

12-2023

Workforce Housing Needs in Monterey County

Charlie Rosales

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps_thes_all

This Capstone Project (Open Access) is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ CSUMB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Capstone Projects and Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CSUMB. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csumb.edu.

Workforce Housing Needs in Monterey County

Charlie Rosales

City of Pacific Grove Community Development - Alyssa Kroeger

Collaborative Health & Human Services

Department of Health Human Services and Public Policy

California State University Monterey Bay

8/29/23

Author Note

Charlie Rosales, Department of Health Human Services and Public Policy, California State University Monterey Bay. This research was supported by City of Pacific Grove Community Development. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Charlie Rosales, California State University Monterey Bay, 100 Campus Center, Seaside, CA, 93955. Contact: charosales@csumb.edu.

Abstract

There is an ongoing housing crisis all over the state of California. Each city is struggling tremendously to make sure there is affordable housing available to the average individual. However, it is a lot more difficult to make housing affordable since the cost of living has increased over the years. As well with there being a low supply of homes available this created a bidding war for property, thus the concept of supply and demand. Specifically in Pacific Grove, the ongoing issue is that there is not enough housing due to the natural environmental barrier next to them which is the ocean. In this paper it will discuss the project of accessory dwelling units to try and help fight this ongoing housing crisis.

Agency & Communities Served

The Community Development Department works in partnership with the community to protect the beauty, sustainability, economic vitality and environmental integrity of Pacific Grove. The department is committed to consistently pursuing high quality and structurally-sound development that is in line with the City's land use and design goals. Further, the department strives to preserve the existing housing stock and support new affordable housing to help meet the housing needs of Pacific Grove residents.

The services that City of Pacific Grove Community Development Department provides to their residents from four departments: the planning department, building division, housing division and code compliance. Overall the main goal is to uphold great customer service to any one person who seeks aid or a service from the city. According to census.gov the population of Pacific Grove there is 84% white alone, while asian being 7% and hispanic being 11%. Unfortunately since the population is mostly white dominant there are not too many available programs to help those in need of funding. Could be due to the social ideal of making funding programs more accessible to minority groups.

Problem Model Background and Literature Review

Problem Statement

One of the biggest challenges that Monterey County faces is the housing crisis that is affecting all of California. Mainly the workforce of this area is feeling most of the heat. In the previous decades people who had an ordinary job making minimum wage could work and live in this area however, now in today's society that is slim to none. Many of the jobs here cannot compete with the cost of living since it's recent skyrocket after the pandemic. Many of the workers here have

to commute in order to have a liveable space or work two to three minimum wage jobs to afford market rent.

Figure 1: Problem Model

Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Factor one: Limited housing supply (across income levels and unit types)	Lack of affordable housing in Monterey County	Consequence one: Over crowded conditions plus homelessness
Factor two: Low wages		Consequence two: work two to three minimum wage jobs
Factor three: High cost of living		Consequence three: Commute to work

Solution:

The solution that the intern has come up with would be pre-approved accessory dwelling unit plans. Other jurisdictions such as Salinas, Seaside and the County of Monterey provide pre-approved ADU plans which ultimately improve the turnaround time and may slightly reduce the total cost of development. The intern would meet with Pacific Grove residents and give a short answered survey with the key question being if pre-approved plans would be of aid to them, as this would greatly help the fight against the existing housing crisis going on all over the state especially in Pacific Grove. It would help communities come together as more units will be available, potentially prevent bidding wars with one another and have families be close to one another instead of moving away. A great way to present/provide these pre-approved plans into conversation is to host a workshop. This workshop would provide a series of sample plans, how they would look like, what would the residents like to see added or even removed. Additionally express any concerns they might have.

Contributing Factors

[Limited Affordable Housing Supply]

With the population growing in Monterey County it is only natural that there will be a limit on the amount of homes available for the residents. A major issue is not being able to build any more homes at a rapid pace due to the environmental barrier of the ocean. Not only is the environmental barrier slowing down the building rate but as well the price of lumber has gone up. According to Proest, “Lumber prices have increased by 14% in 2023 after plummeting last year. While lumber prices are yet to hit the peak witnessed in May 2021, they are approximately three times higher than before the pandemic struck in 2020”. It was well known that during the pandemic it majorly slowed down the economy due to the lockdown however, a big surprise was the price of lumber increasing. It was only natural due to the price of lumber going up so would the cost of building a home go up as well. Thus creating a majority of unaffordable homes being available.

[Low wages/high cost of living]

Another factor that has a major contribution towards this problem is low wages. With professions not having great wages it tremendously hurts the workers since it has a big impact on their families and communities. Not only does it have a negative impact on their mental health but also low wages often lead to higher stress levels. Additionally when an individual has a low wage it is nearly impossible to afford a home, the reason why the market is incredibly high due to high mortgage rates or bidding wars occurring. Furthermore the high cost of living is another contributing factor. It has a direct effect on affordability on essential goods such as food and in this case shelter. Over the years the cost of living has skyrocketed the real estate prices of properties, rent etc. In this case with Pacific Grove with rent increasing it challenges the locals to

secure affordable and suitable homes to either live on their own or begin to build their families with their significant partner.

Consequences (two and three were combined)

/Over crowded conditions plus homelessness/

A consequence of not having enough homes is people not being able to live the typical “american dream”. This consists of having a career, single family home and building a family. Many of the residents have to room with other friends or even strangers in order to have a place to live as the housing crisis still increases. As mentioned before the state of California is having a housing crisis all over the state, the price of lumber has gone up tremendously compared to previous years ago. The population has grown drastically as well thus creating a higher demand for houses. Now with the rent sky rocketing, it appears as if there is no end to this ongoing battle. Sadly for those that just simply could not afford a home, have to live out in shelters or even in vehicles just to meet living necessities.

[Work multiple jobs/commute to work]

A big consequence that the residents of Pacific Grove are experiencing is having to work multiple jobs in order to make ends meet. Back in the day people could make a living with having one minimum wage job however, those times have passed. A lot of workforce in Pacific Grove even with high paying jobs are living in tight housing situations. On top of that a part of Pacific Grove workforce has to commute some even great distances. For example a workshop that was hosted by the Director of the Monterey Bay Aquarium we were able to hear some insight of how far people are traveling in order to come work it is not only just Pacific Grove being effected. Some people lived in Marina, Salinas, Soledad etc. As well many of the workers stated that there were those who were interested in applying/take the offering of a job there

simply turned it down due to the high cost of living. Now the staff is being overworked due to low employees.

Project Description and Implementation Process

Project Description

The project will be an evaluation of a program that California has implemented to fight the housing crisis which is the accessory dwelling unit or better known as ADU's. The evaluation of this program will be a short survey the questions would indicate if they are satisfied with the way things are going, if any change is to be made and as well to implement any other assistance to the program to help pay the cost of an ADU. Specifically the implementation will be pre-approved general architecture plans.

Project Justification & Benefits

Pacific Grove has a low supply of available housing however, the demand has never been higher especially with the population continuing to grow. One attempt to help tackle this issue is the accessory dwelling unit program that was created by the state of California back in 2016. It has helped cities all over the state including Pacific Grove. However, as demand keeps increasing this has created a bidding war among people due to low supply. Or rent being ridiculously high. The project that the intern will be doing is a ADU survey. This survey will consist a series of questions regarding the program. These question will be where does the residents live, how much are they willing to pay for an ADU etc. The main question that the intern hopes to receive most responses for is "Would it be helpful to provide pre-approved garage conversion plans? Why or why not?".

The reason why this is the main question is due to the fact that currently the City of Pacific Grove does not provide pre-approved ADU plans while other jurisdictions so, such as

Salinas, Seaside and County of Monterey. Pre-approved ADU plans slightly reduce cost and majorly speed up the process. By the City of Pacific Grove acquiring pre-approved plans this will have a great positive impact on the community because families will be able to live close to one another. It will speed up the process thus potentially eliminate bidding wars and lowering rent cost as more housing supply will be available. On the other hand it will benefit the City of Pacific Grove Community Development tremendously because the public will see that the agency is truly trying to work with its community members by reducing cost and speeding up the process.

Expected Outcomes & Assessment Plan question

One expected outcome that the intern is anticipating on is for a crowd of Pacific Grove residents will be in attendance. In the past workshops usually it is roughly around between thirty and fifty participants. The way the intern and mentor will keep track of the incoming foot traffic will be through a sign in worksheet. There will be a sign in sheet station by the entrance of the workshop and will require any participants to sign in, this will be done in order to see the accurate amount of participants instead of a rough estimate.

Implementation Process

The intern will overall gather participants for the survey project will be to conduct a workshop. In order to make sure this workshop gains resident participation will be to perform outreach through the city. In means of verbal for anyone who visits in person, to creating flyers to leave at local coffee shops and other areas and to write this event occurring in the city managers letter. To ensure this workshop is executed perfectly the intern will have help by his mentor Alyssa and another intern her name by the name of Laura. Ideally it would be great for the planning department to be there supporting us since they are in charge of the whole ADU

program themselves however, if not able to that is perfectly fine as they are busy all the time, the intern will simply present them the results and get their opinion on them.

Appendix A

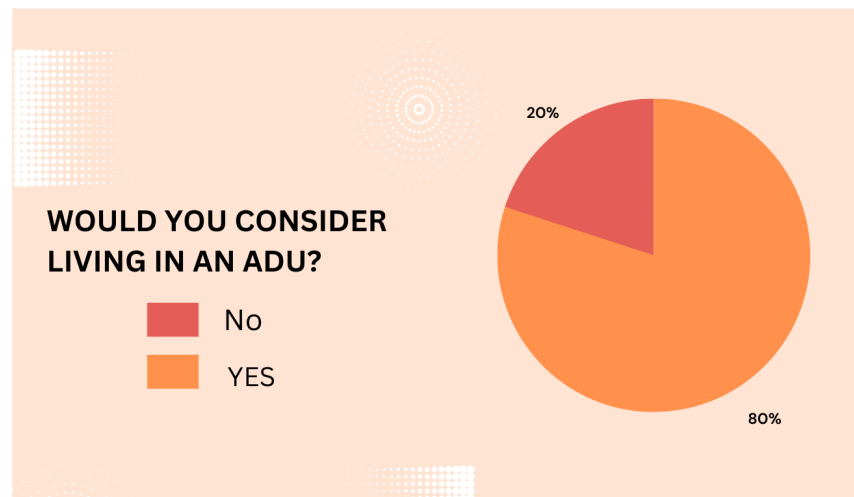
Project Implementation Plan

Tasks	Timeline/ Deadlines	Parties Involved	Materials/ Services Needed	Deliverables
Conduct outreach	September 30th	The interns	Finished fliers	Public participation
Find a location for workshop	September 30th	City staff/employees	Ask community members for permission at a location	Have a palace for workshop
Create the flier	September 30th	The interns	Paper, canva, printer	outreach
Host the workshop	September 30th	The interns and mentor	chairs /tables	Participants
Create short answered survey	September 30th	The intern and mentor	Google doc	Survey
Create a sign in sheet	September 30th	The interns	Google doc	How many people attended
Meet with planners	October 3rd	The interns and mentor	Organize a meeting	Discussion
Analyze the participants responses	October 12	The inter, mentor and planners	Finished surveys	Survey data
Potentially use old aquarium data	October 31st	The intern and mentor	computer/ access to idrive	Analyzing old data
Review the project and create presentation for CAP stone	December 15th	The interns and mentor	Power point	Cap stone presentation

Project Results

The results of the project were foreseen by the intern, it was expected that the residents of Pacific Grove will be in support of more ADU's being built in order to continue to live in this

beautiful place they call home. Additionally if more ADU's are being built this will drive housing prices down as more units to live in are available. Now a question that was asked during the survey is if residents would be willing to live in an ADU and the results speak for themselves. From the ten responses that were received from the questioners, a whopping 80% stated that yes would consider living in one.



Once the results were received from the residents it was now time to show them to the planners of Pacific Grove. As mentioned before 80% of people were in favor of having pre-approved plans. With the planners seeing this it made sense to try address the public voice on this topic that wasn't talked about before. The intern did mention some personal experiences with pre-approved plans and how they were in other cities. For example in Salinas, the planning department offers three already approved plans for ADU conversion, all plans are similar in meeting the California code and Salinas code only difference is design on how you would want it to look. The intern as well mentioned that Seaside and Monterey does provide pre-approved

plans to their residents for ADU conversion. However, despite the planners for Pacific Grove seeing the results of the survey, a roadblock was hit. Reason why is when it comes to Pacific Grove, each lot is different from one another some are larger while others are very small. The planners always stated for example in Salinas it is a lot easier to have pre-approved plans as all of the lots are nearly the same size. Despite hitting this roadblock in Pacific Grove, planners mentioned they would still find a way to try to implement pre-approved plans even if it is not for ADU's. Ideally this goal was to help housing which is some ways it may in the future but this idea did give the opportunity to have pre-approved plans from the agency offered to residents in Pacific Grove.

(Below is small data stating public opinion on pre-approved plans that was entered on google sheets by the intern).

yes

Yes.

Yes! I would imagine having pre-approved plans would remove a decent amount of the time and money required.

Yes, I have a garage that I do not use and there is not enough space on the rest of my lot to develop an ADU. I would like pre-approved plans to help me streamline the process and decrease the time and money spent on permitting, planning approval, and design standards during the pre-development and early phases of construction.

I think it would be difficult to provide pre-approved garage conversion plans because there is not a standard size garage. They range in all sorts of shapes and sizes. I think it would be more helpful and provide more options to have pre-approved ADU plans.

Yes. It would be nice to assist property owners with a pre-approved plan.

Conclusion & Recommendations

In conclusion the housing topic is a lot more easier said to solve but truly is very difficult to come up with a proper solution. Despite listing what are some contributing factors towards this problem such as, low wages, higher cost of living, low housing supply there is a lot more that are overlooked. For example mental health could be a contributing factor, overall there is just one solution for all it is a very complex issue. There needs to be multiple methods to help tackle this issue. In this paper pre-approved ADU plans is a great method to help. Again it is very cost effective, speeds up the process thus having more available housing supplies, in hopes of lowering the rent for others as there will not be limited housing. The intern does understand that this one implementation of pre-approved plans will not completely solve the issue but will try to help. With this information gathered from the public the intern would highly recommend and encourage not just Pacific Grove but as well other cities across the state to implement this because it will help people have at least a place to live. Pre-approved plans are simple yes however, it greatly speeds up the process as it avoids having to hire an architect and gets you straight to the building process.

References

[Insert reference entries in APA style 7th edition. Format using hanging first line as described in the linked document:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_SXhxbQ7srIneB9LcTC8aSNoEh9De8hj/view?usp=sharing.]

1. [Farmworker Housing - City of Salinas](#)
 - a. [FARMWORKER HOUSING STUDY AND ACTION PLAN FOR SALINAS VALLEY AND PAJARO VALLEY](#)
 - i. Pg 357: “We have calculated the total number of individuals in farmworker households to be 193,797. At an occupancy of 7.00 we estimate that these households occupy 27,685 units of housing of all types and tenures.”
 - ii. Pg 359: “Farmworker housing in the region is severely crowded. In assessing the needs based on survey data, an astounding 33,159 additional units of farmworker housing are needed to alleviate critical overcrowding in farmworker households.”
2. [MBEP Practical Housing Policy: Increasing Supply and Affordability](#)
3. <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/ca>
4. <https://chpc.net/resources/california-housing-needs-report-2023/>
5. https://www.montereycountyweekly.com/opinion/mcnow_intro/updating-a-city-housing-element-is-not-just-an-academic-exercise-it-s-about-creating/article_ae362cf4-17a2-11ee-8c6f-cb83fb7f4731.html

6. <https://www.ksbw.com/article/monterey-santa-cruz-rent-housing-cost-of-living/39957915#>
7. <https://localhousingsolutions.org/plan/engaging-the-community-in-the-development-of-a-local-housing-strategy/>
8. <https://calmatters.org/commentary/2022/05/community-planning-is-key-to-solving-housing-crisis/>
9. <https://www.citizenlab.co/blog/neighborhoods-community-development/when-to-engage-your-community-on-an-affordable-housing-strategy/>
10. <https://turnercenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ADU-Equity-August-2022-Final.pdf>
11. <https://csba.org/workforcehousing#gsc.tab=0>
12. [Monterey County ADU Resource Guide | United Way Monterey County \(unitedwaymcca.org\)](#)
13. [FINAL: MC ADU White Paper 11.29.21 \(unitedwaymcca.org\)](#)
14. files.cityofpacificgrove.org/Pacific Grove 2023–2031 Housing Element Update_with Appendices.pdf

