



CHAPTER 3 HOUSING ELEMENT

SUMMARY

The Housing Element addresses several key issues including the provision of affordable housing; housing to accommodate populations with special needs; maintenance of the City's housing stock; protection of existing residential areas; and the provision of diversified housing opportunities to meet the needs of the population. Diversified housing and the preservation of suburban character are items identified in the 2020 Vision Statement and Community Building Blocks.

Like all communities, the City has a need to balance the cost of housing with the income levels of available jobs in the community. This is basically what is meant by the term "affordable housing". Approximately 60% of the total households in the City fall into an income category (i.e. defined as extremely low, very low, low, or moderate) where there is an identified need for affordable housing opportunities. The Housing Element explains the City's role in the provision of affordable housing as it relates to the private sector, which acts as the primary housing provider in the community. This Element also explores available opportunities for the City to receive State and federal funding to assist with the provision of affordable housing and community development as the City's population continues to increase.

In addition to providing affordable housing for residents in certain income ranges, the Housing Element explains the City's role in providing housing opportunities for households with special needs. One identified special needs group of particular importance is the elderly. The Housing Element makes provisions to accommodate the future housing needs for the 65+-age cohort, which is likely to continue to comprise about 30% of the total households in the City in 2020. Updated projections indicate that the percentage of the population over the age of 65 will continue to increase and become a larger segment of Palm Coast's total population. It is anticipated that elderly residents will need smaller dwelling units on smaller lots, assisted living, and age-in-place transitional housing facilities.

The Housing Element identifies strategies to provide diversified housing opportunities not only for the elderly, but also for all age groups. Currently, the City's residential choices are mostly limited to single family homes on ¼-acre lots. Many of the areas platted for ¼-acre lots are vacant, with underutilized infrastructure. Some of these areas are in need of redevelopment activities, such as relating, to promote different lot sizes to accommodate different housing types such as country estates and patio homes. The City also will need multi-family housing units as the population grows in the future. One of the key aspects of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide residential units in mixed-use areas where residents are within walking distance of commercial and recreational amenities.





At the same time, there is a paramount concern that existing residential areas must be protected. The Housing Element contains several strategies related to protecting residential areas and maintaining the housing stock. Unlike many older cities, Palm Coast will not face a large-scale need for rehabilitation of residential units. The only area where there is a concentration of substandard units is along the SR100 corridor, which is proposed for inclusion in a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA).

The City's expansion from 50 square miles at the time of its incorporation in 1999 to its current size of more than 89 square miles provide opportunities for the City to meet its future housing need and to increase the diversity of housing stock in the City of Palm Coast.





GOAL 3.1: PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Citizens of all income levels shall have the opportunity to obtain quality housing at a reasonable cost.

FINDING: *The cornerstone of a City's quality of life is its housing stock. Citizens of all income levels desire safe, secure, good quality housing at a reasonable cost. Although the provision of housing is largely a function of the private sector, the public sector plays a role in helping to ensure that the housing needs of all citizens are met by attempting to balance the cost of housing with the income levels of available jobs in the community. This is basically what is meant by the term "affordable housing". Affordability is defined as housing where monthly rents or mortgage payments, inclusive of taxes, insurance, and utilities, do not exceed 30% of a household's gross annual income adjusted for family size. Households in need of affordable housing are classified in the following income ranges:*

"moderate income" households can earn up to 120% of median income adjusted for family size; "low income" households can earn up to 80%; "very low income" households can earn up to 50%; and "extremely low income" households can earn up to 30%.

Of the total number of households in the City, approximately 60% are in need of "affordable housing" – 32% are classified as either extremely low, low income or very low income under these criteria and approximately 25% are classified as moderate income. According to 2008 figures, the median income for a family of four in the City of Palm Coast is \$55,600. This means a family of four can earn a total annual gross income of \$66,750 to be classified as moderate income, \$44,500 to be classified as low income, \$27,800 to be classified as very low income and \$16,700 to be classified as extremely low income. Thus, the term "low income housing" in Palm Coast might mean a family of four living in a \$185,000 single family home or a \$1,113 per month apartment or duplex where dual household incomes are derived from the construction trades, government employment, or the retail or service sectors. Although there may be some governmental subsidies involved, "low income housing" is now provided mainly through the private sector. This term should not be confused with government owned, built, and operated housing units or government housing projects.

The following objectives and policies are written not only to meet State regulatory requirements, but also to express the City's plan to continue to ensure that housing opportunities are available to residents of all income levels. This can be accomplished by the City working in partnership with the private sector to offer economic development incentives that will encourage availability of affordable home sites and the construction of good quality dwelling units. As the City's population continues to grow there will be opportunities for the City to obtain substantial funding from both the State and Federal levels to promote affordable housing and community development. Specific sources of funding include the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program or another program developed by the state or federal government.





Objective 3.1.1 – Adequate and Affordable Housing Opportunities

Provide adequate and affordable housing opportunities to accommodate the needs of existing and future residents of households classified as extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income through a variety of mechanisms, including financial assistance and development incentives.

Policy 3.1.1.1 – Through the joint City of Palm Coast-Flagler County housing program, the City shall support Flagler County in its efforts to assist extremely low, very low, low, and moderate-income residents to purchase single-family residences within the City using funding from the SHIP program or other available housing programs.

Policy 3.1.1.2 – The City shall provide local support to developers seeking tax credits administered by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to construct affordable multi-family projects at appropriate locations. This can be provided through a variety of mechanisms, including, but not limited to financial contributions, expedited plan review and permitting, and density bonuses.

Policy 3.1.1.3 – Through the joint City of Palm Coast-Flagler County housing program the City shall work with the County to use SHIP monies or other available funding to support the development of affordable multi-family units in the City.

Policy 3.1.1.4 – The City shall include innovative land development regulations in the LDC to promote affordable housing in the community. Potential actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Density bonuses;
- B. Expedited site plan review and permitting;
- C. Innovative land development regulations established through zoning districts or through Planned Unit Developments (PUDs); and
- D. Other regulations intended to reduce building and development costs.

Objective 3.1.2 – State and Federal Funding to Implement Housing Programs

Seek funding from Federal and State housing and community development sources to formulate and establish housing implementation programs.

Policy 3.1.2.1 – The City shall seek to become a CDBG Entitlement Community when the population reaches 50,000 by completing a Consolidated Plan in accordance with program guidelines. With the participation of local citizens, CDBG funds can be used for activities that best serve the City’s development priorities, provided that these projects benefit low and moderate income persons; prevent or eliminate slums or blight; or meet other urgent community development needs.





Policy 3.1.2.2 – The City shall seek funding from the SHIP program when the population reaches 50,000. In order to participate in SHIP under current program regulations, the City must establish a local housing assistance program by ordinance; develop a housing assistance plan and housing incentive strategy; amend land development regulations or establish local policies to implement the incentive strategies; form partnerships and combine resources in order to reduce housing costs; and ensure that rent or mortgage payments within the targeted areas do not exceed 30 percent of the area median income limits, unless authorized by the mortgage lender.

Policy 3.1.2.3 – In addition to CDBG and SHIP, the City shall evaluate other potential sources of affordable housing funding.

Policy 3.1.2.4 – The City shall participate with the County and neighboring cities to pursue joint affordable housing funding if the opportunity arises.

Objective 3.1.3 – Sites for Extremely Low, Very Low, Low and Moderate Income Housing

Provide adequate sites for extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income households.

Policy 3.1.3.1 – The City shall ensure that the Residential land use designation, the associated zoning districts, and land development regulations permit a variety of housing types and densities throughout the City

Policy 3.1.3.2 – The City shall seek to disperse affordable housing throughout the City and avoid over-concentration in any single area.

Policy 3.1.3.3 – The City shall provide assistance to housing developers in identifying sites for affordable housing for very low, low, and moderate-income households. Potential sites shall be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- A. Availability of existing or planned roads and central utilities;
- B. Proximity of existing or planned schools, parks, and other public facilities;
- C. Proximity of existing or planned employment centers; and
- D. Proximity to grocery stores and medical facilities.

Policy 3.1.3.4 – The City shall provide in-kind services, time permitting and where appropriate, to assist non-profit organizations in their efforts to construct homes for very low, low, and moderate-income households.

Policy 3.1.3.5 – The City shall collaborate with architects, designers and other housing providers to encourage the innovative design of affordable housing.





GOAL 3.2: SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

Households with special needs shall be integrated into and dispersed throughout residential areas.

FINDING: Public sector assistance is typically required to provide housing to accommodate populations with special needs, including the elderly, handicapped, and female headed households. State regulations are very specific in ensuring populations with special needs are not discriminated against by requiring local governments to treat small group homes as single-family units subject to certain distance requirements to avoid over concentrations in any one area.

Based upon its demographics, the City faces a major need to address housing for the elderly. According to figures from the 2000 census, approximately 30% of the City's population is 65 years of age or older and nearly half of the City's households have at least one individual in this age category. Updated figures from the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies indicate that the elderly population will again start to increase as a percentage of the city's population over the planning horizon. The City's elderly residents will need special housing assistance and group home facilities that will enable them to age-in-place. For elderly and handicapped persons utilizing in-home day car services, there will be an increased demand for downsized, barrier-free dwellings (i.e. apartments, condos or single-family homes on smaller lots). Others may opt to move to a congregate care or an assisted living facility. A continuum of care facility, which would allow residents to age-in-place and transition from single family residential structures to assisted living and then to a nursing home within the same development site is a concept which has received much public support.

The role of local government in providing housing assistance for special needs households is discussed in the following objectives and policies. State comprehensive planning requirements extend into areas that may not be as pertinent in the City as compared to other places in the State. For example, the analysis indicates that farm worker housing and shelters for the homeless are not a need in the City, but these issues still must be addressed in the Plan. Outside the City, but within the boundaries of the Daytona Beach MSA, there are numerous resources offered for homeless persons in the form of support services and institutions.

Objective 3.2.1 – Housing Sites for Special Needs Groups

Provide adequate sites within residential areas for group homes and foster care facilities licensed and monitored by the State of Florida.

Policy 3.2.1.1 – The City shall enforce the siting requirements consistent with the provisions of Chapter 419, F.S., for group homes and foster care facilities licensed by the Florida Department of Children and Families, which are summarized as follows:





- A. Community Residential Homes (CRH) with 6 or fewer residents shall be deemed as a single-family residential dwelling unit and shall be permitted in all residential zoning districts provided they are separated by a distance of 1,000 feet from any other CRH (measured from building walls, home to home).
- B. Community Residential Homes with 7-14 residents shall be permitted in multi-family zoning districts provided they are separated by a distance of 1,200 feet of any other CRH and at least 500 feet from a single-family residential zoning district (measured from building walls, home to home or from home to zoning district line).

Policy 3.2.1.2 – To foster nondiscrimination and encourage the development of community residential alternatives to institutionalization, the City shall, at a minimum, establish the following principles and criteria, supplemental to the provisions of Chapter 419, F. S., for siting group homes and foster care facilities:

- A. Availability of existing or planned roads and central utilities;
- B. Proximity of existing or planned schools, parks, and other public facilities;
- C. Proximity of existing or planned employment centers;
- D. Proximity to grocery stores and medical facilities;
- E. Proximity to bus routes; and
- F. Locations outside the Coastal High Hazard Zone.

Objective 3.2.2 – Affordable Housing for Residents with Special Needs

Provide adequate and affordable housing opportunities to accommodate households with special housing needs with an emphasis on provisions for the elderly.

Policy 3.2.2.1 – The City shall support the use of SHIP or CDBG funds, upon availability, to assist in the provision of special needs housing.

Policy 3.2.2.2 – The City shall encourage the development of continuum of care facilities, which would allow residents to age-in-place and transition from single-family residential structures to assisted living and then to a nursing home within the same development site. This can be provided through a variety of potential mechanisms including, but not limited to, the following:

- A. Financial contributions;
- B. Expedited plan review and permitting;
- C. Density bonuses;
- D. Specify continuum of care facilities as an allowable use within the multi-family or the Village Center zoning district;





- E. Innovative development standards created as part of a PUD Agreement; and
- F. Other regulations intended to reduce building and development costs.

Policy 3.2.2.3 – The City shall utilize, at a minimum, the following principles and criteria for siting households with special housing needs:

- A. Availability of existing or planned roads and central utilities;
- B. Proximity of existing or planned schools, parks, and other public facilities;
- C. Proximity of existing or planned employment centers;
- D. Proximity to grocery stores and medical facilities;
- E. Proximity to bus routes; and
- F. Locations outside of the Coastal High Hazard Zone.

Policy 3.2.2.4 – The City shall collaborate with the private sector and non-profit providers in the placement of housing for individuals with special needs, such as group homes, foster care and shelters for the homeless and related services for individuals with special needs, such as frail elderly, victims of domestic violence, and physically or mentally challenged, in order to coordinate the provision of an adequate housing supply to meet the increase in population and/or fluctuations in the number of special needs individuals.

Policy 3.2.2.5 – The City shall participate in the efforts of the Volusia-Flagler Homeless Coalition and other non-profit private agencies in the development of transitional housing for the homeless.

Objective 3.2.3 – Adequate and Affordable Housing for Rural and Farm Workers

Should a need be identified, assist Flagler County in its efforts to provide adequate and affordable rural and farm worker housing

Policy 3.2.3.1 – The City shall assist the County, through the Agricultural Extension Service to determine if there are rural and farm worker housing needs which impact the City.

Policy 3.2.3.2 – Should a need arise, the City shall assist the County in the development of principles and criteria guiding the location of rural and farm worker housing, including supporting infrastructure and public facilities.





GOAL 3.3: MAINTAIN THE HOUSING STOCK AND PROTECT RESIDENTIAL AREAS

To protect, maintain, rehabilitate, and improve City's housing stock.

FINDING: *The City's housing stock is relatively new. More than half of the dwelling units have been built since 2000, with only about 1% built prior to 1970. The number of the City's dwelling units are currently classified as "substandard" has increased significantly, however, this increase might be skewed by the growing national trend in households who forego landline telephone service in favor of cellular phone service. Many of the substandard units identified in 2004 are clustered along SR100 – in a place targeted for a potential Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). Other than this area where a need for rehabilitation and/or demolition of units may be identified through the CRA process, the City's primary focus is to preserve and maintain its housing stock. The economic downturn which led to record number of foreclosures significantly affected Palm Coast's housing stock and led to a number of housing units falling into disrepair. It is the City's challenge to bring stability to neighborhoods by enforcing property standards and participating in federal and state programs to bring foreclosed homes under new ownership. This goal, which works hand-in-hand with broader neighborhood preservation efforts, can be accomplished through a variety of means including strict enforcement of building and maintenance codes. In particular, there is a need to place special emphasis on regulations intended to ensure that landlords maintain rental units. Several options are discussed in the following objectives and policies.*

Objective 3.3.1 – Protect Housing Stock Through Adherence to Codes and Incentive Programs

Conserve, maintain, and improve its existing housing stock and eliminate substandard housing conditions through code provisions and incentive programs to require and/or assist builders, private homeowners, and landlords make structural and aesthetic improvements.

Policy 3.3.1.1 – The City shall enforce the Florida Building Code and associated codes and standards adopted by the City including pertinent sections of the International Property Maintenance Code. These regulations shall be reviewed on a continual basis and updated as needed.

Policy 3.3.1.2 – Within five (5) years of Plan adoption, the City shall establish permitting and inspection provisions pertaining to property rental and landlords.

Policy 3.3.1.3 – To promote high quality housing, the City shall enforce architectural and aesthetic regulations. These regulations shall be reviewed on a continual basis and updated as needed.





Policy 3.3.1.4 – The City shall support the use of SHIP or CDBG funds, and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) or other available housing program, to assist in the elimination of substandard housing conditions and to make structural and aesthetic improvements.

Policy 3.3.1.5 – As part of the LDC, the City shall establish minimum living area standards for various residential uses.

Objective 3.3.2 – Promote Quality Housing

Conduct community outreach efforts to promote quality housing and well-designed neighborhoods where historic resources and the natural environment are protected.

Policy 3.3.2.1 – Within five (5) years of Plan adoption, the City shall explore the feasibility of creating a Neighborhood Partnership Program to encourage community-based planning efforts addressing neighborhood stability, housing quality, safety, circulation, accessibility, recreational opportunities, and community character.

Policy 3.3.2.2 – The City shall create heritage, conservation or other appropriate overlay districts, as needed, for neighborhood stabilization. The City shall have available historic properties listed in the Master Site Files of the State of Florida Department of Historical Resources (DHR), and those historic and archeological properties protected by Florida Law.

Policy 3.3.2.3 – The City shall collaborate with homeowners associations to address community-based issues.

Policy 3.3.2.4 – The City shall encourage infill housing and cluster subdivisions in order to protect environmentally sensitive lands and to promote energy conservation.

Policy 3.3.2.5 – Within five (5) years of Plan adoption, the City shall provide a developer’s handbook which shall contain guidelines for siting, building orientation and landscaping of new housing developments to promote energy and water conservation, ensure compatibility with the surrounding area, minimize adverse environmental impacts, and enhance visual appeal.

Objective 3.3.3 – Promote Energy Efficient Homes

Promote the design and construction of energy efficient homes through the establishment of an incentive program.

Policy 3.3.3.1 – The City shall promote the Green Development Program to encourage the development and construction of energy efficient homes. The Green Development Program may use local, state, and national standards for green buildings.





Policy 3.3.3.2 – Promote participation in the Green Development Program through incentives such as:

- a. Reduction of Plan Review Fees
- b. Fast Track Development Review
- c. Recognition for participants through publicity on the city’s website or other media outlets.
- d. Provide assistance during final building inspection service to certify FGBC standards.

Policy 3.3.3.3 – As part of the Green Development Program the City shall provide incentives for the use of solar and other renewable energy resources in the planning and design of housing developments.

Objective 3.3.4 – Rehabilitate Substandard Housing

Work to rehabilitate substandard housing units and demolish dilapidated housing units by the year 2035. Provide relocation housing as warranted.

Policy 3.3.4.1 – The City shall use Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) TIF funds or other available funding to address the elimination of substandard housing in the CRA.

Policy 3.3.4.2 – Redevelopment Plans, which are a requirement of the CRA establishment process, shall address housing rehabilitation, demolition, and or relocation housing based upon the following principles:

- A. In areas where there is strong community identification, redevelopment will occur in a manner to minimize disruption and relocation.
- B. Consideration shall be given to provide opportunities for those living in the redevelopment area to return to their area if redeveloped for residential use.
- C. The City shall utilize Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice CPE 88-33 guidelines and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 for displacements if Federal funds are used.
- D. The City shall provide uniform and equitable treatment of persons and businesses displaced through government action supported by Federal aid funds in accordance with the provisions of Section 421.55, F.S.

Policy 3.3.4.3 – The City shall inspect substandard and potentially dangerous buildings, regardless of location, to ensure that all housing units within the City meet the requirements of the adopted building and life safety codes. Unless otherwise established by a CRA Redevelopment Plan, rehabilitation and preservation should be the primary consideration with condemnation being used by the City only when necessary to accomplish the goals of the CRA. The City shall take advantage of the City of Palm Coast-Flagler County Joint Housing Program as a possible source of funding for the rehabilitation of substandard units.





Objective 3.3.5 – Protect Residential Areas from Inappropriate Land Uses

Protect predominantly residential areas from the intrusion of incompatible or more intensive land uses.

Policy 3.3.5.1 – The City shall amend the LDC to include development standards that provide greater setback and buffering requirements between established residential areas and other uses to ensure compatibility between uses.

Policy 3.3.5.2 – The City shall develop neighborhood compatibility criteria which shall be utilized by the City to review applications for Future Land Use Map amendments, rezonings, and special exceptions to ensure that proposed land uses and development do not adversely impact existing residential areas.





GOAL 3.4: DIVERSITY IN HOUSING

There shall be a variety of lot sizes and housing types to meet the needs of the citizenry.

FINDING: *As discussed in the Future Land Use Element's objectives and policies, the City has an over abundance of ¼-acre platted single-family lots. There is a need for different sized lots and different types of dwelling units, including multi-family, to meet the needs of the expanding and diversifying population.*

Florida Law requires the City to provide adequate sites and locational criteria for mobile / manufactured "homes". Manufactured "buildings" are defined in Florida Law differently than mobile / manufactured "homes". The differences are as follows:

Manufactured "buildings" bear a Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) seal. In accordance with Florida Law, these may be constructed in any residential zoning district where site built dwellings are permitted.

Mobile/manufactured "homes" bear a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) seal. Florida Law requires the City to provide adequate sites for this type of housing unit.

Objective 3.4.1 – Diversity in Housing Opportunities

Increase the diversity of the housing types, prices, and opportunities.

Policy 3.4.1.1 – Through the FLUM and the zoning district regulations of the LDC, the City shall make provisions to supply land that can be developed with various types of residential uses, including single-family homes of various sizes, duplexes, multi-family dwellings, and residential units in mixed use developments.

Policy 3.4.1.2 – Within five (5) years of Plan adoption, the City shall initiate a study to review the implications and potential use of land platted for ¼-acre residential lots.

Policy 3.4.1.3 – The City shall explore the feasibility of using the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) procedures, as defined in Florida Law, as a means to redevelop areas with different housing types.

Objective 3.4.2 – Adequate Sites for Approved Mobile Homes and Manufactured Buildings

Provide adequate sites for residential mobile homes that bear the HUD approval insignia and manufactured buildings that bear the DEO approval insignia.

Policy 3.4.2.1 – Provided that architectural and aesthetic regulations are met, manufactured buildings, which bear the DEO approval insignia, may be constructed in any residential zoning district where conventional, site-built dwellings are permitted.





Policy 3.4.2.2 – Within one (1) year of Plan adoption, the City shall establish a mobile/manufactured home (bearing the HUD approval insignia) zoning district, which is not subject to the same architectural and aesthetic regulations as applied in the City’s other residential zoning districts. The City’s LDC shall provide that lawfully existing mobile homes may be allowed, subject to conditions, to continue as non-conforming uses.

Policy 3.4.2.3 – The City shall utilize, at a minimum, the following principles and criteria for siting the zoning districts in which mobile homes and/or residential manufactured buildings are permitted:

- A. Availability of existing or planned roads and central utilities;
- B. Adequate buffering from proximate residential uses;
- C. Adequate buffering from rights-of-way; and
- D. Located outside of the Coastal High Hazard Zone.

