

## **Made the Rent Report - How This Report Can Guide Policymakers**

The value of rent-restricted housing extends far beyond rent relief alone. When designed and located strategically, Affordable Housing serves as an investment in economic resilience, workforce stability, climate goals, educational outcomes, and community well-being. These broader benefits should be factored into how regional leaders plan, prioritize, and fund affordable housing development.

To maximize these returns, Napa Valley's housing strategy must align production of housing that is affordable with workforce retention, climate resilience, economic vitality, and school enrollment stabilization. This means prioritizing housing development according to how well-situated it is to job centers and transit, how effectively it integrates social services that enhance wellbeing, and whether it's located to help families remain rooted in the community.

1. **Expanding affordable housing near job centers** not only eases financial and logistical burdens on workers but also strengthens employers' ability to attract and retain talent in a competitive labor market in sectors with labor-intensive and inflexible work schedules like hospitality and farm labor. Proximity to employment and amenities also reduces financial stress, even when rents are not significantly lower, to the extent that they may help secure, diversify, and give residents' access to job opportunities nearby.
2. **Joining social services with new affordable housing** can help low-income households stay close to their support networks and increase resilience while accessing on-site services like mental health support and case management. To meet this need, local jurisdictions should leverage flexible land use policies to support the development of affordable, service-enriched housing.
3. **Centrally located housing that is affordable and dense can reduce commutes** at a greater impact than other forms of infill development given both the higher rate of public transit use by lower-income residents as well as the typical density of these types of homes. Elected officials can prioritize density by considering the approval processes, minimum lot sizes, and height and parking requirements, all of which may dissuade affordable developers from certain infill sites.
4. **Keeping economic activity and wages circulating within the community** by leveraging Affordable Housing to maintain the low-wage workforce instead of exporting our wages and local tax base to neighboring counties should be a key outcome of any new units. Public-private partnerships, like Napa County's CSA No. 4 initiative, demonstrate how direct investment in affordable housing can stabilize the workforce and support long-term business success.
5. **Affordable housing is essential to stabilizing school enrollment** in Napa Valley, where rising housing costs are forcing families to leave and disrupting local public education systems. Stable, affordable homes, especially near schools, reduce student turnover, which supports academic achievement, consistent funding, and strong school communities. Strategic partnerships between school districts, housing agencies, and nonprofits can align housing development with school access, helping prevent displacement and improve outcomes for children and families alike.