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Leaders discuss Monterey County housing needs

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The Salinas Californian

More construction of affordable homes and more financial education and support for those who would buy them.

That's what it will take for Monterey County to expand housing options for low-income residents, according to elected officials, housing leaders and bankers who gathered Thursday to discuss the state of affordable housing in the county.

The group met at the National Steinbeck Center in Oldtown Salinas to identify opportunities for working families to be able to buy their own home.

Guests in attendance said the affordable-housing situation has improved, but more can be done.

"We need to find new collaborations between lending institutions and community organizations," said U.S. Rep. Sam Farr, D-Carmel, "so our workforce can live here and understand how to become homeowners.

A state report released Wednesday said two jurisdictions in the county have reported inclusionary housing programs, which require developers to include affordable-priced homes in most developments.

Since 1999, 371 such homes for low-income residents went up in Salinas and 109 in other portions of Monterey County, according to a report from the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California.

Read more in tomorrow's Salinas Californian.
