

Section 1 – Introduction

1.0 Housing and the General Plan Vision

Historically, Davis has adopted an active approach in the assessment of housing need and the provision of housing to address local need, in order to ensure community diversity and to maintain the agricultural roots of the city. Davis has had a commitment to affordable housing since the 1980s that was formalized with its adoption of an inclusionary housing policy in 1987. Inclusionary requirements and a grassroots movement to produce the city's first affordable housing non-profit were reactions to housing costs that were impacting the fabric of the community—and still do. The following City of Davis General Plan Visions adopted in 2001 continue to assist in guiding the city's policies and planning goals related to housing:

- Quality of Life – including fostering a safe, diverse and sustainable environment that supports and stimulates Davis' individuals, families and youth through minimizing impacts of traffic, noise, pollution, crime and litter.
- Small Town Character – maintaining a compact city form that is surrounded by farmland and greenbelts and maintains Davis' small town character that enhances livability and social interaction.
- Diversity – celebrate and encourage a diverse cultural community.
- Arts and Culture – Identify and preserve archeological, historical and cultural resources.
- Natural Resource Protection – pursue sustainability and minimize impacts on Davis' land, water, air and biological resources.
- Distinct Neighborhood Identity – preserve and create neighborhoods that residents can identify, that include gathering places, and that promote a diversity of housing options that will enable people with a wide range of needs, economic levels, cultural identities, and ages to live in Davis.
- Neighborhood-Oriented Transportation System – promote transportation systems that harmonize with the city's neighborhoods and enhances quality of life.
- Parks and Open Space Program – Provide a park system and recreational programs and facilities that meet the diverse needs of Davis citizens.
- Agriculture – protect the viability of agriculture and prime agricultural land in and around Davis.
- Synergistic Partnership with UC Davis – recognize and strengthen the positive partnership between the City and UC Davis.
- Regional Context – recognize Davis' role within the broader region, including understanding the impact of city policies on the region and through joint planning efforts.

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- Regional Leadership – Make Davis a regional leader in slow and well-managed growth, agricultural and environmental preservation, and cultural diversity.
- Accountable, Citizen-Based Planning – Involve citizens on a continuous basis in all aspects of planning.

These visions have led to Davis’ adoption of policies that promote smart growth, local affordable housing and workforce housing programs, agricultural land mitigation and preservation, energy conservation and reduction, mixed-use and redevelopment incentives, local housing production targets, and the creative use and reuse of city land and resources. This Housing Element continues these local policies, as stated in the Davis General Plan. The Steering Committee, appointed by the City Council, as the lead body in the update of the Housing Element was provided a “Summary of Relevant General Plan Policies” (Appendix D) to guide their process in the assessment of potential housing sites. The Steering Committee specifically cited the following overarching goals from these policies that were used to form housing location principles for the consideration of potential housing sites.

“The overarching goals in the Davis General Plan which should influence housing location decisions include: A compact city surrounded by farmland and habitat with slow urban growth; a pedestrian-oriented vital downtown area; a connected greenway system; neighborhoods with schools, parks, greenbelts and shopping; a variety of housing types, designs and prices to meet local housing needs including affordable housing; conservation of energy and resources; a healthy living environment with clean air and compatible noise levels; a balanced transportation system which promotes alternative modes; and city fiscal stability.”¹

These overarching goals were then used to create the following Housing Location Principles¹ that the Steering Committee used to rank potential housing sites:

1. Promotes a compact urban form, which allows for efficient infrastructure and services.
2. Promotes overall proximity to existing community facilities including parks, greenbelts, schools and shopping (which reduces driving and its negative impacts).
3. Promotes overall proximity to the downtown and UC Davis (which reduces driving and its negative impacts).
4. Is capable of providing compact development and higher density housing, especially near community facilities (which reduces driving and its negative impacts).
5. Preserves prime farmland and minimizes farmland conversion.

¹ “Overarching Goals and Housing Location Principles for Overall Site Rankings,” General Plan Housing Element Update Steering Committee, Winter 2007-08.

6. Is adjacent to, or contributes to open space and greenway system connections.
7. Provides adequate vehicular access and safety.
8. Promotes pedestrian, bicycle and transit mobility.
9. Is compatible with existing land uses in the vicinity.
10. Is compatible with noise environment.
11. Avoids health risks (such as exposure to particulates in close proximity to freeways).
12. Preserves a small-town feel.
13. Promotes historic preservation.
14. Advances (or at least does not harm) fiscal stability.

The City of Davis will soon be starting an update process for its existing General Plan document that requires revision by 2010. That large and extended community process will incorporate this Housing Element and will preserve its goals, standards, policies and implementation program.

1.1 Regional Housing Needs Allocation

State law mandates that each area’s council of governments develop the Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) for its region. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is lead agency in developing the RHNP for the six counties and 22 cities that it serves, including Davis, that make up the Sacramento Region. SACOG’s plan is also required to include the Tahoe Basin portions that are within El Dorado and Placer counties, and the city of South Lake Tahoe. It is SACOG’s responsibility to coordinate with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to determine a regional housing needs projection. SACOG then allocates the projected need (in housing units) to each jurisdiction using the drafted RHNP for the region.

In March 2007, HCD first issued a regional allocation of 169,476 units to the six-county region for the period from January 1, 2006 through June 30, 2013. This number was based on a compromise between the California’s Department of Finance’s projection and SACOG’s Blueprint Project calculations. Within this number, subcategory allocations by economic category were also issued for the region, with a breakdown as follows:

- Very low income (less than 50% of Area Median Income): 38,013 units (22.4%)
- Low Income (50 to 80% of Area Median Income): 28,518 units (16.8%)
- Moderate (80 to 120% of Area Median Income): 32,974 units (19.5%)
- Above Moderate (above 120% of Area Median Income): 69,971 units (41.3%)

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On July 9, 2007, the Department of Finance released revised population projection numbers based on actual statistics from the first year of the planning period. The updated numbers showed that SACOG’s 6-county region is estimated to have approximately 30% less of a population growth in the region during the period from 2006-2013 than compared to the 2004 Department of Finance population growth increment projections that were used to draft the original Regional Housing Needs Allocation of 169,476 units. The reduction in the projected need for new housing units in the Sacramento Region led to discussions between SACOG and HCD regarding the need and opportunity for a revised allocation for this area. After reviewing the statistics and conferring with Housing Element Law, HCD determined that approval from the Legislature and Governor would be required for such a revision.

On September 11, 2007, both houses of the state legislature approved the bill (AB 1259) that would allow the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to use the revised Department of Finance projections for the reissuance of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the Sacramento Region. In October 2007, the Governor signed the bill, leading to a revised RHNA of 118,652 for the region. Using the SACOG-created Methodology, reviewed and commented on by the localities, this regional number led to the following Regional Housing Needs Allocation for the City of Davis during this planning period:

**Table 1: City of Davis Regional Housing Needs Allocation
(January 1, 2006 to June 30, 2013)**

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate
Breakdown by Income Categories (in dwelling units)	31	119	163	185
Total Allocation	498 dwelling units			

1.2 Community Participation

The drafting of this Housing Element update included a substantial amount of time and effort by the City of Davis from the City Council, a volunteer Steering Committee, members of city commissions and city staff. In December 2006, the Davis City Council initiated a General Plan update to the city’s Housing Element. The update was to focus on planning for the provision of adequate sites to meet the city’s next Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the seven and one-half year period from January 2006 through June 2013 and to meet the City’s 1% Growth Policy. The General Plan elements to be updated as part of this process included Housing, Land Use and perhaps other elements to assist in making adequate sites available and putting necessary programs in place for implementation.

A 15-member Steering Committee appointed by the City Council was the lead group in this update process. The Steering Committee was comprised of local residents that represented a variety of local viewpoints, expertise, and neighborhoods throughout Davis. Many of the members were past Council or Commission members, past City Managers, and other representatives of community organizations (a teacher, a reverend, etc.). The 13-month process completed by the Steering Committee included the following:

- Bi-monthly (and sometimes weekly) meetings of the Steering Committee, always inclusive of a Public Comment period;
- Two community-wide workshops (summaries of workshop feedback attached as Appendix E and Appendix F);
- Regular “check-ins”/updates with Planning Commission and City Council; and
- Four public meetings and adoption hearings, noticed publicly, by the Steering Committee, Social Services Commission, Planning Commission, and City Council.

Note: All of the documents related to this process, including audio recordings of Steering Committee meetings, have been posted online and can be found at the following city website: <http://www.cityofdavis.org/cdd/GPUUpdate/documents.cfm>

In addition to regular noticing of City Council and Planning Commission updates, agendas for every Steering Committee meeting were posted at City Hall and at the Steering Committee’s website. Additionally, persons wishing to do so were able to subscribe to be on a city email listserv related to the Housing Element update. Each meeting’s agenda and draft minutes from the previous meeting were emailed to this listserv when the hardcopy packets for each meeting were mailed to the Steering Committee. Additionally, notices related to the Steering Committee, including those related to upcoming workshops and public meetings were also provided to this email listserv. Members of the community were able to sign-up for the listserv on the Steering Committee website at any time and were specifically invited to provide an email for the listserv at both community workshops. People without email addresses were provided the opportunity to request information from staff throughout the update process and extra copies of all materials were provided at all meetings of the Steering Committee.

Noticing for the two Community Workshops regarding this update included the following outreach:

1. Fliers distributed in public places. Fliers regarding the workshop were provided at the following locations: Celebrate Davis (a citywide event in Community Park that occurs annually, only used for Community Workshop #1), the local Farmer’s Market (as part of City Hall at the Market), City offices- including City Hall, the Senior Center, Child Care Services Center for Yolo County, and the Hunt Boyer offices in downtown Davis.
2. Information posted on the City’s government television channel. Information regarding the workshops was posted on the city’s television channel. This information ran for a two week period prior to each workshop during unscheduled broadcast times with other city information.
3. Neighborhood Associations. All Neighborhood Associations that have provided contact information to the City were mailed a notice of the workshop.
4. Community Organizations. Contact persons for the local chapters of Rotary, Soroptimist, Kiwanis, and the Sierra Club were provided a notice.

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5. University of California, Davis. The workshop notice was emailed to the city/county relations manager of the university, as well as all of the current student-elected Senators of the student body.
6. Local business organizations. A notice was mailed to the Davis Chamber of Commerce, Davis Downtown Business Association, and the Davis Independent Merchant Association.
7. Legal Services of Northern California, Woodland. The notice was provided to the local offices of legal services.
8. Davis Joint Unified School District. The notice was provided to the Parents and Teachers Association contact for each of the schools in the local school district.
9. Local affordable housing organizations. The local affordable housing organizations were emailed a copy of the workshop notice.
10. Letter to the Editor. The Chair and Co Chair of the Steering Committee submitted a Letter to the Editor detailing the goals of the workshop and inviting the community to it. The letter was published in the Davis Enterprise.
11. Public meeting notices. A public meeting notice was published in the Davis Enterprise and posted at City Hall.
12. Regular mailing list. A workshop notice and packet of information was provided to the standard meeting mailing list that includes the Planning Commission, the City Council, contacts throughout city departments (police, parks, etc.), Yolo County planning staff, the City Manager, and the Community Development Director.
13. Other City Commissions. The workshop fliers and information were provided to the staff liaisons for all eighteen city commissions.

City staff worked for over a year to staff the Housing Steering Committee through this update process and to ensure that the community was aware of the process and every opportunity available to them for input. Input from the community has been considered and incorporated by the Steering Committee into their activities and recommendations to the City Council. Additionally, summary information from the Steering Committee meetings and the public workshops held were included in the staff report that accompanied reviews of the draft Housing Element by city commissions and ultimately the City Council.

As stated previously, input from the community was incorporated into the goals, policies and program actions of the housing element update. The City, along with the Steering Committee and City Council weighed all comments provided by Davis residents. Many of the specific comments received from members of the community focused on facilitating smart growth practices such as infill development and increasing density in existing residential areas to preserve agricultural land and open space and many other comments advocated for the creation of more opportunities for more affordable housing for all income levels and special needs populations throughout the

City. In particular many comments asked for the facilitation of a variety of housing types that would serve the needs of seniors and their ability to “downsize” by buying smaller homes within the community so that larger family homes would become available to younger families. These comments also considered the importance of walkable and bikeable neighborhoods with access to a variety of retail and other services and transportation. Many comments were received and a summary of representative comments are listed below:

“Density as in Europe – drastically different than what we have done so far in Davis – a new paradigm”

“Housing for people who would like to sell their big houses and move into smaller ones with less upkeep”

“Senior housing with care continuum, extensive services, i.e. optimal meals van, recreation, ownership by seniors of their units is important”

“More affordable units, fewer expansive large houses”

“Accommodation of the fastest growing segment of the population – the aging “baby boomers”. We need to be planning for housing for seniors and we need to give people attractive, unique, Davis-worthy housing alternatives for this “special Needs” population. Development should be planned for active healthy lifestyle, social connections and sense of community!”

“Use all sites available in town before paving more ag land”

“Try to maximize in-fill development (density of in-fill) so that fewer annexations are needed”

“There should be no urban development on prime agricultural land”

“The City should develop all existing infill sites within the city limits before any peripheral (outside the city limits) development is considered”

The overall sentiment of the comments listed here was considered in the drafting of all goals, policies and program actions and are particularly evident in the following policies and program actions. Per Policy Housing 1.1, the City will “encourage a variety of housing types that meet the housing needs of an economically and social diverse Davis”. Program Actions b, c, d, and e directly correlate with input from the community. Action b calls for an analysis of a mechanism for permanent affordability, Action c, considers a requirement for a percentage of small lots and structures in large developments, Action d evaluates ways the City can encourage increased densities (in addition to their density bonus), and Action e targets housing types appropriate for seniors, ‘empty nesters’, singles and couples without children that are near neighborhood shopping to minimize sprawl. Action b of Policy Housing 1.3 also incorporates the public’s request for housing options for single persons or smaller homes, calling for zoning provisions allowing housing for small households or single persons of all income levels. Additionally, land use policies 2.1 Action e and k were included in the Housing Element. These actions incorporate the community’s desire for infill development and anti-sprawl measures.

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Policy Housing 1.4 is to “encourage a variety of housing types and care choices for disabled persons”. Actions a, b, and c echoes the public’s requests for actions for housing appropriate for seniors, many of whom are disabled. These actions along with those associated with Policy Housing 1.41, agree with the community’s need for housing types that accommodate persons with disabilities and promote aging in place.

Policy Housing 2.1 is to “strive to meet the identified current and projected local need for housing and for housing affordable to extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income households including provision of Davis’ five-year fair share of regional housing needs. The actions contained within this policy incorporate the public comments about the need for more affordable housing and housing for seniors and special needs groups. For example, Actions a, b, c, and d call for the City to pursue funding sources and to offer incentives that will facilitate the development of housing affordable to all income levels. Action e targets assistance for “high risk” renters and Action m encourages funding for shared housing. In addition, Policy Housing 4.4 encourages senior housing near neighborhood centers, shopping centers, public transportation and or parks and greenbelts. Policy Housing 4.5 encourages housing for special needs to be dispersed throughout the community to avoid an over-concentration in one area and to be located near neighborhood services and facilities. The City also included program actions to help preserve the housing stock, specifically for senior citizen homeowners. Action d under Policy Housing 5.1 supports the existing program at the Senior Center that coordinates volunteers to help seniors maintain their homes. This action also supports a program to subsidize necessary upgrades and repairs for low-income seniors and disabled persons.

The City has made a diligent effort to obtain public comment on the housing needs of the community and has considered all input in the development of its goals, policies and program actions. Refer to Section 6 and 7 for more details on policy and program action language.

1.3 Organization of Housing Element

Following this introduction, the Housing Element contains the following sections:

- Section 1. An Introduction of Davis General Plan vision and policies, background in the creation of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation for this planning period, and a summary of the community outreach efforts that surrounded this update.
- Section 2. A review of the prior (2002) Element, including a summary of the results, an analysis of the City’s progress toward achieving its adopted goals and objectives, and an appraisal of its housing policies with the incorporation of lessons learned for this Housing Element Update.
- Section 3. A Housing Needs Assessment, which analyzes socio-economic conditions, housing conditions, population projections, special needs groups, local overcrowding and overpaying, and market cost trends to determine the City’s current and future housing needs.
- Section 4. An Adequate Sites Inventory and Analysis, which identifies potential housing sites to accommodate the City’s RHNA, analyzes their suitability and availability, and offers other site alternatives to address local housing needs.

- Section 5. A Constraints Analysis, which addresses governmental constraints to housing development such as zoning and fees, and non-governmental constraints, such as the high cost of land. This analysis includes specific consideration of governmental constraints to the provision of housing for persons with disabilities.
- Section 6. Goals, Standards, Policies, and Actions, designed to address the City’s housing needs (supply and affordability), ensure equal access to housing, reduce housing constraints, work to preserve existing housing opportunities, and promote energy conservation in housing. This section includes quantified objectives that may be used to measure the City’s progress.
- Section 7. An Implementation Plan, which summarizes local housing programs and establishes a timeline, available funding sources, and responsible party for carrying out Housing Element actions.
- Section 8. Index of Appendices
- Section 9. Index of Tables
- Section 10. Index of Figures