

Chapter 6: HOUSING

Housing stock within Clackamas County serves local communities and also ties into the regional supply. As such, many of the housing challenges currently facing the county are not unique to the local area and solutions must be considered within the context of regional and statewide trends, as well as county-wide needs. To move forward, we must also look back and acknowledge actions in the past that have harmed and excluded members of our community. Residential zoning has a complex history that resulted in exclusion of low-income, black, indigenous, and people of color from certain neighborhoods. In Oregon, this history was especially harmful with direct exclusion of non-white people from the state until 1926. Although those exclusions are illegal today, their negative impacts are still affecting our community through the legacy of exclusionary zoning. Housing policy and code changes are an opportunity to help mitigate effects of these past practices; housing policies moving forward must be more focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Meeting the future housing needs and desires of residents will require the County to allow for new housing types and densities. A wider range of housing prices can be encouraged by providing a greater variety of lot sizes and more opportunities for the development of a range of housing sizes and types. Providing more opportunities for the development of multifamily dwellings and other alternative housing forms are needed to house the young, the elderly, and lower-income households who may prefer, or only be able to afford, housing types other than detached single-family homes. And as the current housing stock ages and redevelopment takes place, regulations pertaining to density, design and accessibility will shape neighborhoods and the county.

HOUSING GOALS

- **Goal 1:** Meet the needs of the County houseless population through a variety of short- and long-term options.
- **Goal 2:** Encourage development that will provide a range of choices in housing type, density, and price throughout the County.
- **Goal 3:** Provide housing opportunities that meet the economic, social, and cultural needs of community members while using energy, land, and public facilities as efficiently as possible.

BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

In response to growing concerns about increasing housing costs, increasing homelessness, and an historic lack of equity in housing policies, both the Oregon State Legislature and the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners (BCC) recently took action to address housing issues.

The Oregon State legislature took action to affect housing development in larger jurisdictions in the state. The two most notable bills affecting how the County regulates housing include:

- Senate Bill 1051(2017), which requires jurisdictions to provide clear and objective standards for housing development, and to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in areas zoned for detached housing inside urban growth boundaries; and
- House Bill 2001(2019), which requires larger jurisdictions, including the County, to allow duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters and townhouses (“middle housing”) on urban lots zoned for a single-family home.

In 2018, the BCC appointed the Affordable Housing and Homelessness Task Force (Task Force) to research, recommend, and support, new policies and strategies to address housing affordability and homelessness in the County. The BCC also initiated the production of a countywide Housing Needs Analysis, which was completed in 2019 and compared expected housing demand with available land supply over 20 years.

The Task Force and the Housing Needs Analysis identified following as the top issues facing the county with respect to housing:

- In the County, population growth is fueling strong demand for new housing units. Future housing needs will need to be accommodated in an urban area with a rapidly dwindling supply of residentially-zoned land.
- Housing built in the County continues to be predominantly detached, single-family dwellings while the need for smaller units and multi-family units is increasing due to changing demographics in the county.
- Housing is becoming increasingly less affordable.
- The number of people experiencing houselessness is increasing.
- Manufactured home parks continue to provide a valuable source of affordable housing, but face redevelopment pressures as land values and housing prices continue to increase.
- It is essential to consider equity within housing policies. It has be demonstrated that housing cost burdens fall disproportionately on people of color and rates of homeownership are significantly lower for Hispanic and non-white households than for white households.

Creating housing opportunities that are safe, affordable, available, and accessible for all residents must be done within the context of federal, state, and regional regulations. The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning & Development Ordinance need to be responsive to new initiatives adopted by these regulatory agencies to ensure the development of sufficient and sustainable housing opportunities. The county's goals and policies to address housing have been created within this context and are intended to guide development of more equitable and diverse housing and neighborhoods in the county.

Housing Goal 1: Meet the needs of the County houseless population through a variety of short and long-term options.

Over the last several years, the cost of living has outpaced wage growth across the nation and in the County. As rent and homeownership become less affordable, the risk of becoming houseless increases. Meeting the needs of the county's houseless population will require coordination between several county departments to ensure that safe, affordable shelter place, as well as the services necessary to help the houseless transition to more permanent housing can be provided.

6.A Houselessness Policies

- 6.A.1 Support regional programs and the County's Public Housing Program as a means to provide more low- and moderate-income housing.
- 6.A.2 Give priority for relocation into public housing to low-income residents displaced by development.
- 6.A.3 Develop and support a full spectrum of shelter and housing options (e.g., emergency shelters, transitional shelters, and public housing) that assist individuals in moving from houselessness to stable, long-term housing solutions.
- 6.A.4 Collaborate with community partners to provide a continuum of supportive services and programs that address the needs of unhoused persons and families to assist in their transition to more permanent housing solutions.
- 6.A.5 Ensure the Zoning and Development Ordinance allows for places to develop temporary shelters, alternative shelter models, and other transitional housing types.

Housing Goal 2: Encourage development that will provide a range of choices in housing type, density, and price throughout the County.

Throughout the County, there is a need to have housing available where people live and work. Having a range of housing types and prices will help to alleviate the deficit of land that exists to accommodate the needed future housing supply.

6.B Housing Type Policies

- 6.B.1 Enable a range of housing types throughout the county in a range of zoning districts.
- 6.B.2 Allow for accessibility and universal design standards.
- 6.B.3 Allow middle housing in urban, low density residential areas.
- 6.B.4 Provide for higher-density, single-family development by planning for developments in smaller-lot zoning districts.
- 6.B.5. Encourage smaller lots by allowing for planned unit developments and middle housing developments.
- 6.B.6 Provide for increased capacity for multifamily development in the urban area.
- 6.B.7 Allow for the development of housing on existing legal lots that do not meet the current minimum lot size in a zoning district.
- 6.B.8 Support the continued existence of manufactured dwelling parks and require that parks shall not be redeveloped unless a plan for relocation of the existing tenants is submitted and approved prior to redevelopment.
- 6.B.9 Allow new manufactured home parks as a primary use in Medium Density Residential zoning districts, but not in designated commercial, industrial, or higher-density multifamily areas.

6.C Housing Affordability Policies

- 6.C.1 Encourage more affordable housing by allowing for a variety of housing densities and price ranges throughout the county.
- 6.C.2 Allow for rental units with a variety of size, location, and accessibility.
- 6.C.3 Enable more affordable pathways to home ownership.
- 6.C.4 Pursue subsidies to provide affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households.
- 6.C.5 Provide expedient, efficient design review, building permit, zoning, and subdivision processes.

- 6.C.6 Allow alternative road and improvement standards where appropriate (see the policies in the Roadways section of Chapter 5, *Transportation System Plan*).
- 6.C.7 Allow reduced utility and roadway costs through flexible lotting patterns in subdivisions and planned unit developments.
- 6.C.8 Allow density transfers to encourage the creation of less expensive lots (see the policies in Chapter 4, *Land Use*).
- 6.C.9 Allow, where appropriate, residential density bonuses for:
 - Affordable housing units, developed either through a government-subsidized program or by the private sector
 - Housing included as part of a mixed-use development
 - Parks dedication
 - Where special performance criteria have been met.

Housing Goal 3: *Provide housing opportunities that meet the economic, social, and cultural needs of community members while using energy, land, and public facilities as efficiently as possible.*

Economic, social, and cultural perspectives influence the aspects of the built environment that create welcoming and livable communities. The following policies are designed to address the livability of the County.

6.D Livability Policies

- 6.D.1 Encourage growth in areas where public services can be economically provided.
- 6.D.2 Support programs that help homeowners and renters to remain in their homes if redevelopment puts upward pressure on home costs and rents.
- 6.D.3 Consider housing choice, livability, and displacement when developing community plans.
- 6.D.4 Make use of existing urban service by allowing for infill development and providing for middle housing types when the existing home is retained.
- 6.D.5 Provide for a variety of middle housing opportunities that meet the design standards that apply in existing, urban residential neighborhoods.
- 6.D.6 Allow greater flexibility for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes in the urban area.
- 6.D.7 Invest in active transportation systems to support livable neighborhoods (see the policies in the Roadways section of Chapter 5).

- 6.D.8 Encourage shared access to limit impervious surface and to promote efficient use of existing infrastructure and pedestrian safety.
- 6.D.9 Provide for buffers between residential areas and neighboring nonresidential land use.
- 6.D.10 Allow flexibility in residential setback requirements pursuant to adopted criteria to support a more uniform street frontage and the development of existing lots with unique circumstances.
- 6.D.11 Require design review approval for all multiple-family development, where appropriate.
- 6.D.12 Ensure design review considers the continued livability of existing neighborhoods by requiring design review address at least the following:
 - Energy efficiency and conservation
 - Access to transit
 - Crime prevention including natural surveillance of public areas by residents
 - Open space, including recreation areas and children's play areas
 - Privacy considerations, including private entries, patios, and fencing
 - Noise abatement
 - Shared parking to reduce paved areas
 - Accessibility of parking to units
 - Pedestrian/bicycle facilities on and off site
 - Minimization of impervious ground cover
 - Retention of natural areas and features such as major trees
 - Landscaping
 - Screened parking areas.