

VII. Housing Goals

HOUSING EDUCATION

Educate renters, potential homeowners, homeowners, and landlords about housing assistance programs and the importance of home maintenance and upkeep.

- Create a formalized “Affordable Housing Committee” that meets quarterly to assess and direct housing development and education activities.
- Continue to offer first-time home buyer education classes and increase awareness through public entities, including schools, churches, and other community organizations.
- Continue to integrate home maintenance education into first-time home buyer and rental education classes.
- Establish an incentive program for new homeowners to ensure participation in educational opportunities.
- Recruit volunteers to teach workshops about or collaborate among agencies to present home improvement basics.
- Educate homeowners on lead-based paint issues and how to avoid negative health impacts.
- Support the Hall County Housing Authority in providing Section 8 workshops for existing and potential landlords.

HOUSING PRESERVATION

Prevent abandonment, prevent further deterioration of the housing stock, stabilize neighborhoods and rebuild neighborhood markets.

- Target specific neighborhoods for comprehensive revitalization, which may include but not be limited to rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, and down payment assistance.
- Encourage private rehabilitation of the community’s housing stock.
- Work with the City Building Department and other qualified entities to develop a “drive-by” inspection program that targets safety issues (i.e. falling porches, deteriorating steps)
- Work with the City Problem Resolution Team to address nuisance issues on vacant property.
- Monitor vacant properties to promote infill development.
- Strategically demolish blighted and substandard properties.
- Replace substantially deteriorated and dilapidated structures with housing of appropriate size, scale, and architectural design in relation to the surrounding neighborhood.

- Promote and support infill development.
- Publicly recognize successful infill development projects.
- Establish a Housing Rehabilitation Warehouse through a cooperative effort of multiple organizations to allow for the donation and resale of housing construction materials.
- Support policies that promote landlord/tenant accountability

HOUSING AVAILABILITY

Reinvigorate the City's neighborhoods with a greater range of housing typologies and design to fully meet market potential. Increase the vacancy rate of the community to a sufficient level.

- Create additional Private/Public partnerships and develop ways for the Public and/or Non-profit sector to work together with developers to provide Affordable Housing; for example, tax credits.
- Consider the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to fund the construction of infrastructure for new affordable housing development.
- Promote developments that include a wide mix of housing types that provide housing opportunities to persons having a range of incomes within a developed area.
- Support development of upper level housing in the Downtown and identify funding that may offset development costs (i.e. second exits, sprinkler systems).
- Encourage housing construction for low income elderly to expand the availability of independent and assisted living apartments.
- Encourage availability and choice of amenities in retirement and assisted living units.
- Ensure that sufficient vacant property is zoned for residential uses to assure market flexibility and adequate consumer choice.
- Ensure that the Future Land Use element of the Grand Island Comprehensive Plan identifies sufficient acreages for potential residential zoning.
- Find sources of funding to subsidize zoning and development fees for affordable housing units as a way to reduce the overall development cost and promote affordable housing.
- Allow for smaller lot sizes to increase density for affordable single family housing.
- Create a local Affordable Housing Trust Fund or other funding mechanism in which developers, landlords, non-profits, the public sector and others contribute to a fund for acquisition, development, mortgage assistance, and site preparation costs to create Affordable Housing.
- Achieve a housing vacancy rate of 5 to 7 percent, comprised of sound, modern affordable housing units, by 2020.
- Encourage rehabilitation and/or construction of housing with 4 or more bedrooms to accommodate the growing number of large families in the area.

LEADERSHIP IN HOUSING

Invigorate community leaders to make housing a top priority and educate them about the importance of quality, safe, affordable housing to community health.

- Ask the Affordable Housing Committee to annually review the Affordable Housing Study to measure progress and cite objectives for the upcoming year to meet the goals of the Study.
- Provide reports to the Grand Island City Council of the progress made in meeting the goals of the study.
- Promote the organization of homeowner/neighborhood associations to assist in the planning and improvement of their neighborhoods.
- Develop neighborhood-based revitalization plans to coordinate improvement efforts between city entities and neighborhood associations for greatest impact of revitalization efforts.
- Ensure that future transit routes provide access to affordable and special needs housing areas.

HOMELESSNESS

Expand or develop the number of emergency shelter beds and transitional housing units in the community to improve the short term housing options available.

- Expand the number of emergency shelter beds in the community.
- Expand the number transitional housing units in the community for homeless and near-homeless populations.
- Expand or develop the number of housing options for victims of domestic violence.
- Create an emphasis on developing programs which assist unsupervised homeless youth.
- Create affordable housing for persons with SMI (Serious Mental Illness) that are currently residing in inappropriate housing.

PROACTIVE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Align community-based organizations and resources to increase synergy and to act as partners in affordable housing revival.

- Recruit Housing Steering Committee and/or community members to participate in an ongoing "Neighborhood Council".
- Reorganize and/or create neighborhood organizations to lead "grassroots" efforts to revitalize neighborhoods.

- Promote the usefulness of neighborhood organizations by giving preference to projects developed by the neighborhood organizations, in collaboration with the Neighborhood Council.
- Encourage *housing partnerships* which bring representatives of the housing stakeholder community together to streamline housing development.
- Coordinate communication tools (i.e. booklets, flyers, websites, and/or posters) that identify organizations that are housing stakeholders (providers/developers/clients) and provide descriptions of partner agencies with programs and contacts.
- Update quick reference guides (i.e. Human Services Coalition Community Resource Brochure, Saint Francis Medical Center Community Resources Director, 211)
- Provide materials about available housing programs to various public entities and in public locations, including schools, churches, and other community organizations, and on various community websites.