

Specialized Housing Training for Permitting Officials

The development process and timeline for affordable or innovative housing projects can differ from typical market rate projects. Building and permitting staff can benefit from training that focuses on the unique development conditions for these projects, which, in turn, can lead to a smoother administrative process. Staff also benefit from and are more supportive if they are included in policy development and kept up-to-date on affordable housing actions in the city.

BACKGROUND

Housing developers often interact more with building and permitting staff, rather than those working on housing policy. Building officials and permit staff should be kept on board with the jurisdiction's affordability and density goals, as well as any new regulations on innovative housing. It can make the processing and approval of development applications more efficient. Building officials and permit coordinators are a resource for developers to learn the latest information on development code changes and additions. Officials working with developers and landowners can accurately advise on incentives and programs for affordable housing or explain the variety of housing developments permitted on the property.

When affordable or innovative housing proposals are brought forward for permits, understanding of the unique characteristics of the project by all parties helps to ensure a smooth and efficient review process so that project schedules are met per funding and financing requirements. Maintaining a schedule of upcoming deadlines and project milestones can help assure that projects move through the review and permitting process on schedule. [Regulatory streamlining](#) and permitting priority can also be used to create a supportive administrative environment for new innovative or affordable housing development.

Training can take many forms, from in-person workshops, peer exchanges, intergovernmental meetings, department newsletters or briefings, and professional development opportunities to learn from other cities and agencies. Staff members are a resource – department management can also actively solicit suggestions from staff on their questions and what training they would like to better connect permitting work to broader policy goals.

TOOL PROFILE

Objectives

[Housing in Centers and Near Transit](#)

[Housing Options in Expensive Markets](#)

[Missing Middle Density](#)

Type of Tool

Education and Outreach

Project Type

Single family

Multifamily

Ownership

Rental

Affordability Level

**Most effective for units
<80% AMI**

