

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Article 10.6 of the Government Code (Sections 65580-65590) requires all California localities to adopt Housing Elements as part of their general plans. The Housing Element must include identification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs and a statement of goals, policies, quantified objectives, financial resources, and scheduled programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. It must include identification of adequate sites for housing and provision of housing for the existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community. The law requires that the Housing Element include:

- a. An assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to meeting these needs. The assessment and inventory should include: analysis of population and employment trends, household characteristics, inventory of land suitable for residential development, analysis of potential and actual governmental constraints to housing development, analysis of potential and actual nongovernmental constraints to housing development, analysis of any special housing needs, analysis of opportunities for energy conservation with respect to residential development, analysis of existing assisted housing developments;
- b. A statement of the community's goals, quantified objectives, and policies relative to the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing; and
- c. A program which sets forth a five-year schedule of actions the local government is undertaking, or intends to undertake, to implement the policies and achieve the goals and objectives of the Housing Element, including the administration of land use and development controls, provision of regulatory concessions and incentives, and the utilization of appropriate federal and state financing and subsidy programs. The program should:
  - Identify adequate sites, through appropriate zoning and development standards, to facilitate and encourage the development of a variety of housing types
  - Assist in the development of adequate housing to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income households
  - When appropriate, remove or reduce governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing
  - Conserve and improve the condition of the existing affordable housing stock
  - Promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability
  - Preservation of assisted housing developments for lower income households

Government code section 65588(a) reads as follows:

"Each local government shall review its housing element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate all of the following:

- (1) The appropriateness of the housing goals, objectives, and policies in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal.
- (2) The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives.
- (3) The progress of the city, county, or city and county in implementation of the housing element."

This Housing Element serves as the city's overall housing goals and policies framework. The Housing Element will guide decisions that facilitate the provision, development, preservation, rehabilitation, financing, and maintenance of all types of housing for all income segments in Davis. The Housing Element goals, policies, standards and actions are internally consistent with the other elements of the General Plan.

Section 10 of this Housing Element addresses the appropriateness of housing goals, objectives and policies in the 1993 Housing Element; the effectiveness of the 1993 Housing Element in attainment of community's goals and objectives; and the progress of the city in implementation of the 1993 Housing Element. The section concludes that the city appropriately achieved its housing goals while contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal; that the 1993 Housing Element was effective in attaining the city's housing goals; and highlighted progress made in the implementation of the 1993 Housing Element.

## **1.1 HISTORY OF DAVIS HOUSING POLICY**

Historically, the City of Davis has maintained an activist approach to housing development. The size and character of dwellings that make up the city's housing stock have been strongly influenced by city policies relating to affordability, energy efficiency, mix of dwelling-unit types, and urban form. All these factors were discussed throughout the 2001 General Plan update process. Community goals for Davis are reflected in the Housing Element; closely related policies are in the Land Use Element. The size of the city has been a major policy issue throughout the history of Davis, as the Growth Management section of the current General Plan fully addresses.

In recent years, the city has sustained a significant growth in housing production and population. The 2001 General Plan provided a modest increase in residential densities but less land for urban development than the 1987 General Plan. The City Council has continued to evaluate future residential and commercial development prospects for the city. On April 2, 2003, the Council passed and adopted Resolution No. 03-48, which directs staff to implement an annual city

growth parameter, prepare amendments to the General Plan and Phased Allocation Ordinance, and prepare a joint housing strategy with UC Davis. Resolution No. 03-48 finds that an annual average growth parameter for the city of 250 housing units is appropriate as an initial baseline for future growth management and planning.

In November 1999 the citizens of Davis approved Measure J, which requires voter-approval of residential development involving open space and agricultural land as a way to address unplanned growth.

### **Historic Population**

The City of Davis grew from a population of 23,488 in 1970 to 36,640 in 1980, an increase of 56 percent. The population increased another 26 percent from 1980 to 1990, when it reached 46,322. It increased another 30 percent from 1990 to 2000, when it reached 60,308.

The impetus for reviving the General Plan in 1987 was a 1986 evaluation of development occurring in the Davis area, which concluded that the General Plan was nearing buildout much sooner than projected, unless residential construction was virtually halted. The 1987 General Plan revision led to a significant change in total projected population for the Davis Planning Area. The 1987 General Plan projected a total population of approximately 75,000 in the year 2010. This projection was based on the growth rate of approximately 1.8 percent per year (from 1987 to 2010). Assumptions for the 2001 General Plan include correction of weaknesses in the 1987 General Plan, provision of new information where appropriate, enhancement of consistency between elements and addition of elements. Table 5 of the 2001 General Plan projects the city's 2010 population at approximately 62,182 based on growth management policies in the plan. Obviously this estimation is flawed. The 2002 DOF projected population for the city was 63,324.

### **General Plan**

In 1993, the City Council established assumptions and parameters for the update of the 1987 General Plan. The 1987 General Plan was used as the base document for the 2001 General Plan. Its planning horizon was also 2010. The 2001 update was to correct weaknesses in the 1987 General Plan, provide new information where appropriate, enhance consistency between elements, and add elements. The total acreage of developable land and the total number of units in the 1987 General Plan were not increased in the 2001 document, although the location and mix of uses were subject to change.

### **Growth Control Mechanisms**

Historically, the population goals of the city were implemented in part by a housing allocation system, under which the City Council reviewed development applications and allocated to a certain time period (generally one or two years) a certain number of the units remaining toward meeting the population goal. Apartments, certain types of affordable housing, and housing for persons with special needs were exempted from the allocation system, and certain standard

conditions were imposed on allocations. General Plan policies have established the basis for setting growth rates and the number of housing units that will be allowed in the future.

This Housing Element establishes the basis for city programs that will provide market-rate housing and affordable housing, including special needs housing to meet or exceed fair share requirements and address local housing priorities. Policies in the Housing Element and in other General Plan elements require revision of the housing allocation system that was, in the past, the primary growth-control measure used by the city. The 2001 General Plan contains other growth-control measures, including policies calling for establishment of an urban / agricultural buffer around the city. The Davis City Council placed Measure O (i.e., the open space and agricultural tax) on the November 2000 ballot. By an overwhelming majority, the citizens of Davis voted for Measure O to tax themselves to protect open space and agricultural resources in the Davis area.

### **Affordable Housing**

As noted above, the city has engaged in long standing efforts to create and maintain the stock of affordable housing in Davis. The requirement for Designated Low Priced Units as a condition of allocation began in the early 1980s. Over the years, the city also participated in the Loans-to-Lenders mortgage revenue bond program, which financed subsidized rental units. The city has encouraged development of rental housing through growth control exemptions for apartments and assisted in rehabilitation of rental and ownership units through a variety of funding programs. Other forms of affordable housing for special need groups have been provided in the city. Policies in this Housing Element encourage continued efforts to preserve existing affordable housing stock, create additional affordable housing stock, and subsidize all types of affordable housing. The affordable housing programs have resulted in a broad-based portfolio that includes:

- Over 20 years, 641 affordable homes sold to low-income families, at least 307 of which are still owned by the low-income buyer
- Over 890 permanently affordable units under the management of local non-profit organizations
- 59 beds of affordable student housing at Pacifico Co-op (equivalent of 24 Units)
- 63 moderate income beds at the University Retirement Community continuum project (equivalent of 25 units)
- Over 104 beds of affordable housing for homeless and disabled individuals (equivalent of 41 units)
- 116 affordable apartment units built and maintained by for-profit developers
- 84 units of permanently affordable multi-family housing currently under construction

- 102 units of permanently affordable multi-family and single family housing actively under development.

The units (or the equivalent) of affordable housing created under the city's affordable housing ordinance is approximately 1,923. According to the State Department of Finance, as of January 1, 2002, there were 24,717 housing units in Davis. Of those units, nearly eight percent were constructed under the affordable housing program and approximately five percent are permanently affordable.

## **Housing Element**

This is an update to the 1993 Housing Element. This update is for the purpose of complying with state mandated five-year Housing Element update. The format of the 1993 Housing Element is maintained so as to facilitate the completion of this Housing Element. Changes to the 1993 Housing Element are in the form of new information and update of tables.

## **1.2 HOUSING ISSUES**

The 2001 General Plan policies include many policies of the 1987 General Plan relative to the following issues: 1) small or compact university-oriented town; 2) slow or managed growth; 3) mix of housing types, prices, densities and designs in each neighborhood; and 4) projects to provide affordable units, ownership and rental (multifamily).

The differences between the 2001 General Plan and the 1987 General Plan include:

- increased residential districts' densities;
- new policies on infill development projects; and
- revision to the percentage of required affordable housing relative to rental housing projects with 20 or more units. However, a recent Council decision in the review of these Housing Element policies reverts the percentage to the 1987 plan. The 1987 plan called for 25% of affordable rental units to go to low-income households and 10% of affordable rental units to go to very-low-income households.

The housing issues discussed during the 2001 General Plan Update process included:

- Jobs / housing balance;
- Residential infill;
- Housing for fair share obligations;
- Housing for UC Davis growth; and

- Affordable housing requirements for rental projects.

The jobs / housing balance issue is part of the overall growth context for community planning. The policy in the 1987 General Plan calling for job/housing balance was deleted in the 2001 General Plan. Residential Infill is fully discussed in Section 8 of this Housing Element. Several new infill policies were included in the 2001 General Plan and this current 2003 Housing Element update. The policies promote reasonable densification while maintaining the characteristics of existing neighborhoods. Sections 6 and 9 of this Housing Element fully discuss the issues of fair share housing, UC Davis growth, and affordable housing provision for students with special needs.

This update to the Housing Element made technical edits to the 2001 General Plan Housing Element goals, policies, standards, and action. It recognizes emerging issues, which include:

- the housing market;
- scarce vacant developable residential land;
- scarce resources available to finance the development of affordable housing;
- the prospective increase of student enrollment at UC Davis; and
- projected statewide population increases.

### **1.3 CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN**

The process of developing the Housing Element of the General Plan Update was based on the General Plan Update approved in 2001. It is expected that implementation of all policies and actions will also be done in a manner consistent with the 2001 General Plan. Accordingly, it is important that the community visions and land use planning principles are noted as a preface to the Housing Element.

#### **Visions**

The visions in the 2001 General Plan are broad philosophical statements describing desired end states. They are intended to convey purpose and mission and are not necessarily attainable now or in the foreseeable future. The visions from the 2001 General Plan that this Housing Element Update was based upon include:

- Foster a safe, sustainable, healthy, diverse and stimulating environment for all in the community.

- Becomes a community where the impacts of traffic, noise, pollution, crime and litter are minimized.
- Maintain Davis as a cohesive, compact, university-oriented city surrounded by and containing farmland, greenbelts, natural habitats and natural resources.
- Reflect Davis' small town character in urban design that contributes to and enhances livability and social interaction.
- Encourage carefully-planned, sensitively-designed infill and new development to a scale in keeping with the existing city character.
- Celebrate and encourage a diverse cultural community.
- Identify and promote changes of those social structures, which limit equal access or participation on the basis of race, ethnicity, culture, age, education, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or socio-economic background.
- Promote a clean, safe, healthy, livable and ecologically sound environment for today and the future.
- Pursue sustainability.
- Minimize impacts on Davis' land, water, air and biological resources and seek to enhance and restore Davis' environment, through such projects as wetlands and multi-functional drainage ponds.
- Preserve and create an array of distinct neighborhoods so that all residents can identify a neighborhood that is "home" for them.
- Promote in each neighborhood a diversity of housing options that will enable people with wide range of needs, economic levels, cultural identities and ages to live in Davis.
- Enhance neighborhoods by supporting schools, retail centers, parks and community facilities that can be the foci and gathering places for each neighborhood.
- Protect the viability of agriculture and prime agricultural land in and around Davis.
- Encourage agriculture practices that are not injurious to the city's environment or residents.
- Recognize and strengthen the positive synergistic partnership between the City and UC Davis.
- Recognize Davis' role within the broader region.

- Make decisions on City policy with an understanding of regional impacts.
- Maximize available resources through joint planning with other agencies and jurisdictions.
- Make Davis a regional leader in slow and well-managed growth, agricultural and environmental preservation, and cultural diversity.

### **Principles Used in Creating Land Use Map**

The 2001 General Plan land use map portrays the ultimate uses of land in and around Davis. The land use map shows areas intended for urban development during the term of the General Plan, which is through 2010. The land use map was created to implement certain principles, which form the foundation for land use planning in Davis. See the 2001 General Plan for the land use map. Some of the land use principles used to develop this Housing Element include:

- Provide land use and zoning categories to generally reflect existing densities and to allow for a broad range of housing types, configurations and densities.
- Focus growth inward to accommodate population increases. Infill development is supported as an appropriate means of meeting some of the city's housing needs.
- Create and maintain housing patterns that promote energy conserving transportation methods.
- Accommodate new buildings with floor area ratios that can support transit use, especially within ¼ mile from commercial areas and transit stops, but maintain scale transition and retain enough older buildings to retain small-city character.
- All neighborhoods, both new and existing, should include a centrally located hub or activity node within walking distance of housing in the neighborhood, as illustrated in Figures 9 and 10. Transit stops, neighborhood commercial uses and activity centers should be in this hub. Hubs should be designed to support transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel, and to serve neighborhood needs.
- Create an open space buffer between urban and agricultural uses to maintain the integrity of the adjoining agricultural/natural areas, to serve as a transitional space between urban and rural lands, to provide a visual edge, and to be an aesthetic and recreational resource.
- To preserve existing agriculture and control growth, relocate the boundary of the General Plan Area farther to the west from the current County Road 97D (one mile west of Stonegate) to County Road 96 (2½ miles west of Stonegate). This is intended to increase Davis' area of planning concern farther into the possible growth area of the city of Dixon, not to expand the urban growth.