The Colorado Health Foundation™

A Closer Look at Colorado's Affordable Housing Landscape

It's no secret. Housing affordability is top of mind for Coloradans. Poll after poll, including Pulse: The Colorado Health Foundation Poll, shows it's one of the most pressing issues in the state. And for good reason: where we live deeply impacts our health, opportunities and quality of life. Affordable housing isn't just about shelter. It's about access to health care, jobs, transportation, healthy food, community and more.

Policymakers across the political spectrum recognize the scale of the problem and have taken action. Between 2019 and 2025, Colorado state legislators introduced 107 housing-related bills, with 84 of them passing — a striking 78% success rate. This flurry of policies highlights the breadth and complexity of the affordable housing landscape, which is characterized by a host of different funding mechanisms, multiple government agencies with distinct mandates and responsibilities, and local and regional needs that require tailored interventions.?

Despite these actions, housing affordability hasn't been solved in Colorado. Home prices remain high, eviction rates are climbing and the state now ranks as the 10th least affordable in the country. More work remains to be done to ensure Coloradans can afford to live, work and play in the state they call home. To better understand the current policy context and make this information easily accessible to community members, advocates and policymakers, The Colorado Health Foundation partnered with Intention2Impact to get a bird's eye view of the state-

level affordable housing policies that have been passed since 2019.

The resulting landscape scan offers a broad look at what's changed. The research brief dives deep into three key areas where there has been a significant amount of policy activity: funding, land use and renter protections. The results reveal both real progress and ongoing challenges.

Read the Landscape Scan

On the funding front, the state leveraged federal dollars, especially through the American Rescue Plan Act, and created new programs like the Transit-Oriented Communities Tax Credit. But there's still concern about who benefits most, and whether the state is tracking how funds are used.

When it comes to land use, recent laws aim to increase density near transit and legalize accessory dwelling units (ADUs). While these shifts are promising, they come with tensions, especially around local control and potential displacement without proper safeguards.

Meanwhile, renters have seen the most legislative activity, with 32 bills passed since 2019. New laws have raised habitability standards and increased renter protections. Yet some landlords say these policies are tough to navigate and some worry they're being left out of the conversation.

Despite these challenges, there's reason for hope. The scale of policy change in just a few years is remarkable and it reflects a growing understanding that housing is foundational to health and well-being. Now more than ever, there's an opportunity for advocates, developers, funders and communities to align efforts and keep pushing for inclusive, affordable housing for all Coloradans. Let's build on the momentum and make sure no one is left behind.

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