

HOUSING ELEMENT

CHAPTER V

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

GOAL

PROVIDE ADEQUATE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING, IN SUITABLE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS THAT MEET THE PUBLIC'S PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS, WHILE STRIVING TO ENSURE EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF BREVARD COUNTY.

Objective 1-Affordable Housing

Brevard County should act within its authority to substantially increase the supply of affordable housing through housing implementation or other programs, especially to meet the needs of very low income households and households with special housing needs including rural and farm worker households, to provide housing for the existing and anticipated residents in the County. Very low income households are defined as those households with gross incomes of less than fifty (50) percent of the median income in Brevard County. The median income shall be that determined by HUD based upon family size.

Policy 1.1

Brevard County has established the following as the definitions of affordable and workforce housing:

A. Brevard County defines Affordable Housing as a single family owner occupied, or multi-family owner occupied, or rental unit, that has a mortgage or rental payment, including utilities, not exceeding 30% of the gross income of households at or below 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI), as adjusted for family size;

B. Brevard County defines Workforce Housing as a single family owner occupied, or multi-family owner occupied, or rental unit, that has a mortgage or rental payment, including utilities, not exceeding 30% of the annual gross income of households at or below 140% of the Area Median Income (AMI), as adjusted for family size.

The dwelling unit shall comply with the requirements of the Standard Housing Code, 1991 as published by the Southern Building Code Congress International, and amended from time to time. Housing costs include: contract rent and utilities for rental units; and payment of principal, interest, taxes and insurance for owner occupied units. The County should increase the supply of affordable housing within the County by utilizing the following strategies:

Criteria:

- A. Utilize federal, state, and local sources of funding, when available, to enable low income families to purchase their first homes through down-

- payment assistance, interest buy-downs, and/or other “creative financing.”
- B. Provide housing counseling assistance to prospective first time homebuyers.
 - C. Provide continuing counseling to home owners who are in danger of mortgage default or who may require special assistance in obtaining other aid.
 - D. Ensure that homes purchased by low and very low income homebuyers are brought up to Section 8 Housing Quality Standards or higher.
 - E. Encourage mortgage lenders to invest mortgage dollars in housing for low and very low income families.
 - F. Encourage mortgage lenders to investigate and utilize existing programs, such as Fannie Mae, for low income homebuyers.
 - G. Forge public - private partnerships to facilitate a community based first time homebuyers’ program.
 - H. Increase developer awareness of all federal and state sources of loans and grants for rental property rehabilitation and construction.
 - I. Provide technical assistance to owners, developers, and potential developers of affordable housing.
 - J. Recruit, identify, and develop partnerships with non-profits to develop capacity for successful rehabilitation/construction, and management of affordable units.
 - K. Review the County’s permitting process on a continual basis and conduct pre-application meetings with affordable housing developers.
 - L. Continue to utilize a joint review of development plans at scheduled meetings to expedite the permitting process.
 - M. Establish and maintain the Affordable Housing Council as part of the process by which each new proposed regulation will be reviewed for impact upon housing.

Policy 1.2

Brevard County shall define 'significant economic impact(s)' which result from regulation, and require each new proposed regulation to be reviewed and evaluated accordingly. Brevard County shall include the Affordable Housing Council in the process by which each new proposed regulation will be reviewed for impact of cost upon housing. The Affordable Housing Council will weigh that cost impact against the quality of life aspects of the regulations' intent and purpose.

Policy 1.3

The Housing and Community Development Program should focus on the development and rehabilitation of housing which is affordable to the very low income households.

Policy 1.4

Brevard County shall identify and establish, as appropriate, a local funding source to assist in the provision of very low income housing, including housing for households with special housing needs. This funding source shall be a stable, consistent and broad-based financial resource.

Criteria:

- A. The following funding sources when available should include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Brevard County Housing Authority
 - 2. Community Development Block Grant Program
 - 3. Community Reinvestment Act
 - 4. State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program
 - 5. Rural Economic Development Corporation
 - 6. HOME Investment Partnership Program
 - 7. Florida Housing Finance Agency
 - 8. Brevard County Housing Finance Authority
 - 9. Non-profit Organization
 - 10. Tax Increment Financing
 - 11. Interest on Real Estate Escrow Accounts
 - 12. General Obligation Bonds
 - 13. Housing Finance Authority Reserves
 - 14. Private Investments
 - 15. Tax Credit Program
 - 16. Local Option Sales Tax
 - 17. Property Tax Relief

Policy 1.5

Identify public or private vacant lands or structures that would be suitable for the location of housing affordable to very low income households or to meet the needs of the homeless and identify the funding sources for an acquisition and development program.

Criteria:

- A. Suitable locations should be conveniently located to the essential public facilities and services, employment centers, shopping, mass transit, schools, health services, and other community services. Such locations should be residential in character, with a variety of locations being available throughout the County so as not to cluster this development in limited locations.

Policy 1.6

Brevard County should coordinate with entities that provide services to the homeless to identify the need for temporary shelters and transitional housing so as to target available funding to these areas.

Policy 1.7

As a part of Development of Regional Impact reviews, Chapter 380, F.S., Brevard County should review these proposals with respect to the impact upon the need for affordable housing for very low and low income households within the County and East Central Florida Region.

Policy 1.8

The County encourages Developments of Regional Impact (DRI's) to incorporate affordable and workforce housing within the boundaries of the project. Developers will be encouraged to meet with county staff to discuss opportunities for including affordable and workforce housing in their project through a Community Benefits Agreement for the provision of such housing.

Policy 1.9

The County shall continue to encourage the use of the Affordable and Workforce Housing Incentives Section of the County Land Development Regulations adopted on May 3rd, 2007.

Policy 1.10

The BOCC and respective County departments and agencies recognize that affordable/workforce housing is a vital component of the local economy and will participate in solution oriented efforts to facilitate, preserve, and increase affordable and workforce housing inventory.

Policy 1.11

The County, when funding is available, will continue to offer down payment assistance to very low, low and moderate income homebuyers.

Policy 1.12

The County shall use the existing Housing Trust Fund, and proceeds from BOCC authorized dedicated funding sources, to generate revenues for the provision of affordable/workforce housing by the private and non-profit sectors.

Policy 1.13

The County shall continue to provide local regulatory incentives through the SHIP Local Housing Assistance Plan, and other programs and opportunities for affordable housing, and eliminate disincentives that negatively affect housing costs and supply in the private and non-profit sectors, consistent with state statutes. These incentives shall be annually reviewed by the Affordable Housing Council, and forwarded with any recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

Policy 1.14

The County shall annually review its Building Code, Land Development and Zoning Regulations to identify, modify, or eliminate those regulations and/or procedures that unnecessarily increase the cost of housing.

Policy 1.15

The County shall analyze the effect impact fees and concurrency will have on affordable housing, and evaluate, if appropriate, methods that could be used to reduce identified adverse impacts.

Policy 1.16

The County shall further evaluate, and if appropriate adopt, local regulatory incentives in the Land Development and Zoning Codes, including, but not limited to, transfer of development rights, density bonuses, and other similar incentives.

Policy 1.17

The County shall further continue and develop procedures to expedite review of affordable housing developments and housing for essential employees and special needs groups. Such procedures shall be included in the Land Development Regulations.

Objective 2-Housing Programs Awareness

Brevard County shall increase the public's awareness of housing programs and activities, especially those which target very low income households through effective marketing of available programs.

Policy 2.1

The Housing and Community Development Program should maintain a list of the various housing programs and opportunities that are available from the public and private sectors and ensure that this information is readily available to the public.

Policy 2.2

A Housing Resource webpage and brochure to provide information, on the housing assistance programs available from the public and private sectors throughout the County will be maintained.

Policy 2.3

Brevard County Housing and Community Development should maintain information on trends and needs in the housing market to assist the participants in the housing delivery system in the provision of housing which meets the physical, economic and social needs of the residents.

Criteria:

- A. At a minimum, information should be maintained and distributed on general housing and population characteristics, housing units by type,

residential building permits by type and general location, housing vacancy rates, and land use acreage.

- B. This information should be updated on an annual basis where possible, or when more current information becomes available.

Policy 2.4

The County, when funding is available, shall provide and maintain a comprehensive and effective education program, using existing programs and resources, to prepare low-income families for homeownership and long term affordability. This program should include the following components: homebuyer education, homebuyer counseling, and mortgage default prevention counseling.

Policy 2.5

The County shall continue to meet quarterly and coordinate County housing assistance programs with other municipal, regional, State, and Federal programs that are designed to provide housing opportunities for very low, low and moderate income groups.

Objective 3- Equal Housing Opportunities

Brevard County shall seek to achieve a housing market with mechanisms to ensure that the market is fair and balanced, and provides equal housing opportunity for all residents of the County.

Policy 3.1

All housing, community development and redevelopment activities of Brevard County shall be administered in accordance with Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the Florida Fair Housing Act, Chapter 760.020, F.S., and a local fair housing ordinance if adopted.

Objective 4- Adequate Residential Choices

Brevard County shall continue to provide for adequate lands for residential land uses in a wide variety of housing types, housing price levels and broad geographic choices to meet the needs of all existing and anticipated residents in the County.

Policy 4.1

The zoning ordinance of the Land Development Regulations shall continue to designate adequate lands for residential development which allows for a variety of housing types, while providing residents with choices in residential location. The following criteria shall apply:

Criteria:

- A. The zoning ordinance shall continue to designate lands for single-family, multi-family and mobile home residential development in a range of

densities consistent with the service sectors, Future Land Use Map, and this Comprehensive Plan.

- B. The zoning ordinance shall continue to designate lands for residential development where the public facilities and services are available at the adopted levels of service in this Comprehensive Plan. Where public facilities are not available, residential development should only be permitted at densities which allow for self-sufficiency for water and sewer service.
- C. The zoning ordinance should continue to provide for a variety of minimum lot sizes, minimum floor areas, setbacks, and residential land use mixes that allow for choice in housing types, designs and price levels.
- D. The zoning ordinance shall continue to provide for appropriate land use relationships to be considered in the review of development proposals to ensure land use compatibility between residential and surrounding uses.

Policy 4.2

The Land Development Regulations should allow for housing, which is affordable to very low, low and moderate income households, to be located conveniently to major employment centers, mass transit corridors, shopping, schools, health centers, and other community facilities and services.

Policy 4.3

The County shall update, as needed, the location evaluation matrix and needs analysis methods in the land development regulations to aid in determining favorable locations for affordable/workforce housing development and determining eligibility for funding and incentives. The Community Characteristics Inventory Maps, developed by the Brevard County Transportation Planning Organization in June of 2007, and as revised, may be considered for adoption into the plan to help evaluate, and guide in the location and development of affordable/workforce housing.(See Attached Maps (3))

Policy 4.4

The County will study accessory units as a method for use by private families and individuals in the provision of affordable/workforce housing opportunities and solutions on their own properties, in areas with established infrastructure. The County will consider land development regulations and other ordinances as needed that would regulate their use as permitted by state statute.

Policy 4.5

The County will study and determine the opportunities for the co-location and joint use of county owned lands and facilities to provide affordable/ workforce housing and discuss these opportunities with other government agencies in the County.

Policy 4.6

As an incentive and resource, the County before eliminating residential density on County owned lands, will consider allowing a transfer of a portion of the residential development rights to an eligible receiver site, or the housing trust fund unit mitigation bank.

Policy 4.7

The County shall establish and maintain a program to monitor building and demolition permit applications, and monitor the number of housing units attributable to new construction, conversions, mobile home replacements and removals.

Objective 5 -Residential Environments

Brevard County shall reduce the degree of substandard housing conditions, improve residential environments, and provide for relocation housing or assistance, to ensure that adequate housing and suitable residential neighborhoods are available for all residents of the County.

Policy 5.1

A local minimum housing code shall be adopted, enforced and amended as necessary, to ensure the construction and maintenance of sound, safe and sanitary housing for the public health, safety and welfare.

Criteria:

- A. The Standard Minimum Housing Code shall be adopted as the local minimum housing code. Amendments may be made to this Code to meet unique circumstances in its administration in Brevard County.
- B. The following codes should also be adopted and enforced, with regard to housing construction and maintenance, and maintained through adoption of subsequent revisions:
 - 1. National Electric Code
 - 2. Standard Building Code
 - 3. Standard Plumbing Code
 - 4. Standard Swimming Pool Code
 - 5. Standard Mechanical Code
 - 6. Standard Gas Code
 - 7. Standard Aluminum Code

Policy 5.2

Portions of available federal, state and local funds should be allocated to rehabilitation and demolition of residential structures as well as to the provision, renovation or reconstruction of public facilities and services which target very low income households and neighborhoods.

Criteria:

- A. These funds shall be dedicated to improve the housing conditions and residential environments of very low and moderate income households.
- B. Public education measures shall be strengthened through affirmative outreach efforts to very low income households to ensure that the persons or neighborhoods eligible for such assistance are aware of its availability and procedures for obtaining such assistance. Public workshops should be held in areas where these needs are demonstrated.

Policy 5.3

Redevelopment plans supported by Brevard County should provide for a variety of housing types and price levels, while ensuring that such provisions do not reduce the supply of housing which is affordable to very low, low and moderate income households.

Criteria:

- A. Redevelopment plans which will result in the displacement of households shall make advance written determination of the extent of displacement and shall provide a relocation plan with strategies for mitigation. Provisions for notice and hearing should be included.
- B. The provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, shall be used to guide mitigation.

Policy 5.4

Residents who are displaced as a result of redevelopment, demolition or other public projects shall be provided prompt equitable compensation ~~to affected~~ by the property owners or assistance in locating comparable relocation housing for displaced tenants.

Criteria:

- A. Relocation housing should be comparable to the existing dwelling at much as possible, with an emphasis on the number of rooms, size of living space, location to commercial and public facilities and place of employment, and shall be within the financial means of the displaced household. Relocation housing shall be a sound, safe and sanitary dwelling meeting all locally adopted minimum housing codes.
- B. Relocation housing or equitable compensation shall be provided prior to the time displacement occurs.
- C. The provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, shall direct the fulfillment of this policy.

Policy 5.5

In order to assist in the preservation of affordable housing unit inventory The County may require that solution oriented relocation efforts are made by property owners, and when needed, and as permitted by law, pursue mitigation solutions for the loss of affordable housing units.

Policy 5.6

The County encourages the use and application of the Affordable and Workforce Housing Incentives Section of the County Land Development Regulations to aid in mitigation solutions related to housing displacement.

Policy 5.7

The County will study manufactured housing, mobile home parks and subdivisions that provide affordable/workforce housing inventory, and will consider creating solutions to help upgrade these uses while maintaining affordability. The Affordable Housing Team, The Affordable Housing Council and, or Legal staff will evaluate existing policies and regulations and develop recommendations and options for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners.

Policy 5.8

By December 31, 2012, Brevard County shall conduct an affordable housing study to assess affordable housing needs allowing the utilization of the newly released 2010 Census Baseline data for the analysis.

Objective 6- Residential Types

Brevard County shall integrate care facilities, group homes, child and adolescent care facilities, and retirement homes into residential areas of the County, and provide the opportunity for these facilities to be located in a variety of urban and rural locations.

Policy 6.1

The Group Homes Ordinance of the Land Development Regulations shall continue to allow for the location of group home facilities in all residential and other areas of the County as a permitted or conditional use, to ensure that the facility residents have access to normal residential settings.

Policy 6.2

The Group Homes Ordinance of the Land Development Regulations shall be reviewed continually to ensure its effectiveness in integrating care facilities, group homes, child and adolescent care facilities, and retirement homes into a variety of urban and rural residential locations.

Policy 6.3

The County Code shall continue to require compliance with Chapter 553, Florida Statutes, which requires special exterior and interior design in the construction of dwelling units to make them accessible for persons with physical or developmental disabilities and senior citizens.

Policy 6.4

The County shall continue to support transitional housing programs and developments which will enable homeless people to live as independently as possible. The Board of County Commissioners may utilize at their discretion the reasonable accommodation standards and procedures, and temporary use agreements sections of the County Code, to evaluate and permit transitional and emergency housing facilities.

Objective 7- Historical Homes

Brevard County shall increase the knowledge and appreciation of the historically significant housing in Brevard County through measures which identify, preserve, protect and educate the community about the heritage of such housing.

Policy 7.1

Brevard County should continue to implement the policies of the Historic Preservation element of the Comprehensive Plan regarding the identification, evaluation, protection and preservation of the housing which is historically significant.

Criterion:

Historically significant housing would include that listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Florida Master Site File, or the Local Register of Historic Places when established.

Policy 7.2

Brevard County should provide technical assistance to owners of historically significant housing or other individuals that are interested in preservation activities.

Criteria:

- A. Assistance to be provided should include, but not be limited to, that for the preparation of National Register and Florida Master Site File nomination forms, preparation of grant applications, and the identification of historic resources.
- B. Assistance should also be provided in the interpretation and application of the Historic Preservation element of this Comprehensive Plan and any regulations prepared pursuant to that element.

Policy 7.3

Pursue available Federal, State and local funding sources to support efforts to preserve or protect historically significant housing.

Criteria:

- A. At a minimum, applications should be made for the Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid program administered by the Division of Archives, History and Records Management of the Florida Department of State.
- B. Appropriate activities eligible for grant funding are classified as Acquisition and Development or Survey and Planning activities (Chapter 1A-34, F.A.C.). Emphasis should be placed on surveys and evaluations of historic resources, research efforts to study the effectiveness of preservation programs and techniques, and on community relations and education programs.

Objective 8 –Public and Private Partnerships

Brevard County shall increase the coordination between the public and private sector entities involved in the provision of housing and in community development and redevelopment activities.

Policy 8.1

Brevard County Housing and Community Development shall coordinate with applicable private agencies and assist them in obtaining housing information, preparing recommendations, lobbying, and implementing programs and activities that would target the housing needs for the very low income households.

Policy 8.2

The Planning and Zoning Office should be responsible for ensuring the review of housing, community development and redevelopment proposals or activities for consistency with this Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 8.3

Brevard County should initiate efforts to standardize all building and housing codes utilized by Brevard County and the municipalities within the County for efficiency in the development process.

Policy 8.4

The Technical Advisory Group for the Housing Element and representatives of the Affordable Housing Council should be responsible for reviewing comprehensive plan amendments to the Housing Element.