

To: Legislative Policy Committee

From: Rebecca Graham, Senior Legislative Advocate
Kate Dufour, Director of Advocacy & Communications

Date: September 18, 2024

Re: Housing & GA Working Group Update

Attending Members: Kathleen Billings, Stonington; Roberta Boczkiewicz, Castine; Kara George, Thomaston; Tor Glendinning, Newcastle; Eric Glidden, Brewer; Danielle Loring, Minot; Marc Meyers, Bath; and Cara Pelletier, Bangor

Staff: Rebecca Graham; Kate Dufour

Summary: The Housing and GA Working Group met on September 17, 2024 to brainstorm possible legislative solutions. Based on the LPC feedback received during the September 26 meeting, the ideas that follow will be fully vetted at the working group's October meeting.

Recommendations:

Reforms to the TIF Program

- Reintroduce an amended [LD 1493](#) expanding the use of TIF revenue to incentive development of affordable housing.
- Repeal the limit on the use of TIF revenue on administrative municipal buildings.
- Use revenue to invest in tax acquired property.

New Housing Program Targeted at Second/Third Home Municipalities

- Focused on meeting the year-round needs of communities with an expanding second and third home inventory that do not qualify for state housing programs.
- Expand access to the workforce that can maintain and build new housing.
- Implement step-up housing funding programs or broaden existing ones to provide access to affordable housing, such as trailer parks, as residents find other longer term housing options within the community.

State/Municipal Team Effort

- Investment in a true State Planning Office, possibly the newly enacted MOCA, to help municipalities adopt and implement comprehensive plans. State agencies should be helping communities develop plans for meeting local and state goals.

Reform to the Tax Lien Foreclosure Process

- Too many limits on municipal authority to dispose property in a cost-effective manner. Of note is the return of revenue to the state if the owner or heirs cannot be located often after significant municipal investment to facilitate the sale.

Market Impact on Assessed Value

- Amend assessment practices to limit the burdens placed on owner occupied housing.
- Develop market disruption tools to help avoid pricing full-time residents out of their homes.

Vacancy Tax

- Implement the Bangor model statewide.

State Assistance in Building Affordable Housing

- Develop state properties, such as the Dorothea Dix campus in Bangor, to be used to help house refugees and help transition homeless population into affordable housing, especially in service center communities.

General Assistance

- Increase GA reimbursement rate, as well require state reimbursement of a portion of administrative costs.
- Develop a comprehensive model for county administration of the GA program, instead of local administration. The model would address the process of joining a regionalized program, cost-share, incentives, etc.

Next Meeting

- October 1 from 1-3:00 p.m. via Zoom. The meeting will be recorded.