

South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association (SCRLA)
Hilton Head Island Chapter

Comments on
Beaufort County, South Carolina Housing Needs Assessment
Stakeholder Interview

October 10, 2017

1. The Hilton Head Chapter of the SCRLA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Needs Assessment Interview. Establishing a significant stock of affordable, moderately priced workforce housing on Hilton Head Island is essential to the future economic viability of our industry, the largest employment segment on the island. It is equally critical to funding of public services, quality of life for island residents and sustainment of a reasonable property tax structure. **These facts have been recognized by the Hilton Head Town Council which will use the results of this survey in developing its workforce housing strategy.**

The comments/suggestions in subsequent paragraphs recommend changes to specific survey items and generally reflect our desire to incorporate a business/employer perspective into the discussion and to definitize the housing needs of personnel employed on HHI. While our area of expertise is the hospitality industry, we believe many of the same workforce housing considerations apply equally to other business and public service sectors. Please address any questions or comments regarding this issue to our POC - Chris Christon, 63Viking89@gmail.com, (703) 989-8600.

2. Page 1, Table 2: Please include an organization type selection for “Business/Employer”.

Rationale: Current survey respondent categories are weighted toward government and real estate perspectives. Private and public employers have a front row view of housing needs and shortfalls that impact the County’s economy and are an important survey resource.

3. Page 1, New Table: If identifying as a “Business/Employer”, request the respondent specify the type of business or enterprise he or she represents. Categories could include: education, public safety, retail, construction, services, hospitality, recreation.

Rationale: The combination of the first three questions qualify respondents on three dimensions that will allow the analysis of answers to portray housing needs at a level that will support action development. For instance, the hospitality sector might generate the most compelling need on HHI for rental apartments, while single family houses for public employees might be the predominant need in Beaufort.

4. Page 1, New Table: In addition to the type of organization a respondent represents, suggest an additional chart to qualify the sector of the County to which the respondent’s expertise and input applies. The regional definitions listed on Page 2 can be adapted to this end.

Rationale: One goal of the survey, as we understand it, is to differentiate housing needs for individual parts of the County. The proposed chart will focus the geographic scope of any respondent’s responses and promote more granular and useful conclusions for entities like the Hilton Head Town Council while still enabling aggregation at the County

5. Page 3, Table 5: Suggest this table be expanded to include categories of income-producing employees having demands for affordable housing.

	Low Demand	Moderate Demand	High Demand
Seasonal Worker			
Resident Worker			
Civil Service			
Mid-level Manager			
Young Professional			
Student			
Independent Senior			
Assisted Senior			
Homeless			
Special Needs			

Rationale: The categories on the draft survey table mix facility types with client types and don't address all of the significant categories of people impacted by affordable housing shortages in the County, particularly employed people in the hospitality and public and private service sectors. The proposed revision attempts to flesh out the sample.

6. Page 3, New Table: Suggest an additional question - "In your business or interest area and region, what do you project to be the number of persons in each category requiring housing in the listed time frames?"

	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	7-10 Years
Seasonal Worker				
Resident Worker				
Civil Service				
Mid-level Manager				
Young Professional				
Student				
Independent Senior				
Assisted Senior				
Homeless				
Special Needs				

Rationale: The qualitative measures extracted from other questions in the survey are well suited to define the structure of the County's housing problems. However, none capture the quantitative aspect vital to

development of solutions. For instance, the need for single family homes for permanent workers, managers and civil servants might be the most pressing challenge in a given locale, but the number of units needed to solve the problem might not be attainable. The size of a need and its economic and social importance do not necessarily correlate. This suggested question and the next attempt to quantify the needs.

7. Page 3, New Table: Recommend an additional question - “In your business or interest area and region, what do you project to be the number of persons at each income level requiring housing in the listed time frames?”

	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	7-10 Years
\$0 - \$25k				
\$26 - \$50K				
\$51 - \$75K				
\$76 - \$100K				
\$101K+				

Rationale: Salary levels and the status of people needing housing do not necessarily correlate among all areas of Beaufort County. The intend of this table is to provide and additional quantitative measure of need which can be analyzed in conjunction with the County Housing Affordability Matrix.

8. Page 3, Table 6: Add housing type category for “Dormitories”.

Rationale: This category provides a reasonable housing choice for seasonal workers as well as students and has been employed successfully to alleviate workforce housing shortages in Florida and Colorado.

9. Page 4, Table 8: Suggest this table be revised to clarify the issues more clearly as to economic impact and policy solutions. Suggest the horizontal axis capture either category of client (Chart 5) or income spread (Chart 7), while the vertical can remain the same. We’ve used income brackets in the example below. 1-3 values could be entered in each block to capture scale.

	\$0-25K	\$26K-\$50K	\$51K-\$75K	\$76K-\$100K	\$101K+
Foreclosure					
Availability					
Overcrowding					
Community Services					
Rent Affordability					
Substandard					
Public Transportation					
Down Payment					

Renovation Cost					
Purchase Affordability					

Rationale: Different housing issues apply to individual segments of the country population. For instance, availability of a down payment will only apply to those income categories which could also qualify for a mortgage, and overcrowding might apply primarily to lower income categories. Differentiation will provide the data to support more targeted solutions.

10. Page 4, Table 9: Suggest this survey question also be revised to generate a more precise view of the potential housing solutions. Suggest the housing styles from Table 6 could be used on the vertical axis, with the solution types on the horizontal. Use data entries 0-3 for not applicable to most important. Example below.

	Adaptive Reuse	Renovation	New Construction
Dormitories			
Apartments			
Duplex/Townhomes			
Condominiums			
Mobile Homes			
Single Family Homes			

Rationale: As with some of the earlier suggestions, the intent here is to segment the responses in such a way as to narrow the potential solutions to the types of housing to which they best apply. For instance, adaptive reuse has a high level of applicability to dormitories and possibly condos but virtually none to single family homes.

11. Page 4, Table 10: This question could also be revised to give a more refined view of potential solutions, again using data entries of 0-3 for not applicable to most important.

	Buyer Assistance	Project Rental Subsidy	Tax Credit Financing	Rental Housing Assistance	Homeowner Assistance
Dormitories					
Apartments					
Duplex/Town-homes					
Condominiums					
Mobile Homes					
Single Family Homes					

Rationale: The reasoning here is similar to that presented for the two prior charts. Hopefully, the consistency and narrower definition among these charts will identify the best basket of solutions for specific needs categories.

12. Page 4, New Table: A question defining the impact of public policy options at the town/county level might also be useful in tying the solution set together at the housing type level. Example below.

	Re-zoni ng	Land Repurposing	Expedited Permit Processing	Infra-structure Investments	Public/Private Partnership
Dormitories					
Apartments					
Duplex/Town-homes					
Condominiums					
Mobile Homes					
Single Family Homes					

Rationale: Discussions with and among HHI town officials have portrayed public policy as an important component to any solution to the workforce housing shortage. Many of these changes can be addressed through changes to ordinances and government practices without a major investment of public money. We believe it is important to highlight this component of the housing solution set in the discussion.

13. Page 6, Table 13: Recommend this question be rephrased to replace “Beaufort County” with “your community”. Also add the categories “Deed/Title Complexity” and “Ownership Fragmentation”. Results would be tabulated only for the community the respondent identified in the new Chart recommended in Para 3. There might be some benefit to asking the respondent to rank the items selected.

Rationale: As noted in Para 3 above, qualifying responses according to sub-elements of the County will provide a more refined perspective on needs, solutions and barriers. For instance, land cost might be more of a factor on HHI than in an unincorporated area. Deed provenance and ownership fragmentation present a challenge to acquiring land for development on HHI and elsewhere in the County.