emergency service providers to seasonal service workers to year-round professionals is important to the maintenance of a diverse community.

Policy 4.1.b: Set strategic targets for restricted housing opportunities

As the value of land in the county has continued to rise, it is no longer just the lower and lower-middle income segments of our local workforce that cannot afford housing. With the median house price at 1,800% of the median income, even the upper-middle income segment is now unable to afford housing. The Housing Authority and Housing Trust will be the agencies responsible for setting

categories and criteria that will encompass the majority of the local workforce.

Policy 4.1.c: Housing locations and patterns will be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan

The development and redevelopment of market and restricted housing will be consistent with the locations and desired patterns portrayed by the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP), density bonuses included.

Policy 4.1.d: Promote the provision of a variety of housing options

The diverse set of households that compose the local workforce requires a variety of housing options. The desire for detached single-family housing and duplex units is strong, but other housing options respond to the seasonal demand and the desire of the community to reduce its development footprint. Multi-family units require less financial subsidy per unit to be affordable, and are more affordable to the local workforce. Multi-family housing also condenses the development footprint and increases the viability of transit. Especially in areas within walking distance of services, multi-family housing will be allowed and encouraged.

Policy 4.1.e: Consider regional impacts

Exporting our affordable housing and workforce to neighboring counties is not the community's solution for addressing our housing affordability issues.

Principle 4.2—Require that development and redevelopment mitigate the workforce housing impacts

Residential and nonresidential development and redevelopment generate demand for additional employees. Development must include housing for a portion of those new employees.

Policy 4.2.a: Require generated employees to be housed

Both residential and non-residential development generates the need for employees. The number of employees generated through development and redevelopment will continue to change as industry standards and types of development evolve. The town and county and partners will update requirements for restricted employee workforce housing in residential and non-residential developments, ensuring the program is fair and understandable. (See Appendix J: Affordable Housing Appendix A & B from 1994 Plan.)

Policy 4.2.b: Minimize workforce housing loss through redevelopment

As redevelopment occurs the replacement of existing workforce housing with new units will often result in a net loss of workforce housing stock and a net increase in the number of needed workers. Conversion of rental housing into ownership housing has similar issues. Requirements, prohibitions, and incentives will be pursued that minimize the net loss of workforce housing that occur through redevelopment and resale.

Principle 4.3—Prioritize the preservation of existing workforce housing stock

Even with new development including enough workforce housing to meet its demand for employees, the community cannot house 65% of the workforce locally without additional action. Every sale of a market home decreases the percentage of the existing housing stock occupied by the local workforce, and increases the shortage of affordable workforce housing. For example, the worker that replaces a retiree who has owned a home for twenty years will not be able to afford that retiree's home.

Policy 4.3.a: Restrict existing housing preferable approach

Restricting existing market units that house members of the workforce is more efficient than building new restricted units. This is because every new residence built requires workers to service its inhabitants (such as grocers, doctors, and teachers) contributing to the need for more housing. Restricting existing homes also avoids the environmental, social, and economic impacts of new construction.

Policy 4.3.b: Promote preservation of existing workforce housing stock

Property owners and developers should be offered incentives for the restriction of existing housing stock. The town and county will explore financial incentives for the voluntary restriction of existing workforce housing, and assist local housing organizations, governmental entities, employers and private citizens in attempts to preserve existing workforce housing stock.



Maintaining existing housing stock is one part of the housing equation.

Principle 4.4—Incentivize the creation of workforce housing

Even with a dedicated funding source, the subsidy will be too large to house 65% of the workforce locally through the preservation of existing workforce housing stock. As a result, the community will continue to provide incentives for the construction of restricted workforce housing that more than compensates for the employees it generates.

Policy 4.4.a: Allow density increases for restricted workforce housing in county nodes and identified town areas

As part of the community’s efforts to reduce its development footprint, areas throughout the rural county will have reduced development potential. Conversely, in the nodes (northern South Park, Wilson, the Aspens area, Teton Village, and town growth districts), base allowances for density should be low enough to allow for density bonuses. The town and county can give density bonuses as incentives for restricted workforce housing construction that is still consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. Density and floor area bonuses and other incentives consistent with the FLUP provide workforce housing units at less financial cost to the community. Incentives for the construction of rental units instead of ownership units and the conversion of non-residential floor area into restricted workforce housing should also be considered.

Policy 4.4.b: Promote public/private cooperation in provision of housing

In addition to providing incentives for the production of workforce housing, the community will also pursue creative cooperative solutions. Local housing organizations will actively pursue cooperation with the federal and state agencies that employ a number of people in Teton County to provide housing solutions that benefit the agencies and the community as a whole. The organizations will also actively work with local government, business owners, care providers such as the hospital and school district, as well as developers and land owners to identify appropriate workforce housing solutions.



The town and county will allow density increases for restricted workforce housing in identified areas.



Example of a deed restricted housing project in Teton County.

Strategies

The Town of Jackson and Teton County will undertake the following strategies in initial implementation of the policies of this theme. The town and county should periodically update strategies as tasks are completed or when additional action is necessary, based on monitoring of the Theme's indicators.

Strategy 4.1: Establish a dedicated funding source for workforce housing preservation and production

- Identify a seventh cent sales tax, additional mil property tax, or other funding source to allow for the Teton County Housing Authority to restrict existing workforce housing or build new restricted workforce housing.
- Continue attempts to institute a real estate transfer tax.
- Continue to fund the administration of the Teton County Housing Authority out of the General Fund, so that additional funds can be focused on workforce housing preservation and provision.

Strategy 4.2: Establish a workforce housing action plan

- Seek opportunities to restrict existing housing stock.
- Seek opportunities to work cooperatively with governmental and quasi-governmental agencies, employers, and developers to provide restricted workforce housing.
- Seek opportunities to construct restricted workforce housing.

Strategy 4.3: Update Land Development Regulations and the zoning maps

- Update the nexus study for establishment of new mitigation requirements for new development and redevelopment.
- Raise qualifying income for some restricted workforce housing to 200% of area median income.
- Incentivize the preservation and creation of rental housing.
- Determine appropriate base zoning and incentives using land use map maximums for the provision of restricted housing in county nodes.
- Allow multi-family housing where consistent with the FLUP.

Strategy 4.4: Increase outreach and educational opportunities

- Increase awareness among the region's employers about opportunities for public/private approaches to increase the supply of workforce housing.
- Seek opportunities to improve public perception of workforce housing needs.

Indicators

The community will use the following indicators to monitor achievement of this theme's values.

Community Housing Indicators	Goal	Review Period
1. Percentage of workforce housed locally	>65%	5 yr
2. Number of existing units restricted annually	increase	1 yr
3. Percentage of new units that are restricted	increase	1 yr
4. Number of houses lost from workforce housing stock	monitor	5 yr
5. Ratio of workforce to population (FTE/capita)	monitor	1 yr
6. Number of rental units	monitor	1 yr

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