

ATTACHMENT #12

Nationwide Survey of
Successful Affordable Housing
Information Campaigns

**NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF SUCCESSFUL AFFORDABLE HOUSING
INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING DIVISION
MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING
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NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF SUCCESSFUL HOUSING INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS

STRATEGIES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Purpose of the Survey

- The Strategic Planning Division conducted a nationwide search for jurisdictions that have implemented successful informational housing campaigns. The search included an assessment of the methods used and the achievements and shortcomings in different jurisdictions.
- The objective was to benefit from their experiences and collect information useful in designing an effective workforce housing campaign. The campaign's aim will be to expand public understanding of existing and future needs for workforce housing in Montgomery County and increase delivery of affordable housing units.
- Samples of campaign material were obtained from: Marin County, California; Westchester County, New York; Albuquerque, New Mexico; San Francisco Bay Area, California; State of Minnesota; and the State of Maine.

HIGHLIGHTS

Objectives of the Campaigns

- Housing campaigns have been conducted to dispel the myths concerning affordable housing and increase the supply of affordable housing.

They are used to inform and educate the public, elected officials, businesses, and non-profit organizations about: 1) the scope of the affordable housing problem, 2) who needs affordable housing, 3) who produces affordable housing, 4) the implications of affordable housing to communities and the economy, and, 5) the roles individuals and organizations can play to promote affordable housing.

Methods and Tools

- Marin County, California, and Westchester County, New York, are excellent examples of substantial commitments to affordable housing campaigns. Campaigns are being implemented in an aggressive, comprehensive and consistent manner, with the full active collaboration of the private sector, public agencies, and non-profit organizations.
- Other campaigns are periodic, with specific durations, and others are ongoing. In some jurisdictions the emphasis is on increasing the delivery of workforce housing, and in others, it is affordable housing as a whole.
- The Housing Marin Information Campaign is a well-orchestrated, low budget, highly creative effort that relies, in large part, on marketing and non-profit talents and resources.
- Campaigns are multi-faceted, and utilize a variety of traditional and innovative outreach techniques:

Some Outcomes

- The Marin Consortium's public outreach and speaking presentations reached approximately 5,000 county employees, residents, business owners, and civic members during the 1997-1999 Campaign. Elected public officials indicated that the Campaign made it easier for them to vote in favor of affordable housing. As a result, affordable housing has been elevated on the political agenda. The campaign has also shown that progress in housing delivery depends on appealing to the self-interest of citizens and highlighting the need to provide housing for their own children and elderly parents, public safety workers, nurses and teachers.
- The State of Maine Housing Authority spearheads one of the lowest-cost and most effective Affordable Housing Campaigns in the United States. They produced 3 "NIMBY print ads" featuring a nurse, a firefighter, and a teacher together with attention-grabbing captions and slogans to drive home the need to provide affordable housing for those providing critical services to the community.
- The three-phased strategy being used in *HousingMinnesota*, with Phase 1 concentrating on public education media campaign; Phase 2 focused on building and coordinating broad support; and the third and final phase focused on achieving public policy objectives, is an ingenious approach to strategically marshal broad-based community, business, and political consensus, resources, and action for affordable housing.
- The Westchester County Affordable Housing Campaign is a model of effective public private collaboration. The Department of Planning, Housing Opportunity Commission, and Division of Housing and Community Development in collaboration with non-profit organizations such as the League of Women Voters and the Housing Action Council, actively implement a multi-faceted campaign. The gist of their campaign is public education about affordable housing that reaches all segments of the community – what it looks like, who lives there, success stories, and who is responsible for the planning decisions that make it happen.
- In 2000, the Silicon Valley Manufacturers Group, through the Housing Trust of Santa Barbara County, launched an aggressive two-year public information and advocacy campaign that resulted in over \$20 million being generated within 24 months. The campaign stressed the close connection between the supply of affordable housing for workers and the economic well being of the region, particularly, the survival and competitiveness of businesses. The amount collected is being used to leverage an estimated \$200 million to assist private non-profit homebuilders to build affordable rental housing, help 5,000 families and first time homebuyers with down payments, and increase funding for homeless programs.

- The Albuquerque Affordable Housing Hotline, which is part of the Family Housing Initiative, has become an effective means of communication with the public. Between March 2001 and December 2002, the hotline received 2,277 calls. Some callers express support for policies, some make suggestions, and others obtain information.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Marin County, California

The Marin Consortium on Workforce Housing, an umbrella group comprising businesses, city administrations, chambers of commerce, and non-profits collaborate in implementing workforce housing advocacy, a key component of which has been a public relations campaign launched in 1998.

Major Employers Committee of the Marin Consortium for Workforce Housing

In 2000, the consortium and leadership of the Silicon Valley Manufacturers Group initiated a collaborative effort by forming the Major Employers Committee of the Marin Consortium for Workforce Housing. This committee launched a public relations campaign involving extensive editorial coverage of the affordable housing crisis, a series of frequent ads, op-ed articles, and letters to the editor. They also published a tabloid, "Hometown Crisis". The campaign ended with an affordable housing forum, hosted by Marin Independent Journal, a local daily newspaper.

Campaign Tools

Following is a list of campaign tools being used in Marin County:

- 1) Press releases, press kits, brochures and flyers featuring facts about workforce housing
- 2) Press conferences
- 3) Video
- 4) Advertising campaign - Newspaper advertisement showing a firefighter, a police officer, and a teacher
- 5) Banners on transit buses
- 6) A stream of special features on workforce housing in the local newspapers
- 7) Cable TV advertisements
- 8) Letter writing campaign
- 9) Speakers' bureau with appearances and presentations to employers, local clubs, elected officials, planning commissions, and city councils. (Available records show that twenty-three speaking engagements were planned in 1998.)
- 10) Brown bag lunches at local businesses to get employees involved in advocacy
- 11) Op-ed articles, guest editorials, and letters to the editor
- 12) Half-day program on affordable housing; and
- 13) Booths at the annual business trade shows.

Other Campaign Activities

1) *Housing Caucus*

In October 2001, the Committee held a one-day Housing Caucus with the objective of training housing supporters to become more effective advocates.

2) *Web site (www.housingmarin.org)*

One of the outcomes of the caucus was the creation of a web site featuring educational and informational materials, and updates on public hearings and other housing related issues.

3) *Movie Theatre Advertisement*

The San Rafael Chamber of Commerce produced a movie theater advertisement on workforce housing featuring a nurse, teacher, and firefighter. It is currently running in all San Rafael theatres.

2. Westchester County, New York

The Westchester County government recognized that the hardest part about building affordable housing is not finding the funding or the land, but finding the political and moral will, and overcoming the myths about affordable housing.

The County launched a campaign to educate the public about affordable housing - what it looks like, who lives there, and who is responsible for the planning decisions that make it happen. The campaign also showcases success stories and projects. It is a collaborative effort by the Department of Planning, Housing Opportunity Commission, and Division of Housing and Community Development. Non-profit organizations, particularly the League of Women Voters and the Housing Action Council, play an active role.

Campaign Tools

1) *Web site (<http://www.westchestergov.com/housing/main.htm>)*

This web site provides detailed statistical and other information about the issues affecting affordable housing; trends in housing affordability; who needs affordable housing; who produces affordable housing; the process involved in affordable housing production; the roles of individuals, organizations, and the community in promoting affordable housing; wider community benefits from affordable housing; and, answers to related questions.

2) *Printed Information Packets*

Packets contain affordable housing related information and resources from the Department of Planning, Housing Opportunities Commission, and League of Women Voters.

3) *Video*

In 1998 the League of Women Voters commissioned production of a video, "*Westchester Housing: Myth and Reality*". It is an educational video featuring the facts surrounding affordable housing in the county and their impact on communities. A free copy is available on request.

3. San Francisco Bay Area, California

Several organizations are engaged in educational and advocacy campaigns for affordable housing in the Bay area. (A list of local organizations engaged in

affordable housing campaigns showing their tools and the outcomes is appended to this Attachment.)

Campaign Tools

The Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California uses the following tools:

1) *Public Information Toolbox*: The Association prepared a briefing packet as a toolbox for educating and informing government officials and staff, local community leaders, and representatives of the media about contemporary affordable housing. (The Tool Box is appended to this Attachment) This toolbox is a resource for those engaging in campaigns. In order to make the packet more persuasive, users are encouraged to add materials that are specific to the housing needs, developers, advocates and issues in different communities. Recommended additional information include:

- a. Examples of successful affordable housing developments in their localities, and an invitation to a housing tour
- b. Benefits of affordable housing to the community
- c. Identified local housing needs
- d. A list of newspaper articles about local affordable housing; and, Impact studies showing the effects of affordable housing on local property values, traffic, schools, etc.

2) *Video*: The Association produced a 9-minute video, *Affordable Housing: A Bay Area Tour*, showcasing multifamily affordable housing in the area with testimony from a cross-section of affordable housing beneficiaries. This video has been shown on 10 cable access stations in conjunction with 30 or 60-minute talk shows about affordable housing. Hundreds of videos and briefing kits have been distributed to target audiences in live presentations.

3) *Public Service Announcement*: The Association sponsored a 30-second public service announcement, "Support Affordable Housing" on local radio and television.

The Silicon Valley Manufacturers Group uses the following tools:

- 1) A brochure: "*Dispelling Myths: The Realities of Affordable Housing*," used for public presentations
- 2) A "*Myths and Facts*" slideshow with facts sheet
- 3) Political activism involving regular breakfasts with elected officials
- 4) Housing symposium every two years
- 5) The Non Profit Housing Association video and briefing kit.

4. Albuquerque, New Mexico

As part of the Albuquerque Family Housing Initiative, started in 1997, the Planning Department actively collaborates with the Affordable Housing Committee in a community education program.

Campaign Tools

The tools used in this program include:

- 1) Slide presentations on housing trends and needs
- 2) Public meetings featuring guest speakers
- 3) Public affordable housing open houses and forums involving candidates for political office.
- 4) Information and resources for homebuyers
- 5) Apartment search brochures
- 6) A bi-lingual "Affordable Housing Hotline" which advertises city-sponsored developments for homeownership opportunities, and welcomes public comments, questions and input
- 7) Individual success stories from mixed-income housing developments
- 8) Housing Summit (June 1994)
- 9) Call-in radio shows featuring guest speakers
- 10) Affordable Housing Leaders Conference (December 1996)
- 11) Direct mailings of the proposed Family Housing Initiative and other relevant information
- 12) Monthly "Neighborhood Newsletter"
- 13) Internet web site (<http://www.cabq.gov/housing/>)
- 14) Two videos produced by Government Channel; one to be shown to the communities, and the other to the business community
- 15) Regular briefings and exchanges with stakeholder city agencies

5. Housing Minnesota – A State Wide Campaign

The Minnesota Housing Partnership and six other organizations formed *HousingMinnesota* for the purpose of raising public awareness, educating policy makers about housing issues, and instigating action towards positive policy reform. Key elements of the campaign are grassroots organizing, collaboration with campaign supporters, targeted public education, and the direct engagement of eight key community groups to achieve concrete public policy changes and funding goals. There has been support from the business community, faith-based organizations, direct service providers and housing advocates, labor unions, local government, Smart Growth proponents, and people directly affected by the shortage of affordable housing.

HousingMinnesota is being implemented in three phases: Phase 1 concentrated on public education media campaign. Phase 2 is focused on building and coordinating support among businesses, organized labor, local government officials, faith communities, housing and low-income advocates, and people directly affected by shortage of affordable housing. The third and final phase is focused on achieving public policy objectives.

Campaign Tools

- 1) Web site (<http://www.housingminnesota.org/>)
- 2) Publicity of facts (by means of the Internet and in print) about housing needs, construction costs, state and federal budget allocations, homelessness, wages, poverty, economic trends, taxation, and public attitudes.

- 3) Public relations consultants
- 4) Campaign staff regularly appears on talk shows and write commentaries, news stories and editorials that are broadcast and reprinted in newspapers.
- 5) Overviews of current affordable housing program legislation to be used as key talking points in meetings with legislators, letters to the editor, or just for public information.
- 6) Bi-weekly bulletin from the Minnesota Housing Partnership with news, announcements, new information and upcoming events.
- 7) Over 90 partnerships including the media have been established thereby creating effective channels for conveying information to the grassroots and soliciting public support for public policy changes and increased funding.
- 8) Lobbying and advocacy to influence the legislative agenda.
- 9) Participation in county fairs

Other Campaign Activities

- On November 14th, 2001, *HousingMinnesota* hosted the first Minnesota Housing Convention at Bandana Square convention center in St. Paul, Minnesota. Bringing together over 500 people.
- On November 15th, 2002, over 1,300 concerned citizens gathered at the Minneapolis Convention Center on Friday to adopt a platform for a legislative agenda on safe, decent, and affordable homes for all Minnesotans by 2012.

6. State of Maine

The Housing Authority spearheads one of the lowest-cost and most effective affordable housing campaigns in the United States that has high media involvement, and uses graphics and catchy slogans to impact the public's attitudes.

Campaign Tools

- 1) Print Ads: Three NIMBY print ads featuring photographs of a nurse, a firefighter, and a teacher with attention-grabbing captions driving home the need to provide affordable housing for those providing critical services to the community. (See photographs at the end of this attachment.) These photographs were used as props on the podium during the governor's conference on affordable housing.
- 2) Slogans: The Authority uses craftily coined slogans (such as; "Back to the Future: Shaping Maine's Housing Future by Building on its Past") to reinforce the message on adequate housing that is affordable to the workforce.
- 3) Video: The Authority produced a video on workforce housing and NIMBYism that is shown to communities, non-profits, investors, and housing developers. The video is also available at no charge.

**EXAMPLES OF NON-PROFIT PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS FOR
AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA**

EXAMPLES OF NON-PROFIT PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

This is a partial listing of some of the campaigns conducted by local groups. This does not include individual developer's education/advocacy work.

1. Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Materials developed:

- Affordable Housing: A Bay Area Briefing (printed materials)
- Supportive Housing: A Bay Area Briefing (printed materials)
- "Affordable Family Housing: A Bay Area Tour" (9 minute video)
- "Support Affordable Housing" (30 second TV public service announcement)

Some Outcomes:

- Video shown on 10 cable access stations in conjunction with 30 min. or 60 min. "talk show" regarding affordable housing
- Hundreds of videos and briefing kits distributed to target audiences in live presentations
- Won California of Non Profits "1998 Communications Award"

Contact: Tim Iglesias, Program Coordinator, (415) 989-8160, ext. 15

2. East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO)

Tools:

- One-on-one visits with local elected officials,
- Affordable Housing Week,
- Housing tours
- Slideshow with adaptations and information for each community
- Presentation evaluation form
- Agenda for speakers bureau training (brief and annotated versions)
 - Speakers Bureau Do's and Don'ts
 - Roles for role play
 - Building Inclusive Community (HomeBase, 1996)
 - Training Evaluation
- Preliminary questions to host organizations form
- Affordable Housing Week (1997 & 1998: An affordable housing booklet used as a fundraiser (from ad sales); Weeklong series of events, open houses, housing tours, media work.

Contact: Sean Heron, EBHO Executive Director (510) 893-5611

3. Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group's Housing Action Coalition

1994 Campaign Materials:

- Brochure: "Dispelling Myths: the realities of affordable housing" used for 3 minute presentations during "public comment" period by pairs at planning commission, city council and board of supervisors meetings throughout the county. They also attracted media attention and linked this to later endorsement work.
- "Myths and Facts" slideshow, speech and fact sheet
- Breakfast for elected officials

1997 Campaign Materials:

- Using NPH video and briefing kit with some supplemental inserts
- Convene major "Housing Symposium" every two years
- Having frequent endorsement process and advocacy actions

Some outcomes:

- Received numerous endorsements
- Built a reputation and contacts in the sub-region
- Other work on "Housing Solutions" and "Best Practices"

Contact: Housing Coordinator, (408) 501-7864.

4. East Bay AIA Housing Committee

Materials:

- Housing slide library text and list of slides available by characteristics

Contact: Willie Pettus, AIA, (510) 465-3856

5. Asian Neighborhood Design (AND)

Materials:

- Text for "Great Neighbors: Affordable Housing in San Francisco" slideshow

Contact: Tom Jones, Development Director, AND, (415) 982-2959.

6. Council of Community Housing Organizations (CCHO) - San Francisco

Materials:

- Text for "San Francisco Affordable Housing Slide Show - CCHO"

Contacts: Whitney Jones, Chinese Community Housing Corporation
415/984-1450
Steve Suzuki, (415) 982-2959

7. Citizens for Quality Neighborhoods

Materials:

- 3 images used as billboards, posters and bus placard - one each for first time homebuyer, low-wage renter and homeless

Contact: Susan Silviera, (408) 733-4938

8. The Consortium for Workforce Housing/Marin County Chambers of Commerce

Materials:

- Brochure
- Article from San Rafael Chamber of Commerce publication
- Briefing sheets
- Outreach to press and electronic media

Contacts: Mary Parkman, (415) 453-4344
Betty Pagett, co-founder, Director of Education and Advocacy,
Ecumenical Association for Housing,

9. Neighbors and Neighborhoods Exhibit - San Francisco

Materials:

- Brochure from exhibit

Contact: Marcia Rosen, Mayor's Office of Housing (415) 252-3114

10. The National Low Income Housing Coalition - Media Advocacy Project

Materials:

- Article in NLIHC's newsletter "RoundUp" - "Common Sense Not Compassion"

Contact: Helen Dunlap, President, (202) 662-1530

11. Corporation for Supportive Housing - National

Materials:

- In Our Back Yard (video)
- Building Community Support for Supportive Housing (video user's handbook)
- Video & Handbook cover letter
- Brochure of CSH publications

Contact: California/Bay Area: Carla Javits, Program Director, (510) 251-0221
Writer/Producer: Cynthia Stuart 212/986-2966

**PUBLIC INFORMATION TOOL BOX FOR GENERATING COMMUNITY
ACCEPTANCE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**DEVELOPED BY
THE NON-PROFIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

PUBLIC INFORMATION TOOL BOX FOR GENERATING COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**DEVELOPED BY
THE NON-PROFIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

The Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California developed the following tools to help affordable housing advocates win the community acceptance necessary to provide much needed affordable housing:

ACTION SUGGESTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Summary of ideas for how local governments can support affordable housing.
2 pages (NPH, 1998)

WHY AFFORDABLE HOUSING DOESN'T LOWER PROPERTY VALUES

Explanation of why and summary of property value studies.
2 pages (Homebase, 1995)

DEALING WITH FEARFUL OPPONENTS OF HOUSING AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

Suggestions on overcoming fear as a basis for opposing affordable housing.
2 pages (NPH, 1996)

LIST OF EDUCATION CAMPAIGN'S MATERIALS AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES

List of actual materials and outreach strategies created and used for affordable housing education campaigns in the San Francisco Bay Area.
1 page (NPH, 1998)

HOW TO ORGANIZE SUCCESSFUL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOURS

Concrete suggestions on goal setting, motivation, program planning, evaluation and follow-up. 2 pages (NPH, 1997)

HOW TO DEAL WITH PROPERTY VALUE CONCERNS

Recommendation for evaluating and determining appropriate responses.
2 pages (NPH, 1998)

SIX STEPS TO GETTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPROVALS

Highly informative overview of strategies for promoting community acceptance of housing development proposals. 2 pages (NPH/CASC, 1998)

SPEAKERS BUREAU DO'S AND DON'TS

List of suggestions to train speakers for presentations about affordable housing.
2 pages (NPH, 1998)

WHAT WORKS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING EDUCATION?

Summary of suggested goals, content, style and follow-up for effective education.
2 pages (NPH, 1998)

WHO NEEDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Information about citizens who need affordable housing and their occupations.
2 page (NPH, 1998)

HOW TO CREATE A CABLE TV SHOW ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Packet of materials enabling user to work with local cable access TV station to produce a show about affordable housing, including sample concept for broadcast, letters, script and more.

SITING OF HOMELESS HOUSING AND SERVICES

25-page technical assistance tool for siting controversial projects, and sharing the lessons learned by the regional Community Acceptance Strategies Consortium. 2000.