

## Letter from the Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce's Gen Z Committee to the Town of Oro Valley

To Mayor Winfield, Town Council, Town Staff, and OV Residents

The Gen Z Committee, established by the Greater Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce in 2024, represents early-career professionals who are deeply invested in the Town's future. We find that many of Oro Valley's dedicated educators, healthcare providers, service workers, and small business employees want to live and grow here but simply can't afford to. As a result, many cannot formally participate in the OV Path Forward general planning, despite being directly impacted as local workers.

Oro Valley faces a shortage of diverse, attainable housing. Most of our committee members commute from outside the Town due to high costs and limited rental options. The average rent (\$1,466/mo) exceeds what many essential workers can afford. Many rentals are luxury units, and the vacancy rate is nearing levels of severe shortage. Additionally, single-family home prices are far beyond reach for early-career professionals and young families. This lack of local housing makes it harder for businesses to attract and retain talent, and it disconnects workers from the community they serve.

This is not just a workforce issue, it's an economic and sustainability challenge. Fewer year-round residents mean reduced local spending, lower tax revenue, and more seasonal slowdowns. Long commutes increase traffic and infrastructure strain. Without housing that is within the price range of younger residents and families, the Town risks school closures, business stagnation, and long-term population decline. Conversely, expanding housing options could lead to more consistent demand for childcare, fitness, dining, and other services, strengthening local business and laying a foundation for future generations to live, work, and play in OV.

To support a better future for Oro Valley, we urge the Town to:

- Encourage a wider range of housing types, including mid-tier rentals, townhomes, and mixed-use developments.
- Streamline permitting processes for developers and consider targeted zoning updates for higher density housing.
- Prioritize sustainable growth with infrastructure that supports a local, year-round workforce, including public transit, bike lanes, and pedestrian friendly designs.

Oro Valley has spent decades building a safe, vibrant community. Let's ensure that the people who power it every day can afford to call it home.

We are ready to collaborate on solutions that support a strong future for all generations. For more research and detailed recommendations, please refer to the full report.

Thank you.