

# HOUSING ELEMENT

## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Adopted: August 22, 2011

**GOAL ONE: Ensure the provision of adequate housing for all existing and future residents of the City.**

*Objective 1.1: Closely monitor and coordinate with private sector, and annually assess its performance, in providing the number and diversity of housing units needed to serve population changes in the City.*

**Policy 1.1.1:** Annually assess the availability of land and housing construction trends in relation to population changes and the projected ratio of 1 housing unit per 1.9 persons.

**Policy 1.1.2:** Continue to evaluate and amend land development regulations to eliminate impediments to development, which would inordinately increase housing costs or eliminate the profit motive of the private sector.

**Policy 1.1.3:** Maintain an ongoing working relationship with the Board of Realtors and Polk County Builders Association to ensure the private sector has full information on projected housing needs.

**Policy 1.1.4:** Ensure that sufficient, properly zoned land, with adequate infrastructure is available to meet the City's projected housing needs, through 2025.

**Policy 1.1.5:** Work with the housing industry, on creating incentives, to provide a variety of housing types and options, from which the City's residents to chose. Ensure that land development regulations and zoning do not create barriers to the construction of alternatives to single-family detached housing such as: condominiums, townhouses, apartments, loft apartments, and accessory residential units.

**Policy 1.1.6:** Work with the housing industry on creating incentives to provide affordable housing units which exceed minimum code requirements for construction, aesthetics, and energy efficiency. Work with developers and home builders on the development and implementation of land development regulations that encourage the use of a variety of lot sizes, floor plans, and models within an individual subdivision.

*Objective 1.2: Identify and develop a program to protect historic residential buildings.*

**Policy 1.2.1:** Coordinate with local historic preservation individuals or groups to enlist or provide technical assistance and participation in any surveys or other programs. Periodically review and update past historic surveys in order to track changes within identified historic areas.

**Policy 1.2.2:** Based on detailed analysis of historic surveys, determine the existence of any historically significant structures and/or districts within the City. Encourage the rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of historically significant housing.

**Policy 1.2.3:** The City shall assist property owners of historically significant housing in identifying, applying for, and utilizing available State and Federal assistance programs for use in restoring these structures.

*Objective 1.3: Establish infill strategies by adopting land development regulations that define standards and criteria, and by programming capital improvements to facilitate infill development and redevelopment.*

**Policy 1.3.1:** Continue to track vacant residential in the City. Include information on size, location, physical characteristics, access, utilities, zoning, and ownership.

**Policy 1.3.2:** Survey infrastructure conditions, annually, to establish the existence of adequate service to vacant residential sites. Within older residential areas, annually complete capital projects to upgrade water, sewer, mobility, drainage, lighting, and recreation facilities to meet current adopted level of service standards.

**Policy 1.3.3:** Establish financial incentives to promote construction on infill lots, such as reducing or waiving impact and utility fees and charges, where legally feasible.

**Policy 1.3.4:** Maintain land development regulations that encourage infill development and other patterns of compact urban growth by allowing for zero lot-line development, accessory units, floor area reduction, and smaller lot sizes.

**Policy 1.3.5:** Allocate funding for minor off-site capital improvements, such as, street and utility extensions or upgrading designed to support development of infill lots.

**Policy 1.3.6:** Revise the land development regulations to allow for greater use of accessory residential units as an alternative, low impact, housing option in place of developing traditional single-family and multi-family units.

*Objective 1.4: Provide opportunities for the siting of licensed group homes.*

**Policy 1.4.1:** Maintain land development regulations that define the standards and criteria for group homes in regard to siting, off street parking, building, and buffering requirements.

**Policy 1.4.2:** Encourage the development of residential alternatives to institutionalization.

*Objective 1.5: Provide opportunities for the siting of housing for the elderly.*

**Policy 1.5.1:** Maintain land development regulations that define the standards and criteria for the development of all types of elderly housing and support facilities.

**Policy 1.5.2:** Identify and coordinate with programs that support the elderly remaining in an independent living environment. Work to reduce or eliminate any land development regulations that would hinder or prevent the elderly from remaining in an independent living environment.

*Objective 1.6: Provide opportunities for the siting of housing for those individuals with disabilities.*

**Policy 1.6.1:** Maintain land development regulations in compliance with Florida Statutes, Chapter 553; providing requirements for elimination of barriers in future housing for the disabled.

**Policy 1.6.2:** Identify and coordinate with programs that support the disabled in a barrier free housing and independent living environment. Work to reduce or eliminate any land development regulations that would hinder or prevent the disabled from remaining in an independent living environment.

*Objective 1.7: Provide relocation housing.*

**Policy 1.7.1:** Maintain a standard residential relocation policy for any residential households displaced by City action.

*Objective 1.8: Provide for family homestead housing.*

**Policy 1.8.1:** Allow parcels of land used solely as a homestead to be conveyed from one family member to another, notwithstanding the use, density or intensity assigned under the Future Land Use Plan, consistent with Florida Statutes, Chapter 163.

**GOAL TWO: Ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing options for individuals and families of all economic levels.**

*Objective 2.1: Promote the development of affordable, quality housing and provide for adequate sites to locate low and moderate income housing. The City shall ensure that a sufficient number of affordable housing sites are available with the City.*

**Policy 2.1.1:** The City's Future Land Use map shall designate substantial acreage for housing sites which can be marketed and developed for all income ranges.

**Policy 2.1.2:** Reduce or eliminate financial and regulatory barriers to private sector construction of affordable housing, by adopting standards and incentives which consider variable impact fee and utility rate structures, and relaxed zoning and structural regulations.

**Policy 2.1.3:** Annually analyze the amount of land zoned for mobile/manufactured homes, and, where necessary, approve zoning for adequate sites available to meet the projected demand for mobile/manufactured homes at a rate of 10% of the City's housing stock.

**Policy 2.1.4:** Maintain and enforce the Fair Housing Ordinances to eliminate all barriers to housing acquisition, based on race, sex, creed, and national origin.

**Policy 2.1.5:** Maintain an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee to evaluate the impacts of comprehensive plan amendments, code changes, and other governmental actions on affordable housing within the City.

*Objective 2.2: Work with home builders, banks and financing companies, realtors, landlords, other governmental agencies, and nonprofits to ensure the city is supplied with a sufficient amount of affordable housing for residents of all income levels.*

**Policy 2.2.1:** Continue to carry out the City's Affordable Housing Program which works with and supports local lenders, the housing construction industry, and other affordable housing providers, particularly in providing safe, decent affordable housing units where deficits have been identified; namely for: rental households for very low income

persons; rental households for moderate and higher income persons; owner-occupied households for very low income persons; affordable owner-occupied households for persons earning above the City's median income.

**Policy 2.2.2:** Periodically review the City's impact fees to ensure that they are not resulting in an obstacle to the provision of affordable housing units. When it has been determined that there is a shortage in affordable housing, consider waiving or reducing impact fees to promote the development of affordable housing.

**Policy 2.2.3:** Implement a streamlined review and permitting process for those developers who commit to building a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the housing units in a development as affordable units as defined by the Lakeland/Winter Haven MSA.

**Policy 2.2.4:** Implement a strategy to utilize all available state, federal, and local housing assistance programs for the rehabilitation and construction of affordable housing.

**GOAL THREE: Prevent the establishment of substandard or dilapidated housing within the City.**

*Objective 3.1: Eliminate substandard and dilapidated housing and prevent its return.*

**Policy 3.1.1:** Maintain a standard procedure for sub-standard housing rehabilitation. Utilize demolition only as a last resort to correct sub-standard housing.

**Policy 3.1.2:** Work with the Code Enforcement and Building Divisions to maintain a neighborhood inspection program to enforce the minimum housing code and the City's aesthetic codes.

**Policy 3.1.3:** Continue to evaluate and prioritize the needs for neighborhood preservation and aesthetic improvement standards and programs for each neighborhood in the City. Develop and implement neighborhood preservation and aesthetic programs for an average of one neighborhood per year throughout the planning period.

**Policy 3.1.4:** Rehabilitate or demolish any substandard housing that is determined to be a hazard to public health and safety.

- Policy 3.1.5:** Enforce regulations intended to eliminate substandard housing in Winter Haven and to prevent its return. Work with Code Enforcement to identify “at risk” housing or neighborhoods in order to prevent the deterioration of housing to a substandard condition.
- Policy 3.1.6:** Disseminate information on available federal, state or local housing rehabilitation programs on an ongoing basis.
- Policy 3.1.7:** Promote public information seminars that address the rehabilitation of units that are beginning to deteriorate, educate the public on code enforcement, and basic home maintenance.

**GOAL FOUR: Promote the development of energy efficient and sustainable housing within the City.**

*Objective 4.1: Encourage, and provide incentives, when appropriate, for design and construction techniques and building materials capable of significantly reducing the cost of construction, maintenance and energy consumption of housing while providing for a more healthy and durable home environment.*

- Policy 4.1.1:** The City shall promote opportunities to integrate housing, including affordable and workforce housing, with infill development to create mixed-use neighborhoods to increase energy efficiency through efficient land use patterns.
- Policy 4.1.2:** The City shall promote communities by encouraging green housing that conserves natural resources and reduces monthly operating costs.
- Policy 4.1.3:** The City will encourage housing construction that uses the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles or the Florida Green Building Coalition's Green land development and building standards.
- Policy 4.1.4:** By 2014, determine a threshold and criteria for requiring LEED standards/certification in development and redevelopment projects, and implement through update to the land development code. In addition, consider pilot incentive programs to encourage green building and development.
- Policy 4.1.5:** Continue to implement the requirements of the latest Florida Energy Efficiency Code for Building Construction that assures a conscious effort toward energy efficiency so that proper equipment, building orientation on site, adequate insulation, and appliance selection will be considered by developers.

**Policy 4.1.6:** The City shall promote construction techniques that enhance the long-term usability and affordability of housing.

**Policy 4.1.7:** The City shall collaborate with the banking community, builders' associations, and other interested parties, to determine ways builders may incorporate "Sustainable Building" technologies in the construction of housing, through the following means:

1. Water (e.g. indoor water conservation, low-flow/low-flush fixtures, pervious materials, use of xeriscaping (Florida Friendly landscaping), reclaimed water irrigation, harvested rainwater)
2. Energy (e.g. Energy Star ratings, passive solar design, landscaping for energy conservation, site development) and unit orientation (e.g. north/south rather than east/west windows) that takes advantage of the natural shade and lighting available, radiant barrier and ridge venting, earth sheltered design, solar heating and cooling systems, gas water heating and cooling systems, ductwork, fans, energy recovery ventilators, programmable thermostats, energy efficient appliances.
3. Building materials (e.g. dimensional lumber, wood treatment, engineered structural materials, engineered siding and trim, non-toxic termite control, earth materials, floor coverings, wood flooring, roofing structural wall panels, insulation, windows and doors, cabinets, finishes and adhesives)
4. Solid Waste Management (e.g., home recycling, compost systems, construction waste recycling)

**Policy 4.1.8:** The City shall promote energy conservation techniques that incorporate Federal Energy Star standards as consistent with the requirements of the State Building Code on energy efficiency. Periodic reviews of development regulations and building codes shall be conducted to determine if there are modifications needed to incorporate energy conservation measures in addition to the requirements of the State Building Code's energy efficiency provisions.