

A Comparison of Inclusionary Housing in U.S. Cities

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Below is a summary of inclusionary housing policies from cities throughout the U.S. Although most of the policies represent mandatory programs, nearly all cities provide value in return to developers through density bonuses, fee waivers, expedited review or subsidies. The policies all underwent feasibility analysis in their respective markets and some have been in place for a decade or more.

Nearly all cities with inclusionary policies calculate the set-aside units based on all units in a building. So a ten percent set aside in a 100-unit building would produce 10 affordable units. However, in the proposed incentive zoning policy for Seattle, the set-aside is based on the bonus area only. For example, most projects participating in the program can expect 20-40% bonus area above the base zoning height. If we assume a 20% set aside, this results in a set aside of 4-8% total affordable units in the building.

Jurisdiction	Set Aside (of total bldg)	Income Targets	Compensation
SEATTLE (PLUNC chair proposal)	4-8%	For rent: 80% For sale: 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bonus density depending on difference between base and max height
Boston, MA	15%	For rent: 68-85% AMI ⁱ For sale: 89-109% AMI ⁱⁱ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax break Increased height/FAR allowance
Boulder, CO	20%	For rent: 70% AMI For sale: 80% AMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Cambridge, MA	15%	Avg. of 65% AMI 10-30% AMI ⁱⁱⁱ (reached by packaging with other affordable housing resources) For sale: 80% AMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30% density bonus (15% for market units, 15% for affordable units)
Davis, CA	25%	80% of AMI (15% of units) 50% of AMI (10% of units)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% density bonus (one-for-one)
Denver, CO ^{iv}	10%	For sale: 80% AMI (< 3 stories) 95% AMI (4+ stories) For rent: 65% AMI (rental)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% density bonus \$5,000/unit cash subsidy Reduced parking requirements Expedited review
New York, NY	20%	80% AMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33% density bonus
Sacramento, CA	15%	50% AMI (10% of units) 80% AMI (5% of units)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% density bonus Fee waivers or deferrals Expedited review Reduced land use limits Less expensive finishes allowed Gap financing
San Diego, CA	10%	For rent: 65% AMI For sale: 100% AMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expedited review Reduced water and sewer fees
San Francisco, CA ^v	15% (20% if off-site)	For rent: 60% AMI of county (not MSA) some up to 120% For sale: 100% AMI of city and county not MSA, some from 80% to 120%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fee waivers
Santa Fe, NM	15% if rental, 30% if for sale	For rent: 50% AMI (5% of units) 50-65% AMI (5% of units) 65-80% AMI (5% of units) For sale: 50-65% AMI (10% of units) 65-80% AMI (10% of units) 80-100% AMI (10% of units)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15% density bonus Fee waivers Reduced water fees
Washington, DC	8-10%	50-80% AMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% density bonus

ⁱ Based on 100-120% of Boston median income in 2008.

ⁱⁱ Based on 130-160% of Boston median income in 2008.

ⁱⁱⁱ Increasing Housing Opportunity in New York City, Policy Link, Fall 2004.

^{iv} Denver's program is mandatory for ownership units but voluntary for rentals.

^v San Francisco income targets are in transition as income measure changes from MSA to city and county.