



**TOWN OF CANANDAIGUA  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE**

**PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY  
JANUARY, 2022**

**OVERVIEW**

In 2021, the Citizens Implementation Committee (CIC) chartered the Affordable Housing Task Force to evaluate gaps between the housing needs of the community and the performance of the current market. One of the top goals of the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan is "Support the development of affordable housing options and affordable transportation options for the local workforce". The Task Force continues to meet with experts, evaluate market data, and explore case studies and best practices, with the goal of developing a set of recommendations to the Town for potential action.

**TASK FORCE OPERATIONS**

The Task Force meets monthly to discuss the challenges and opportunities inherent in the realm of affordable housing in Canandaigua. The committee is staffed by Town Manager Doug Finch, Sarah Reynolds, and Town Planner Shawna Bonshak. Committee members include:

- Karen Parkhurst, Chair
- Erin Pownall Burns (City Resident)
- Nash Bock (Habitat for Humanity)
- Sal Pietropalo (Town Resident)
- Sarah Simson (Pathstone)
- Brenda Spratt (Family Promise)
- Jackie Hawks Little (Happiness House)
- Tom Schwartz (Town Resident/Planning Expert)

Meetings are held in hybrid fashion, with the Town providing meeting space and remote meeting capability.

## **APPROACH**

The Task Force has leveraged expertise from a number of sources to gain insight into the opportunities and challenges facing Canandaigua in this area. Task Force members routinely circulate articles and research from a wide range of sources, and share experiences from their own organizational backgrounds.

The highest value in terms of time spent has been the Task Force's engagement with experts on housing and development from around the region. Since the initiative's launch, the Task Force has met with the following local housing and development experts:

- Mike Manikowski, Ontario County Economic Development
- Ryan Wallace, Solar Home Factory
- Andy Tyman, Finger Lakes Community Development Corporation
- Matt Horn, MRB Group/Canandaigua Local Development Corporation
- Kari Buch, United Way/ALICE Initiative
- DiMarco Group
- Eileen Tiberio, Ontario County Department of Social Services

In the coming months, the Task Force will interview others who may support the effort.

## **CURRENT FOCUS**

Upon review of information and regional market data, the Task Force determined that the best approach would be to focus on a particularly underserved segment of the market—identifying an area where impact could be made, and developing strategy recommendations for the Town Board and staff to consider.

Following much discussion, the Task Force identified the segment of the market which serves those households earning 50% of Average Household Income.

Household income in the Town of Canandaigua averages \$58,000 according to the 2020 U.S. Census. When applying standard discount factors associated with housing burden (individuals are considered burdened when spending more than 1/3 of their annual income on all housing costs), it was estimated that an appropriate household rent for this segment of the market was approximately \$600.

The Task Force did not perform a deep market analysis of available units at this price, but the familiarity of individuals on the panel with the market is certain that there are few to none available at this time.

## **CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS UNDER ANALYSIS**

The Task Force is currently reviewing a number of recommendations that may be advanced for future consideration by staff and the Town Board.

The research of the Task Force has identified roles that the Town may play in pursuing support for reinforcement of this market segment, including:

- **Advocacy**—Town leadership can work with leaders at the state and federal level to ensure that funding and regulatory frameworks are supportive of housing development in this market segment.
- **Zoning/Regulatory Support**—The Town has already taken great strides with the development of the form based code in Uptown Canandaigua. A key to ensuring reasonably priced housing is providing opportunities for more dense development. This should continue to be a focus.
- **Grant Support**—There are a number of state programs that will provide grant funding to Town and private led initiatives. The Town should make affordable housing a focus of its grant pursuit efforts.
- **Developer Attraction**—The Town should work with Ontario County, the Local Development Corporation, and others to attract developers who focus on this segment of the market. It should be made clear to the market that this type of development is sought after in the Town.
- **Networking/Convening**—The Town should facilitate the production and promotion of an event/events to connect the affordable housing development community with local decision makers and property owners, as well as to share our thoughts with the community and to hear ideas and priorities directly from the public.
- **Transportation and Related Issues**—The Town should ensure that mobility issues are considered in the development of affordable housing, including locating the projects along RTS routes (or working with RTS to modify routes), ensuring adequate pedestrian infrastructure, bicycle rentals and storage, parking, and EV charging stations.

Upon additional refinement and research, these may be advanced for your continued consideration.

## **CONFIRMATION OF DIRECTION**

Before additional research, analysis, and effort is deployed, the Task Force is seeking confirmation from the Town Board on our current approach. If supportive, the Task Force will continue research and refinement of current areas of analysis. However, we work at the direction of the Town, and will consider other alternatives if so directed.