

City of St. Augustine Comprehensive Plan 2040

Housing Element Goals, Objectives and Policies

Note: Unless indicated proposed Goals, Objectives and Policies replace previously adopted.

July 2020

Housing Element

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Chapter 163.3177(6)(f) F.S.

Housing Summary

The Housing Element is a required comprehensive plan element under Florida's Local Government Community Planning Act (Chapter 163, Florida Statutes). The Element must consist of principles, guidelines, standards, and strategies to provide housing for all current and anticipated future residents of the city.

This includes eliminating substandard housing, improving the aesthetics of existing housing, identifying the status of historically significant housing, formulating housing implementation programs, and the provision, creation, and preservation of affordable workforce housing. The inventory and analysis discussed in the Data and Analysis are used as the basis for the adopted goals, objectives, and policies.

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Housing Element

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Chapter 163.3177(6)(f) F.S.

Overall Housing Goal

The overall goal of the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that the City supports the provision and maintenance of an adequate inventory of affordable, safe, sanitary and energy efficient housing in stable neighborhoods that meets the needs of the City's present and future residents.

Housing Supply

H Goal 1

Encourage and promote quality housing through new construction, maintenance, rehabilitation and preservation of safe and sanitary housing for the present and future residents of the city.

H Objective 1.1

The city shall assist the private sector in providing adequate housing to meet current and future needs.

H Policy 1.1.1

The city shall continue to provide land use designations and zoning districts on the Future Land Use Map and the official zoning map, respectively, to ensure that adequate amounts of land to accommodate the projected housing needs for single family and multi-family housing units are met within the city.

H Policy 1.1.2

The city shall promote partnerships with the private sector, and other organizations in order to improve the efficiency and expand the capacity of the housing delivery system.

H Policy 1.1.3

The city shall promote nondiscrimination in access to housing within the city by being compliant with fair housing laws and practices.

H Policy 1.1.4

The city shall promote mixed-use developments that include provisions for a wide variety of housing types and prices in close proximity to support facilities.

H Policy 1.1.5

The city shall ensure, for all housing, the availability of public facilities at the levels of service as outlined in this Comprehensive Plan.

H Objective 1.2

The useful life of the existing housing stock shall be conserved through effective implementation of regulatory action programs directed toward preserving neighborhood quality, including conservation of natural resources, maintenance of community facilities and code enforcement activities.

H Policy 1.2.1

The city shall continue to enforce the building, housing, plumbing, energy, electrical, and all other associated construction codes to ensure the maintenance of standard housing and to achieve necessary corrective action where non-compliance exists.

H Policy 1.2.2

The City will continue to make provision for innovative techniques such as Planned Unit Developments (PUD), zero lot line development and cluster housing through the rezoning process established in Chapter 28 of the City Code, and by allowing condominium types of ownership for both residential and commercial development. (Adopted June 2011 Ord. #2011-02)

H Policy 1.2.3

The city shall minimize potential blighting influences within residential areas by promoting use of best management principles and practices of land use planning, urban design and landscaping in development and site plan review.

H Policy 1.2.4

The city shall continue to maintain and update records of permits issued for new construction, alterations and demolitions which affect the number of housing units so that an accurate record of the number of housing units is available.

H Objective 1.3

Work to rehabilitate substandard housing units and demolish dilapidated housing units.

H Policy 1.3.1

The city shall promote the rehabilitation of deteriorated substandard housing units to increase the supply of affordable housing.

H Policy 1.3.2

The city shall promote the rehabilitation of deteriorated substandard housing units to preserve historic housing structures where buildings are 50 years old or older or contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood.

H Policy 1.3.3

The city shall promote the rehabilitation of deteriorated substandard housing units that were storm damaged or are vulnerable to storm damage by remediation measures approved by FEMA and/or lifting the structures in a manner sensitive to the character of the neighborhood.

H Policy 1.3.4

The city shall maintain a Code Enforcement Officer on staff to investigate violations and enforce the City Code.

H Policy 1.3.5

The City shall continue to provide special inspections for homeowners and developers upon request. These special inspections are intended to help determine the condition of a structure after a fire or in the event that the owner is considering rehabilitation of the structure. (Adopted June 2011 Ord. #2011-02)

H Objective 1.4

The city shall strive to provide adequate sites for very low, low, and moderate income households.

H Policy 1.4.1

The city shall ensure that the residential land use designations, the associated zoning districts, and land development regulations permit a variety of housing types and densities throughout the city.

H Policy 1.4.2

The city shall seek to disperse affordable housing throughout the city and avoid overconcentration in any single area.

H Policy 1.4.3

The city's land development code shall encourage that mixed use projects include affordable housing, and that other affordable housing projects are located with access to a collector roadway and provide access to the following facilities, services and/or activity centers through an interconnected system of sidewalks, bicycle paths/lanes and transit stops and amenities, where feasible:

- Employment centers;
- Shopping centers that include stores offering household goods and services needed on a frequent and recurring basis; and
- Public parks, recreation areas, and/or open space.

H Objective 1.5

The city shall coordinate as needed with other agencies to seek funding from Federal and State housing and community development sources to formulate and establish housing implementation programs.

H Policy 1.5.1

The city shall continue to participate with the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to fund activities that best serve the city's development priorities, provided these projects benefit low and moderate-income persons; prevent or eliminate blight; or meet other urgent community development needs.

H Policy 1.5.2

The city shall continue to participate with St. Johns County and the requirements of Chapter 420.907, Florida Statutes to encourage participation with the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program.

H Policy 1.5.3

In addition to CDBG and SHIP, the city shall evaluate other potential sources of affordable housing funding.

H Objective 1.6

The city shall maintain its nondiscriminatory standards and criteria which address the location of group homes and foster care facilities.

H Policy 1.6.1

The city shall enforce the siting requirements consistent with the provisions of Chapter 419, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time, for group homes and foster care facilities licensed by the Florida Department of Children and Families, which are summarized as follows:

- 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).
- Community Residential Homes (CRH) 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 district line).

H Objective 1.7

Provide adequate and affordable housing opportunities to accommodate households with special housing needs.

H Policy 1.7.1

The city shall encourage the development of 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:

- Expedited plan review;
- Density bonuses;
- Specify Continuum of Care Facilities as an allowable use within multi-family, mixed use, and commercial low districts;
- Provide for innovative development standards in the land development code; and
- Other regulations intended to reduce building and development costs.

H Policy 1.7.2

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.

H Policy 1.7.3

The city shall participate in the efforts of the St. Johns County Homeless Coalition and other non-profit private agencies in the development of transitional housing for the homeless.

H Policy 1.7.4

The city shall continue to support organizations that assist elderly and handicapped citizens in finding safe, accessible and affordable housing. Such support may include technical assistance and the adoption of alternative code requirements.

H Policy 1.7.5

The city will work to develop an Affordable Workforce Housing program to encourage a broad mix of affordable housing in all areas of the city to maintain a livable, economically diverse community.

H Policy 1.7.6

The city's land development code shall allow mobile and manufactured homes in certain zoning districts, provided the units comply with all applicable building standards.

H Policy 1.7.7

The City will continue to allow mobile homes as a permissible use by exception in the zoning district associated with the Open Land (Very Low Density) use classification.

Housing Demand

H Goal 2

Promote and assist in the provision of an ample housing supply, with a broad range of types and price levels, to meet current and anticipated housing needs so that all our residents have the opportunity to purchase or rent standard housing.

H Objective 2.1

The city will support private sector housing production capacity sufficient to meet the housing needs of existing and future residents.

H Policy 2.1.1

The city shall provide technical assistance to private sector builders and public redevelopment agencies to plan for the future improvements and expansions of the public infrastructure systems in areas determined to be desirable for the development or redevelopment of housing.

H Policy 2.1.2

The city shall review ordinances, codes, regulations and the permitting process in an ongoing basis to eliminate excessive requirements, and amend or add others in order to increase appropriate private sector housing production.

H Policy 2.1.3

The city shall continue to support the Lincolnville Community Redevelopment Agency (LCRA) or other similar organization to continue to encourage and provide funding to help “fix up” the homes of income qualified homeowners.

H Policy 2.1.4

The city will coordinate with and promote as appropriate housing development funding sources, such as Florida Housing Finance Corporation, and Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs in an effort to encourage affordable housing.

H Policy 2.1.5

The city will coordinate with and promote as appropriate with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) or its equivalent with the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Weatherization Assistance program, Community Contribution Tax Credit program, and the Brownfield Loan Guarantee program.

H Policy 2.1.6

The city will consider fee waivers, density bonuses, density flexibility programs, accessory dwelling units and other affordable housing incentives or strategies to encourage a broad range of housing options and price points within the city limits.

H Policy 2.1.7

The city will coordinate with St. Johns County and other housing providers to encourage affordable housing implementation programs that encourage a broad range of housing options and price points within the commute radius of the city.

H Objective 2.2

The city will evaluate the Affordable Housing Assessment conclusions and the Framework for Achieving Housing Needs in the Data and Analysis as part of the Comprehensive Plan evaluation process in order to determine availability and affordability of rental and for sale housing as workforce housing.

H Policy 2.2.1

The City of St. Augustine defines Workforce Housing as the attainment of rental or for sale housing to an individual or family whose annual income, as adjusted for household size does not exceed 120 percent of the area median income, with an emphasis on households with an annual income between 50 percent to 120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). The AMI is published annually by the U.S. Department of HUD.

H Policy 2.2.2

To be certified as a workforce housing development, the City of St. Augustine requires at a minimum 30 percent of the units in a for sale development must be sold to a workforce household in accordance with the workforce housing definition and the maximum sales price; or

To be certified as a workforce housing development, the City of St. Augustine requires at a minimum 40 percent of the units must be rented to a workforce household whose annual income does not exceed 80 percent of the area median income, or 20 percent of the units must be rented to a workforce household whose annual income does not exceed 50 percent of the AMI.

H Policy 2.2.3

To encourage workforce housing, the city should consider exempting workforce housing units from mobility fees related to vehicles and parking requirement reductions in the land development code.

H Policy 2.2.4

To encourage the development of workforce housing, the city shall endeavor to provide an expedited review process to implement time saving measures for workforce housing developments.

H Policy 2.2.5

The City of St. Augustine will encourage the creation of workforce housing through the implementation of a Density Bonus Program designed to create workforce housing. All density bonus units shall be developed and sold or rented as workforce housing. A density bonus of up to 50 percent will be encouraged where residential uses are allowed. A development plan will be a condition for participation in the density bonus program, including demonstrating access to a collector road. The following specific actions will be taken to implement this program:

- A team of staff from Administration, Planning, Public Works/Utilities and the City Attorney's office will develop the program to be approved by the local planning agency (PZB) and the City Commission.
- An adoption ordinance is required to amend the land development code to create and incorporate the Density Bonus Program.

H Policy 2.2.6

A density bonus program, as approved by the Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) and the City Commission, may include, but not be limited to the following as incentives to provide a maximum amount of workforce housing consistent with the property land use category:

- Exceptions to limits on height, building setbacks, floor area ratios (if applicable), lot coverage or other aspects of the building envelope;
- Including encouraging accessory units;
- The use of the Planned Unit Development process as a tool;
- Reductions in parking requirements;
- Bonus related to the provision of alternative forms of transportation consistent with the mobility plan;
- Bonus related to set asides for environmentally sensitive areas, wetlands, floodplains, recreation areas and open space;
- Bonus related to a mix of uses that promotes projects that contribute to the urban fabric; and
- Bonus related to preservation of historic properties, character, and contributions to the context and sense of place of the neighborhood/district.

H Policy 2.2.7

Some of the above incentives may also be appropriate for certified workforce housing developments as referenced in H Policy 2.2.2, and adopted in the land development code.

Historic Preservation

H Goal 3

Encourage and promote quality housing through maintenance, rehabilitation and preservation of historic properties and neighborhood character.

H Objective 3.1

Historic resources identified as historically significant shall be preserved and, if possible maintained for residential uses.

H Policy 3.1.1

The city shall encourage the continued identification, analysis, and preservation of the city's historical resources. Such efforts shall include determination of their significance and vulnerability, as well as implementation of preservation management policies.

H Policy 3.1.2

The city shall coordinate with the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, to assist property owners in applying for and utilizing available state and federal assistance programs for the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historically significant housing.

H Policy 3.1.3

The city shall promote the designation of appropriate areas as historic districts or national register designations to potentially protect the historic character and sense of place of the city's historic neighborhoods.

H Policy 3.1.4

The city shall continue to promote and implement the policies of the Historic Preservation Element regarding the identification, protection, and preservation of housing which is historically significant.

H Objective 3.2

The city shall provide for the development of affordable housing, dispersed throughout the city.

H Policy 3.2.1

The city shall continue to support compatible infill development in existing neighborhoods.

H Policy 3.2.2

The city shall encourage neighborhood identity in an effort to preserve neighborhood character, address issues impacting neighborhoods, and encourage residents to live in their homes, continue the residential nature of the city, and contribute to the eclectic mix of St. Augustine.

Relocation

H Goal 4

The City shall pursue a strategy that no residents are displaced from their current housing by government action without addressing future housing needs.

H Objective 4.1

The city shall provide uniform and equitable treatment to persons and businesses displaced by state and local government programs, consistent with Section 421.55, Florida Statutes.

H Policy 4.1.1

The city shall strive to avoid displacing any households, however, if residents are displaced by city actions, through public development or redevelopment, the city shall attempt to ensure that residents are able to be relocated to standard, affordable housing.

Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

H Goal 5

Encourage and promote quality housing through new construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation including considering energy efficiency and sustainability of the community.

H Objective 5.1

In conjunction with related Future Land Use Objectives and Policies the city shall ensure that the design and construction of new housing, and the use of renewable energy resources shall be consistent with Chapter 553, Florida Statutes.

H Policy 5.1.1

The Building Official or designee shall review applications for new housing construction consistent with the provisions in Chapter 553, Florida Statutes related to design and construction and the use of renewable energy resources.

H Objective 5.1.2

The city shall encourage energy efficiency and sustainable construction in the design and construction of new housing and in the rehabilitation of existing housing.

H Policy 5.1.3

The city shall promote energy efficiency, resource management and conservation for new and existing housing in an effort to keep housing costs at a minimum and to conserve resources.

H Policy 5.1.4

The city shall encourage participation in the State Weatherization Assistance program.

H Policy 5.1.5

The city shall continue to enforce tree protection and landscaping requirements as included in the land development code, as well as, incorporate strategies that encourage the use of the principles of Florida-Friendly Landscaping in the provision of housing.

H Objective 5.1.6

For housing areas that are prone to flooding due to rising sea levels and intense rainfall, the city will address the susceptibility and develop solutions that result in building back in a manner which reduces the vulnerability to flood hazards consistent with the city's post disaster redevelopment policies.

H Policy 5.1.7

To review and implement ways that housing stock either, new or retrofit, are built in smarter and safer ways according to the Florida Building Code and other professional building standards such as ones that are promoted by organizations, including the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

H Objective 5.2

The City shall implement cost effective measures to reduce energy and water consumption and promote energy conservation, carbon reduction, green building and economic development through its Housing initiatives. (Adopted June 2011 Ord. #2011-02)

H Policy 2.1

The City shall continue to enforce the Florida Energy Efficiency Code through the development permit review and approval process. (Adopted June 2011 Ord. #2011-02)

H Policy 2.2

The City shall promote energy conservation by supporting compact neighborhood design with alternative transportation systems consistent with the City's Mobility Plan.

H Policy 2.3

The City of St. Augustine shall encourage all housing structures be constructed with cost effective efficiency construction standards. Whenever feasible, housing should attempt to meet or exceed standards set forth by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership

in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, or other national or state recognized high-performance conservation building rating system as approved by the Florida Department of Management Services. (Adopted June 2011 Ord. #2011-02)

H Policy 2.4

The City shall consider amending its Land Development Code to require that all new housing be energy efficient in its design, use energy and water efficient appliances, and be appropriately weatherized.

H Policy 2.5

The City of St. Augustine will investigate the Florida Residential Retrofit program to determine applicability in the retrofitting of older homes in the City in order for these homes to become more energy efficient. The City may investigate a long term market-based program that offers a whole-house approach for reducing energy use. (Adopted June 2011 Ord. #2011-02)

H Policy 2.6

The City shall promote water conservation by encouraging the use of water-conserving plumbing fixtures, appliances, and irrigation systems, and Florida Friendly Landscapes as recommended by the University of Florida/IFAS program. (Adopted June 2011 Ord. #2011-02)