

Housing Solutions Partnership

News & Updates | March 30, 2024

The Housing Solutions Partnership Advisory Group met Monday, March 25, for the first time since the organization's transition from Connect Kootenai on Housing and Growth (following the dissolution of Connect Kootenai). Kiki Miller, who has been with the organization since its inception, has committed to leading the group for the next 9 to 12 months so the group's can continue addressing Kootenai County's worker housing crisis. She has scheduled multiple presentations in the coming months to provide updates on the partnership's progress. If your organization would like to book a presentation, contact Kiki at kikimillercouncilor@gmail.com.

Future of the Housing Solutions Partnership: Kiki is working with the [Panhandle Area Council](#), an economic development corporation that can provide fiscal oversight for the partnership, administer contracts and manage Memorandums of Understanding. There have been several offers of financial support for the partnership's efforts and once the structure is in place with PAC, there will be an avenue to accept those funds. Funds can be used to hire a part-time administrator and fund website expenses, workshops/meetings, and community outreach efforts. If your organization can provide funding or other resources to support the work of the partnership, please reach out to Kiki.

Partnership Meetings: In the past, the partnership had an Advisory Group and a Working Group and each met monthly. There was a lot of duplication between the two meetings and several members were attending both meetings. To improve efficiency, the Working Group will meet monthly with a focus on one priority project and committee reports. Advisory Group members will be briefed on the Working Group's progress during their monthly meetings. Working Group members may no longer need to attend both meetings.

Focus on Worker Housing: The partnership initially had a broad focus on growth-related issues like open space preservation, schools and traffic. Now local worker housing is the organization's primary focus.

ADU Project: Four plans for Accessory Dwelling Units have been approved by the NIBCA past president. The ADU committee will be visiting local jurisdictions to discuss the ADU plans that were submitted, gather feedback and explain how having pre-approved ADU plans can help address the county's housing crisis. The goal is to have the plans available to the public by July.

Coeur d'Alene Regional REALTORS Fundraising: Coeur d'Alene Regional REALTORS are working toward launch of an annual fundraising campaign encouraging voluntary,

restricted donations to the Idaho Home Partnership Foundation. The funds could be used for grants, distributed in conjunction with a prequalified buying team, to be used for land acquisitions and buydowns on properties for local workers.

Prequalified Buyers Team: The Housing Solutions Partnership is working with regional mortgage lenders and others to develop resources to educate prequalified buyers on loan incentives and link them with programs that can help them become homeowners.

Cohousing/Communal Living: The partnership is reviewing ordinances related to cohousing and communal living (group homes, transitional living, multi-generational housing) to see if there are potential policy changes that could help create more residential housing.

Commuter Projections Report: So far two health care facilities, three municipalities, multiple employers and a school district are providing the partnership with their employees' home zip codes from last year, five years ago and 10 years ago. The data will be used to develop a Commuter Projections Report summarizing percentages of zip code distance from the employment location. More employees are traveling farther to their place of work and it's escalating dramatically as homes in Kootenai County become increasingly unaffordable for local workers. If your organization or business would like to participate, please contact Kiki at kikimillercouncilor@gmail.com.

Solutions ToolKit: The Solutions ToolKit on the partnership website has been updated and ToolKit items have been sorted as Launched, In Progress, Pending or Exploratory.

Coeur d'Alene Press Column: Kiki is writing a weekly column in the Coeur d'Alene Press that is publishing on Sundays to highlight the Solutions ToolKit and partnership's efforts. The articles are being posted to the partnership's Facebook page and are also on the website's news blog.