



Date: September 23, 2025

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Lynn Baumgartner, Program Analyst II

Title: **Rooted Renters Program Guidelines Update**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: Review and approve the recommended changes to the Rooted Renters Program Guidelines.

Discussion:

INTRODUCTION

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. Rental incentive programs are an effective tool to fulfill some of the missing community needs by “unlocking” existing housing inventory for use as workforce housing without the cost and time commitment of new construction. This effort furthers the Council’s strategic priority of actively supporting the development of workforce housing in our community, while also helping to preserve the inventory of existing workforce housing.

The Rooted Renters Program aims to lock in workforce rental units at below market prices for at least three years by providing financial incentives to property owners. The goals of the Program are to:

- Create stable, long-term rental housing for locals at an affordable rate,
- Provide landlords offering below-market rent with a financial incentive, and
- Expand the Town’s suite of housing programs through a multi-year rental solution.

Council approved the Rooted Renters Program in May 2024 as a pilot, with a plan to have two cohorts of participants who agree to rent long term to income qualified local workers for three years. The program launched for the first cohort of participants in July 2024 and the second in August 2025.

Selected Program results as of September 12, 2025:

- Rooted Renters has preserved 23 rentals and housed 55 people in Cohort 1.
- Of the 23 properties from Cohort 1, 17 are renewing leases with their existing tenant groups, two have signed leases with new qualified tenant households, and the remaining are still in process.
- Cohort 2 is in applicant review and lease up and so far has preserved 13 rentals and housed 33 people.
- Staff anticipate that approximately 45 properties will be able to participate in Cohort 2 based on current funding levels.
- Funds have been fully allocated for properties that participated in Lease to Locals.

- There are remaining funds available for properties that have not participated in Lease to Locals. Applications are still open for these slots, and staff anticipate filling these slots within the coming weeks.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Rooted Renters is focused on providing housing to local employees who work at least 20 hours per week within the boundaries of the Tahoe Truckee Unified school district and who average up to 150% of Area Median Income (AMI). As Truckee continues to face housing need and large numbers of inadequately housed households, the Rooted Renters Program offers another solution to the ongoing housing crisis.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES UPDATE

In the process of implementing Rooted Renters, staff and Placemate have found opportunities for necessary Program Guideline additions and clarifications and have drafted two clean-up revisions to the guidelines for Council consideration. The following updates are included in the revised guidelines (Attachments 1 & 2).

Section 7 Property Owner Participation Requirements

7.A. Program Eligibility: In order to help ensure that participants are following the program requirements for the full term of the program, staff recommend adding an eligibility requirement that states, “c. The property owner applicant shall act in good faith to report factual information to the Program Administrator and/or Town staff, including but not limited to information provided as part of the Program application, tenant verification, tenant move out dates, and other information requested by the Program Administrator and/or Town staff. A property owner applicant who submits false information to the Program Administrator and/or Town staff may be immediately disqualified from Program participation and incentive payments for all properties in the Program.”

Section 11 Contingencies

11.A. Sale of property: Staff recommend updating the Sale of Property Contingency to allow the purchaser of the property to apply immediately to Rooted Renters for the property they are purchasing and qualify for the remaining incentive amounts, provided that they continue to meet all program requirements. Staff believe that this will encourage stability for the tenant household and will be simpler from an administrative and budget perspective.

Priority:

<input 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: None.

Public Communication: This staff report.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Rooted Renters Program Guidelines – clean version
- Attachment 2: Rooted Renters Program Guidelines – track changes version