

## **New Report: America's Growing Housing Crisis**

The Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University recently released *The State of the Nation's Housing 2006* (PDF). Documenting the nation's growing affordable housing crisis, the report cites several causes such as a large number of low-wage jobs, rising interest rates, and stricter developmental regulations with increased permitting costs and impact fees.

While overall household growth is expected to accelerate over the next ten years, affordable rental housing has diminished 13 percent, increasing the shortfall in units available to low-income households to 5.4 million. Especially foreboding is the report's warning that, if the economy falters, both job growth and housing prices will come under renewed pressure, turning from an economic support into a drag.

With about one-tenth of the nation's poor still living in neighborhoods with poverty rates over 40 percent, the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard suggests that all levels of government will need "to expand housing subsidies, create incentives for the private sector to build affordable housing, institute land use policies that reduce barriers to development, and educate the public about the importance of affordable housing."

The document can be downloaded here:

[www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/markets/son2006/index.htm](http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/markets/son2006/index.htm)

## **Using Housing Plus Services in Rural Communities**

*Formulas for Success: Housing Services in Rural Areas*, a recent report from the Housing Assistance Council, an organization dedicated to building rural communities, discusses strategies rural housing organizations are using to meet the special needs of poor households in rural America. The report includes a brief literature on the housing needs of rural America, an overview of the "housing plus services" model, and cases studies of four rural nonprofit organizations and one rural public housing authority that use the housing plus services model. All of the organizations examined rely on "strong community collaboration, innovative community organizations, and targeted yet flexible housing plus services programs," says the report. The report also provides a list of organizations that provide resources on housing and services and can be accessed here:

<http://www.knowledgeplex.org/showdoc.html?id=177530>