

Description
HFA – **Montana Board of Housing**
Entry Name – **2012 White Paper – Housing in Montana**

2012 NCSHA ANNUAL AWARDS FOR PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

Category: **Legislative Campaign**

Subcategory: **State Campaign**

The Housing White Paper has become a tool in Montana that is widely known and widely used by affordable housing advocates and grant-writers across the state. The 2012 White Paper – Housing in Montana is the third iteration of this report, the first being in 2008 and the second in 2010.

The 2012 White Paper – Housing in Montana is the result of a collaborative effort by the Housing Coordinating Team. The report was created in response to a request from Governor Brian Schweitzer for a 5-year plan for housing in Montana. The Governor had realized that every single county in Montana was reporting some type of adverse housing issue, from affordability to availability.

The Housing Coordinating Team was ready to react quickly because we had been discussing the same issues at our meetings. We had realized that we wanted to “define” the housing problem. We wanted to supply data that would make the problem more easily understood by the average Montanan and to those who are in positions to make change. We knew that the topic of housing can easily become overwhelming to the novice, as well as to seasoned housing professionals, and if we could provide data and graphs and explanations of various housing-related situations across the state we could move the discussion further down the road towards solutions.

So, we began the work of brainstorming and made lists of questions and topics that we were all hearing about from partners across the state. We partnered with the Census and Economic Information Center for help with data and analysis. We use data from the Montana Department of Revenue, the Montana Department of Labor, U.S. Census Bureau, HUD, etc. We compiled information about housing costs; both homeownership and rental, incomes by county for teachers, police officers, nurses, seniors, retail cashiers, median incomes, etc. We showed ability by each profession to afford a home or rent an apartment in their county.

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We also showed data about the number of and the condition of structures in each county. We paired this with projections of population growth and provided an estimate of the units that would be needed in the future for each county.

The 2012 White Paper – Housing in Montana includes many improvements and suggested changes from the first two versions. We increased the County information from one page to two for each of the 56 counties. We added information about the seven Native American Reservations in Montana. We included information, data, graphs and charts to explain the boom situation in Northeastern Montana which includes the drilling in the Bakken Formation. We have expanded the narrative section to include many more stories from around the state, often gathered from our partners. The combination of narrative explanation and the personal touch of the stories give a fairly comprehensive picture of what is happening in our vast state. It has always been difficult to combine discussions about different parts of Montana with its wide array of economies, incomes and influences. This paper brings together the multiple housing stories of Montana under one cover.

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<http://housing.mt.gov/content/FAR/docs/2012WhitePaper.pdf>

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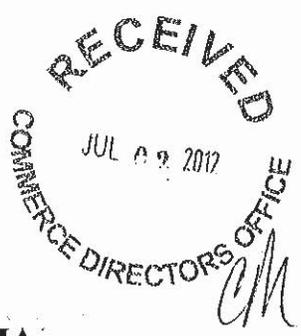
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