

Affordable Housing NOW!

Complete Communities = Housing Choice

What are complete communities?

Complete communities are cities and towns where people of all income levels can live from childhood to retirement if they choose. Complete communities are healthy, vibrant communities with strong social connections, local businesses, and a range of housing options to meet the needs of all members of the community.

Currently in Oregon, increasing housing costs over the past decade have created serious challenges to preserving complete communities. Hardworking people are being forced to leave their communities often because wages have not kept pace with high housing costs. Seniors and people with disabilities are being priced out of neighborhoods they call home. The map on the flip side of this sheet shows how people with lower incomes are being pushed from the communities in which they have lived to new neighborhoods where housing is cheaper. The result of this displacement is the creation of pockets of poverty around the periphery of the Metro region.

Who is affected by the lack of complete communities?

All of us. Communities that lack adequate housing choice exclude grandparents, young families, and people with disabilities, breaking down the social fabric that we value. **Local businesses** are also affected when their employees are forced to live far from where they work. This in turn, creates traffic and pollution, and a lower quality of life for everyone.

The greatest impact of the lack of complete communities falls upon **low-income families, people with disabilities, and seniors** who are forced to move out of neighborhoods they have lived in for years in order to find affordable housing. They often have to move to places with fewer community services, less public transportation service, less local employment opportunities and substandard housing. People who are displaced lose contact with long-time neighbors or fellow community members who may assist with shopping, home maintenance, and trips to the doctor.

There is the less tangible but long-lasting damage to our state as **communities lose their economic and racial diversity**, resulting in a stratified society of upper-income and lower-income enclaves. Oregon has long taken pride in its open, democratic nature—we don't want to see the rapid growth of gated communities here as has occurred in other parts of the country.

What can be done to preserve complete communities?

Get involved with Affordable Housing NOW! and help advocate for policy and budget decisions that help foster complete communities. For more information, go to www.cdnportland.org/ahn.html or contact **Sarah Buckley at (503) 460-9702 or sarah@aracnet.com**