

Diverse stakeholders launch collaborative workgroup to develop and recommend new workforce housing tools Steering committee releases RFP for project management

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BEND, Sept. 13, 2016—A team of diverse organizations has formed to address **Bend's missing middle housing market** by working together to research, recommend and support new tools and policy at the state and local level. This week this new collaborative housing policy workgroup **issued an RFP for project management** to support its work.

"This group will work as an **independent team** to research, evaluate and recommend tools that builders, land owners and housing advocates agree will **truly move the needle** on providing urgently needed workforce housing in Bend," said Bend 2030 Executive Director Erin Foote Morgan, whose organization helped spur the group and is coordinating its administration.

After an initial workgroup exploratory meeting at the **Bend Livability Conference**, a steering committee of nine key housing stakeholders in Bend formed to lead a broader team of as many as 25 other representatives on the emerging project. Bend 2030, Brooks Resources Corporation, Central Oregon Association of REALTORS, Central Oregon Builders Association, Housing Works, OSU-Cascades, the American Institute of Architects Southwestern Oregon Chapter, the City of Bend and the City's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee together make up the steering committee, which has identified three goals for the workgroup:

1. **Clearly define workforce housing needs** in Bend at the 80 to about 175 percent of area median income level and resource map inventory and housing support services provided in the region
2. Organize stakeholders to work together to **develop clear recommendations** on tools and policies that encourage the building of workforce housing in Bend
3. Organize stakeholders to work together to **advocate for implementation** of workgroup recommendations

The timing of the project is critical as Bend turns to executing the recent urban growth boundary proposal, which will require development code changes, rezoning, development of annexation policies, and creative new tools to generate an appropriate housing mix to support our population for the next 10-15 years.

"As Realtors, we feel the need for workforce housing every time a client is ready and able to purchase a home, but is unable due to the lack of housing stock in the middle market. This collaboration goes to the very heart of helping our community members achieve the dream of homeownership," said COAR President Dave Feagans.

This week, the project steering committee released an RFP for project management of the workgroup. The RFP invites firms to submit proposals for achieving group goals that address timeline, cost, strategy and organization of the project. **RFPs are due Sept. 30, 2016.**

The contract for project management will be administered by **Bend 2030**, an Oregon 501(c)3, but managed by the entire steering committee. Funds for the project are anticipated to be provided by local organizations, and grant funding at the state and national level.

Learn more about the collaborative workgroup and review the RFP at **bend2030.org**.