

In spite of wildfires, the pandemic and a dreadful economy, the Housing Action Team of Mendocino's North Coast (HAT) continues to work on affordable housing solutions for our low- and middle-income neighbors. We still meet monthly, but like most groups, we're on Zoom instead of sitting together at a table. It remains a struggle, and stressful, to find and keep affordable housing. Now more than ever, HAT is committed to working toward safe, decent housing for all residents of Mendocino's north coast.

Here's what we're working on:

- Tracking activity on "The Plateau," Danco's affordable housing project, so we can keep you up to date on the development's progress.
- Creating a focus area to explore ways locals might teach locals the skills needed to have careers in the building trades.
- Inviting State elected officials to participate in HAT meetings so we can get to know them, influence housing policy whenever possible, and urge local agencies to leverage advantageous housing legislation and funding opportunities.
- Finding ways to help low-income families use their HUD housing vouchers. We've learned that after waiting years to qualify, many are unable to use their vouchers due to lack of moderately priced rental housing, tight market conditions and landlords who are unwilling to accept voucher payments.
- Connecting with the Inland Housing Action Team, realizing one thing both groups are working on is increasing the availability of housing for people with HUD Housing vouchers.
- Inviting Habitat for Humanity to attend a HAT meeting so we can learn more about what they do, what they have planned for the future, and look for opportunities to collaborate.
- Creating a focus area to explore how local agencies might collaborate to develop a Fort Bragg Tiny Home community.
- Learning about Mendocino College's Construction Skills grant; seeing if it can be used on the Coast to teach alternative, green building techniques such as growing and using hemp for building and manufacturing bricks for sale and use.
- Documenting HAT activities and sharing updates on our web site, Facebook page and submitting articles to the newspapers.