



Date: August 12, 2025

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Laurel Burlingame, Housing and IDEA Programs Intern

Title: **Housing Equity Framework Acceptance and Recommendation Prioritization**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: 1) Accept the Housing Equity Framework; and 2) Provide direction to prioritize selected recommendations for addition to the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities Bike Rack.

Discussion:

BACKGROUND

Increasing the inventory of long-term workforce housing available to community members living and working in Truckee is a Town Council priority. The Town continues to face a shortage of rental and for-sale housing that is affordable to people with jobs in and around Truckee, an issue that current Town housing programs aim to alleviate. As a part of the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility (IDEA) Action Plan, Town staff created this Housing Equity Framework (Attachment 1) to identify gaps in the region's existing housing programs. This Framework is intended to inform the Town and regional partners' consideration of future program changes and/or new housing programs, to ensure that the region's housing solutions are designed and operated to meet the needs of all community members, including communities that have historically been, or can be, underrepresented in public processes, decision-making, and access to services.

An Equity Framework is a structured approach to identifying both areas of success in community programs and areas of opportunity to better meet the needs (in this case, the housing needs) of the community. Equity frameworks are commonly used in fields such as literacy, health, and environmental justice. Housing equity is an established concept which means making sure everyone has a fair chance to find and keep a safe, stable, and affordable place to live—no matter their background or situation. While many jurisdictions incorporate equity principles into their housing programs and policies, staff did not find any examples of similar jurisdictions developing a Housing Equity Framework as a guiding document.

The objective of this Housing Equity Framework is to assess the gaps in the Truckee region's existing housing programs, policies and services and work to ensure there are housing opportunities for all. It investigates where the Truckee region's existing housing programs, policies and services provide availability and choice, and where there is room for growth in creating safe, affordable, and desirable housing options. In the Community Opinion Survey conducted by True North Research, Inc. (2025) for the Town of Truckee, ninety-one percent of respondents were in support of the development of a Housing Equity Framework to establish goals and strategies for improving the accessibility and affordability of housing.

The Town of Truckee Housing Element (2019-2027) identifies and analyzes existing and projected housing needs and articulates the Town's official policies for the preservation, conservation,

improvement, and production of housing within the Town of Truckee. The goals of the Housing Element inform this Housing Equity Framework.

The Town’s IDEA program has identified several communities of focus – communities that have historically been, or can be, underrepresented in public processes, decision-making, and access to services. These include youth, Limited English Proficient individuals, Hispanic/Latine individuals, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Two-Spirit and Plus (LGBTQIA2S+); Indigenous peoples (the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California specifically), senior citizens; persons facing financial insecurity, persons with disabilities and ambulatory challenges; persons experiencing homelessness, and veterans. Seasonal workers are a big driver of housing need in our region, so for the purpose of the Equity Framework, seasonal workers in the Truckee-North Tahoe region have been included.

HOUSING NEED BACKGROUND

The 2023 Mountain Housing Council Housing Needs Assessment Update found that 4,260 (68%) of Households were inadequately housed in Truckee, as shown in Figures 1 below. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines inadequately housed or unmet housing need as households that are overburdened from a cost perspective, occupy housing units that are overcrowded (more than one person per room of the unit), or occupying units that do not have adequate plumbing or kitchen facilities. If a household is spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing, they are considered to be overburdened from a cost perspective. The cost of living in Truckee is high, and approximately 38% of Truckee households spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing (ACS 2022 5-year estimates). A breakdown of housing cost burden according to household income shows that Truckee households earning low and moderate incomes are more likely to be overburdened by housing costs, as shown in Figure 2 below.

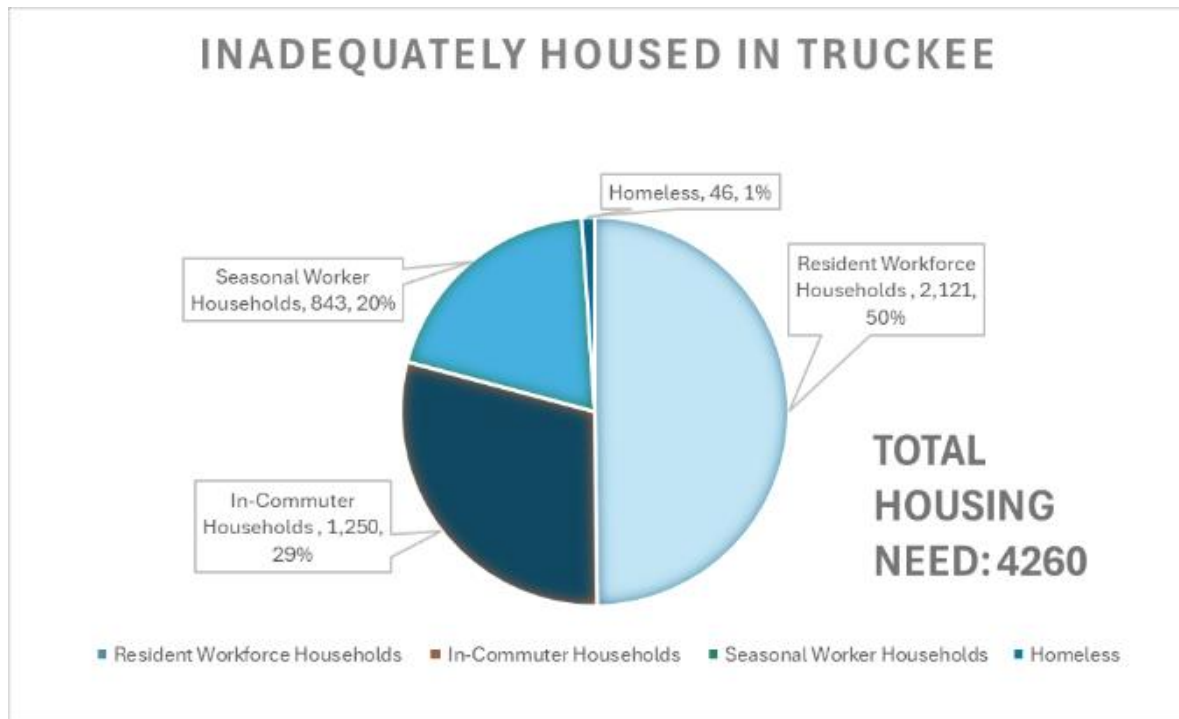


Figure 1

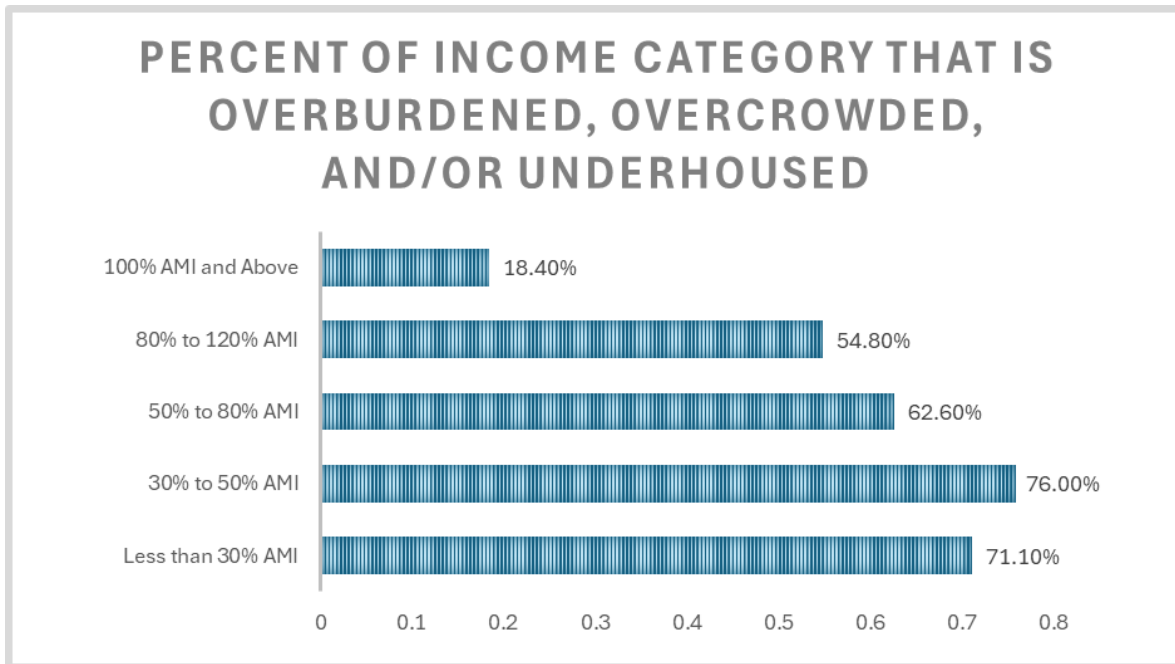


Figure 2

METHODS

Because the Housing Equity Framework is a unique document, staff developed it from the ground up, by modifying methods from other equity processes and adapting for our region's unique needs. Staff conducted research and outreach to ensure the Framework is deeply informed by the communities who have been most impacted by housing insecurity.

It is important to highlight that addressing housing issues in the Truckee-Tahoe region requires broad support and cooperation between the Town, other local jurisdictions, and community organizations. To that end, creating the Housing Equity Framework was a collaborative process involving input both from individual community members and from partnering jurisdictions and organizations including, but not limited to: Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, Tahoe Truckee Workforce Housing Agency, Sierra Community House, Martis Fund, Tahoe Housing Hub, North Tahoe Truckee Homeless Services, Connecting Point, Nevada County, and Placer County. In the Housing Equity Framework, potentially relevant partners are identified for each recommendation, i.e. the Town is not identified as the anticipated lead for every recommended action.

The Framework development process included:

- **Data Analysis & Research Review:** Staff reviewed census data, local assessments, and research findings about housing and community needs.
- **Interviews:** Town Staff conducted interviews with thirty Truckee community members including housing leaders involved in housing production, preservation, and protection, representatives from community organizations servicing our communities of focus, and locals feeling the effects of housing instability. These qualitative interviews served to intentionally seek insights from the Town's identified communities of focus who may be underrepresented in quantitative data.
- **Recommendation Development:** Using the feedback gathered during the interviews, the data analysis and research review, staff synthesized common findings related to housing issues in the region and developed draft recommendations to help address these challenges. Staff grouped the findings and draft recommendations into ten themes.
- **Community Workshop:** Town staff hosted a public workshop on June 16th, 2025, at the Community Arts Center to provide the community an opportunity to review and comment on the draft themes and findings and to help shape the Town's Housing Equity Framework.

- Recommendation Refinement: Following the community workshop, the feedback collected from the workshop, Town staff, and other stakeholders was incorporated to further refine the recommendations.

THEMES and FINDINGS

Based on data analysis and research review, and input received during interviews, and the community workshop, staff synthesized the common findings that identified areas of success and challenges in meeting our community's housing needs. Staff then developed specific recommendations to address these findings, and categorized the findings and recommendations into ten themes:

1. Enhance housing assistance for communities of focus by ensuring equitable access to resources.
2. Create a centralized source of information about all housing assistance programs in the region.
3. Advocate for state policies that allow tailored solutions to meet the region's unique workforce housing needs since State-mandated housing laws impose one-size-fits-all solutions that fail to address challenges unique to mountain communities.
4. Work to expand senior housing options.
5. Improve the way we engage with the community and share information about housing programs.
6. Preserve Existing Affordable and Workforce Housing Stock to prevent people from living in substandard housing. Preserving the existing housing stock is a more cost-effective and sustainable way to house members of Truckee's workforce than building new.
7. Create more transparency in the waitlist process at affordable housing developments.
8. Increase housing stock.
9. Encourage large employers of seasonal staff, specifically international workers like those with J-1 visas, to create employee housing.
10. Invest in supportive services for unhoused residents in line with the Truckee Tahoe Homeless Action Plan (2025).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The full list of themes, findings, and recommendations is included in the Housing Equity Framework (see Attachment 1). Below, staff has focused this staff report on the recommendations that are most relevant to the Town.

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL PRIORITIZATION

Staff has selected five recommendations that we recommend Council prioritize and add to the 2025-27 Strategic Priorities Workplan Bike Rack during the next Workplan update. These five recommendations were selected for prioritization because these issues were called out multiple times throughout the research and outreach process, marking them as top priority items. In addition, these recommendations were selected for council prioritization based on their high impact and feasibility.

- **Recommendation 1.1**: Explore the potential benefits of establishing a local housing authority to create affordable, safe, and high-quality housing opportunities for residents and workers.
- **Recommendation 1.4**: Create an equitable and innovative solution to assist with the purchase of mobile homes.
- **Recommendation 4.3**: Consider how existing Town housing programs could be expanded to include seniors.
- **Recommendations 7.1**: Explore the ability to require/encourage waitlist transparency for affordable housing projects as a requirement for funding.
- **Recommendation 9.1**: Encourage large employers of seasonal staff, specifically international workers like those with J-1 visas, to create employee housing in line with workforce demand.

IN PROGRESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Additionally, it's important to recognize that some recommendations developed to enhance housing for the Communities of Focus through the Framework are the continuation or expansion of actions already in progress as part of existing Town programs or included as actions in the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities Workplan.

The following recommendations are currently being addressed by the Town, and the program, policy, or workplan action they fall under is identified in parenthesis:

- Explore opportunities to strengthen community engagement and education efforts around housing resources and programs. (*Recommendation 5.1, Community Engagement Framework and Language Access Plan*)
- Establish a home repair assistance program (*Recommendation 6.1, Workplan 2026*)
- Invest in supportive services for unhoused residents such as permanent supportive housing projects, emergency shelters, and day centers. (*Recommendation 3.1, Tahoe Truckee Homeless Advisory*)
- Continue to advocate for a Truckee specific AMI at the state and federal level. (*Recommendation 3.1, Legislative Advocacy Platform*)
- Continue to advocate to preserve local control over housing and land-use decisions, such as flexible implementation of state housing laws that consider rural, resort community, high elevation, and high fire hazard severity zone housing constraints and support incentive-based approaches over top-down mandates for housing production. (*Recommendation 3.2, Legislative Advocacy Platform*)
- Continue working directly with Sierra Community House's Promotoras(es) to ensure the Spanish speaking community is well informed of housing resources and support. (*Recommendation 5.2, IDEA Action Plan*)
- Integrate wildfire risk, climate resilience, and energy efficiency into housing programs. (*Recommendation 6.3, Various programs*)
- Continue to streamline the review of affordable housing projects based on State and local timelines. (*Recommendation 8.1, Development Services processes*)
- Incentivize builders to create deed-restricted, affordable units. (*Recommendation 8.2, Deed Restriction for New Housing Development/Homegrown Housing*)
- Develop a Truckee-specific density bonus program that meets Truckee-specific housing needs and goals. (*Recommendation 8.5, Housing Incentive Program*)
- Continue to expand transit services in the region. (*Recommendation 9.3, Various programs and policies*)
- Support climate resilient and sustainable housing solutions by promoting green building incentives and energy-efficient housing programs. (*Additional Recommendations, Truckee Weatherization Program; Retrofit Incentives; Heat Pump Air Conditioning Incentive Program; Building Electrification Token Program*)

CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS:

Staff recommends that the Town Council:

- 1) Accept the Housing Equity Framework; and
- 2) Provide direction to prioritize selected recommendations for addition to the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities Bike Rack.

If Council accepts the Housing Equity Framework, staff plan to share the finalized framework with our housing partners and the general public in August 2025. Housing staff will coordinate with the Communications Division for the wider release. The recommendations prioritized by Council will be added to the Workplan's Bike Rack at the next Workplan update this fall.

Priority:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Investment	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Core Service

Fiscal Impact: There is no current fiscal impact directly related to the acceptance of the Housing Equity Framework and the additions to the Workplan’s Bike Rack. The addition of future housing programs will have a fiscal impact when added to the Workplan and budget.

Public Communication: Town staff hosted a public workshop on June 16th, 2025, at the Community Arts Center to provide the community an opportunity to review and comment on the draft themes and findings presented in this report, voice their thoughts, and provide feedback to help shape the Town’s Housing Equity Framework. Creating the Housing Equity Framework was a collaborative process involving input from partnering jurisdictions and organizations including, but not limited to: Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, Tahoe Truckee Workforce Housing Agency, Sierra Community House, Martis Fund, Tahoe Housing Hub, North Tahoe Truckee Homeless Services, Connecting Point, Nevada County, and Placer County.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Town of Truckee Housing Equity Framework.