



## Senior Housing: The Need

In 2010, the percent of people over 65 throughout the nation was 12.9; in Montana, 14.6% of our residents are over 65. Montana ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation in that percentage.  
*U. S. Census 2010*

The U. S. Administration on Aging reports that in 2009 the older population of those 65 and older was 39.6 million . . . one in every eight Americans. The fastest-growing segment of the total population is the oldest old—those 80 and over. For the first time in history, people aged 65 and over will soon outnumber children under the age of five. The 2010 Census reports there were approximately twice as many women as men age 89.  
*Transgenerational.org. "The Demographics of Aging."*

## Key Findings from the Helena Area Housing Needs Assessment

"The number one issue among survey respondents and focus group participants is housing affordability."

"Survey respondents ranked apartments for the elderly and apartments with two or three bedrooms as the most needed type of new housing in the greater Helena area."

### Focus groups said:

We need for affordable rentals.  
We need rental assistance.  
Homes are cheaper farther out from Helena but transportation costs are higher.  
One-level units are in demand.  
Accessibility is important for aging boomers.  
Close to town is most in demand.  
We need senior housing.

### Survey respondents said:

Affordable rental housing and affordable sale housing were the most needed types of housing in the Helena area.

### Documented demand for subsidized units:

"In May 2010, there were 453 applicants on the waiting list for public housing. The average wait for an applicant was 177 days. The waiting list for one-bedrooms is the largest and wait times can take up to a year."

"The Helena Housing waiting list for (Section 8) vouchers in May, 2010 was 529 people with a wait list of 237 days. The State of Montana Board of Housing maintains a separate waiting list for the Montana voucher program. In July, 2010, there were 486 people from Lewis & Clark County on that waiting list."

In 2010, Rocky Mountain Development Council's waiting lists for the following projects were as follows:  
Eagle Manor Campus (senior and persons with disabilities) 60; Ptarmigan (family units) – 16;  
Pheasant Glen (family units – 16)

*The Needs Assessment was sponsored by the Greater Helena Area Task Force and prepared by Applied Communications. December 2010*