

# Chapter 2: Housing

## Introduction

Housing is a basic need for all Dane County residents. Housing opportunities and choices determine where we send our children to school, where we raise our families and where we will grow old. Housing also influences traffic patterns and determines our proximity and access to services and jobs. In addition, housing and related industries help drive our regional economy, employing thousands of Dane County residents. As a permanent feature on the landscape, housing is also the most noticeable aspect of Dane County's growth. As more people move to Dane County, as our children and grandchildren grow up and move into their own homes, the demand for housing grows. Between 2000 and 2005 Dane County added approximately 14,000 new single-family homes, 663 two family units and 13,059 multi-family units. Over the same time period, Dane County's population increased by 31,770 residents, or 1.5% per year. This growth rate is comparable to the rate of job growth over the same period.

## Purpose

This chapter identifies goals, objectives, policies and programs Dane County can pursue to:

- Provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand;
- Promote housing development in proximity and with good access to transportation and other services;
- Promote a range of housing choices for residents of all income levels, age groups and needs;
- Inventory and assess existing housing stock;
- Maintain, improve and rehabilitate the county's existing housing stock;
- Promote opportunities for mixed-use development;
- Promote compact, residential development that provides efficient service delivery and conserves farmland and open space;
- Promote the availability of land for development or redevelopment of low and-moderate income housing;
- Identify barriers to affordable housing;
- Promote attractive, distinct and diverse communities and neighborhoods, and;
- Ensure that housing needs are met in a way that maximizes energy conservation.

### Key Issues

**Given the continued demand for housing in Dane County, how can the county:**

- Accommodate people of all income levels in good quality homes close to where they work?
- Balance the need to build more houses with protecting irreplaceable farmland, prairies and wetlands?
- Meet challenges faced by the housing industry, including developers and builders?
- Meet the specialized housing needs of our growing elderly and disabled populations?
- Foster partnerships and cooperation among public, private and non-profit housing providers?
- Ensure that housing takes advantage of existing transportation and service infrastructure and that new services are provided as efficiently as possible?
- Provide a range of housing options to meet the demands, including child-care options, of diverse family types and sizes?

## Stakeholders

The Housing and Economic Development Work Group (HED) developed the goals, objectives and policies for this chapter. HED members and regular participants included representatives from nonprofit housing advocates, county housing agencies, private landlords, architects, the County Board of Supervisors, the Wisconsin Realtors Association, utility companies, developers, entrepreneurs, large business owners, labor unions, business incubators and others. HED also contributed specific recommendations (including several originally developed for the housing chapter) to Chapter 5: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources and to Chapter 8: Land Use.

## Survey Results

Housing ranked highly among respondents to the *Dane County Comprehensive Plan Survey*. When asked how much attention Dane County government should give to a variety of housing goals, a majority of respondents (actual percentages in parentheses below) felt Dane County should pay “considerably more” or “somewhat more” attention to the following issues:

- Promoting housing that maintains and improves the quality of life for all in Dane County (76%);
- Promoting good use of land for housing (70%);
- Ensuring an adequate supply of enough housing choices that meets the needs of people from all income levels, all age groups, with different family sizes, and families that have special needs (66%);
- Ensuring that there is housing close to public transportation routes (66%), and;
- Ensuring that there is housing close to shopping and commercial centers (52%).

Renters were more likely than homeowners to emphasize proximity to public transportation (36% vs. 28%), choices for income, special needs and family size (48% vs. 25%), and quality of life (52% vs. 35%).

When asked what the most important role Dane County should play to ensure housing for all, the most popular responses included:

- Help to build relationships between developers and local government (36%);
- Improve regulations and zoning ordinances (14%);
- Educate the public on housing issues (12%);
- Buy existing buildings for public-owned housing (12%), and;
- Lower taxes for owners and potential buyers (10%).

## Background/Orientation

Since 1998, the Dane County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME program has helped residents with low to moderate incomes meet their housing needs. The housing programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) include the American Dream Down Payment Initiative (ADDI) that provides funding and education for first time homebuyers and the HOME programs. The HOME program includes assistance for the following:

- Construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing (rental and homeownership);
- Direct rental assistance to low-income persons;
- Down payment assistance to qualified persons, and;
- Land acquisition.

The Dane County Department of Human Services (DHS) has a long history of working with county residents that are facing a housing crisis. DHS provides services and funding for programs including mental health counseling, eviction prevention, emergency shelter, housing assistance vouchers and housing counseling. Since 2001, the DHS caseload has doubled.

The *Dane County Comprehensive Plan* Housing Chapter builds on our existing programs and includes recommendations from the *Dane County Consolidated Plan* (2004-2008) and the Department of Human Services.

However, due to a number of trends including:

- increasing population growth;
- decreasing land supply for residential and commercial development;
- housing costs rising faster than income, and;
- the increase in the percentage of families living at or below poverty,

Dane County has a new opportunity to coordinate, work with and support residents and stakeholders to ensure that housing and communities are planned and created to meet the needs of all residents and communities.

## Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs

### Affordable Housing and Housing Supply

#### Goal

1. *Promote and support a full range and adequate supply of housing choices throughout the county that meets the needs of persons of all income levels, age groups, household sizes, and persons with special needs.*

#### Supporting Objectives

- A. Promote the development of housing to meet forecasted needs.
- B. Promote an adequate supply of accessible and special needs owner occupied and rental housing for a range of all income levels.
- C. Encourage the leveraging of housing subsidies, public funding and incentives to maximize the private sector use and investment of those funds.
- D. Promote the development and preservation of long-term, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents throughout Dane County.
- E. Improve opportunities for homeownership, targeting specific groups including minorities, immigrants, low-income people, and people

with disabilities.

- F. Encourage coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- G. Continue to explore policies and programs to promote and support appropriate use of mobile and manufactured homes as an affordable housing option. Consider opportunities to encourage resident ownership of mobile home parks.

## Homelessness and Housing Crisis Services

### *Policies and Programs:*

1. Promote the most effective programs and services that prevent homelessness and housing crises in Dane County.
  - A. Maintain sufficient funding for the Dane County Department of Human Services for programs and services to prevent housing crises or homelessness, as well as the consequent increase in demand for emergency services and public expenditures. Provide emergency and homeless prevention services to individuals and families facing a housing crisis, especially, but not limited to, the following:
    - (1) Emergency shelter;
    - (2) Eviction prevention funding;
    - (3) Case management;
    - (4) Housing vouchers;
    - (5) Single room occupancy (SRO) and transitional housing, and;
    - (6) Programs for those leaving prison.
  - B. Continue public outreach for the Homeless Services Consortium to make sure that the public is aware of the issues surrounding homelessness, and the need for both private and public sector support.
  - C. Increase funding for Dane County Department of Human Services Interim Assistance program in order to substantially reduce the waiting list for individuals before SSI and SSDI is established.

- D. Increase funding for Dane County Department of Human Services drug treatment and mental health services programs to prevent homelessness.
- 2. Identify and evaluate homeless services programs in adjacent counties, and develop partnerships with neighboring counties to prevent homelessness.
- 3. Develop criteria as part of the Dane County Affordable Housing Trust Fund for funding programs and initiatives that prevent and end homelessness.
- 4. Provide increased access and options for transportation and child-care for low-income individuals so that they can get to work and maintain employment.
  - A. Support an increase in childcare and transportation subsidies, and the elimination of co-pays for low-income households facing a housing crisis to prevent their return to homelessness and re-current demand for emergency services.
  - B. Conduct an analysis of the following:
    - (1) The cost per individual for providing emergency housing and related services per homeless person in Dane County for three, six and nine month periods, and;
    - (2) The cost per person of chronically homeless vs. temporarily homeless (all others).
- 5. Through advocacy and education, promote the increase of wages for the bottom 15-20% of Dane County workers, so they can remain in stable housing.
- 6. Provide needed services to the homeless, including case management and credit counseling.

## Housing Assistance Programs

### *Policies and Programs:*

- 1. Retain the numbers of Housing Choice Vouchers in the short-term, and to increase the number of vouchers available in future federal budgets distributed by Dane County Housing Authority

(DCHA) and Community Development Authority (CDA).

- 2. Use public funding to maintain long-term affordable housing.
- 3. Continue to provide free homebuyers' assistance to lower income households to purchase homes through CDBG and HOME funding.
- 4. Continue to provide homeownership education, training, and counseling to homebuyers to increase their capacity to become successful homeowners through CDBG and HOME funding.

## Incentive Programs

### *Policies and Programs:*

- 1. Create a Dane County Affordable Housing Development Fund to stimulate the development and preservation of affordable housing.
- 2. Review, identify and make recommendations regarding tax incentives for providers of housing (i.e. developers and builders) to create more affordable housing for low and moderate-income households.
- 3. Provide non-monetary incentives to the housing industry, such as expedited permitting and other tools, to promote the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing.
- 4. Promote first time homebuyer programs through strategic marketing to attract and keep young professionals in Dane County.

## Intergovernmental Coordination

### *Policies and Programs:*

- 1. Continue, maintain, and improve fair share housing efforts throughout Dane County.
  - A. Continue to work to improve fair housing efforts and eliminate housing discrimination through education, enforcement, and identifying and reducing built-in barriers.



2. Make sure the Department of Planning and Development maintains the ability to provide technical assistance and support to cities and villages to encourage the creation of affordable housing. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
3. Promote the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for providing affordable housing, for low-income and very low-income residents, and to help developers offset the cost of providing affordable units.
4. Provide and advertise facilitation services for the purpose of fostering discussion between neighboring communities to identify and plan areas for housing. (*See Chapter 7: Intergovernmental Cooperation.*)
5. Encourage cooperative development agreements between communities.

## Partnerships

### *Policies and Programs:*

1. Promote utilization of non-profit housing organizations that build, rehabilitate and work to preserve affordable housing through funding and collaboration.
2. Identify and promote the expertise of non-profit housing agencies, so that they can initiate and take advantage of multi-level funding and resource opportunities.
3. Dane County should participate in meetings for housing provider stakeholders including:
  - A. non-profit providers of housing and services;
  - B. homeless services providers, and;
  - C. special needs providers.
4. Work with existing affordable housing developers to maximize funding opportunities and resources for affordable housing development in the county.
5. Dane County should partner with local communities and other organizations to:
  - A. Facilitate a spectrum of housing redevelopment activities - from visioning to actual infill and redevelopment.
  - B. Dedicate resources toward the Dane County Infill Inventory Project to promote the redevelopment of under utilized or unused parcels within urban service areas and promote compact development within these areas in order to reduce the pace of expansion into undeveloped open space or agricultural areas.
6. Dane County, the City of Madison CDBG Office and the Community Development Authority should explore options for working together to provide and promote affordable housing.



## Residential Development

### *Policies and Programs:*

1. Promote policies and regulations that support the full range of housing marketed at 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or below.
  - A. Promote the development of owner occupied and rental housing for very-low, low-, and moderate-income households in response to housing demand.
  - B. Allow for the development of an adequate portion of rural homes to be affordable to low and moderate-income households.
  - C. Amend county land use ordinances to remove barriers to affordable housing and mixed-use development. *(See Chapter 8: Land Use.)*
  - D. Promote land uses that allow for mixed-income housing. *(See Chapter 8: Land Use.)*



2. Support the option of the elderly to age in place by promoting the maintenance and siting of important services in proximity to housing — especially health care facilities and reliable public transportation, but also grocery stores, drug stores, opportunities for civic engagement and entertainment, and safe and walkable neighborhoods. *(See Chapter 8: Land Use.)*

## Special Needs and Aging Demographic

### *Policies and Programs:*

1. Increase affordable housing options for the elderly who require supportive services and encourage the development of additional housing units, including assisted living housing.
  - A. Encourage the development of additional housing units for the elderly who require supportive services, including assisted living housing.
  - B. Develop programs to help seniors age in place that address issues of improved access and support services such as cleaning, shopping and basic care, as well as programs that allow them to transition into appropriate housing within their communities.
  - C. Promote a mix of housing options such as single room occupancy (SRO) and transitional housing, as well as supportive programs, to enhance the lives of those with special needs, or those looking for additional supports.
  - D. Promote an adequate supply of single room occupancy (SRO) housing for special needs residents and the elderly making less than 30% of the median family income.
  - E. Promote the development of intergenerational housing and housing near health care services to support the aging demographic trend.
  - F. Explore options for financing housing for special needs residents, including the use of tax increment financing.

## Education and Outreach

### *Policies and Programs:*

1. Develop information and educational material on different housing options and examples for the aging demographic, as well as other groups.
2. Promote multi-lingual real estate services, financial education, homeownership training and housing programs.



3. Continue support for the affordable housing inventory listings such as the Wisconsin Front Door Housing website, as well as the Tenant Resource Center's apartment vacancy listing.
4. Engage the housing industry and retailers of food services, day care, and health care to foster partnerships and develop models for building more integrated communities.
5. Assist non-traditional and minority populations in gaining access to private funding sources.
  - A. Identify county funding sources and existing sites for land banking of those sites for future housing.
  - B. Support and encourage private/public partnerships in order to maximize a range of housing options.
6. Explore opportunities to increase the financial literacy of high school students and other groups, in order to increase their opportunities for finding and maintaining stable housing and becoming homeowners and informed renters.
7. Hold education sessions and design workshops for planning commissions, residents and developers to aid in the creation of affordable housing.
  - A. Promote the community land trust model to increase long-term affordable housing options.
  - B. Identify and promote strategies to preserve affordable housing no longer eligible for state and federal affordable tax credits.
  - C. Encourage and promote apartment to condominium conversion to create affordable homeownership.
8. Increase rental-housing options for low-income residents through education, programs and funding.
  - A. Engage employers in the effort to supply affordable rental and owner occupied housing.
9. Provide educational opportunities and promote the benefits of green building, its affordability and long-term savings to builders, residents and stakeholders.



10. Ensure that Dane County housing resources and information are adequately represented on the web.
11. Provide outreach and educational opportunities to help promote cooperation, foster relationships and provide examples of current intergovernmental, cross-sector and public/private coordination.

## **Land Availability for Housing**

### **Goals**

1. *Promote the efficient use of land for housing.*
2. *Promote an adequate supply of land to meet existing and future needs for housing.*

### **Supporting Objectives**

- A. Promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing.
- B. Encourage compact communities and neighborhoods.
- C. Promote the location of higher density residential development close to infrastructure and services.
- D. Encourage the infilling of housing in urban areas that make more efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- E. Encourage housing development that has the least impact on or enhances existing and local regional facilities.

- F. Provide housing development alternatives to minimize the conversion of agricultural land, reduce scattered site non-farm development, and provide more housing options.
- G. Promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing.

### ***Policies and Programs***

1. Expand and enhance the ability of the Department of Planning and Development to provide low-cost or free planning services directly to rural town governments, to:
  - A. maintain or increase housing density in accordance with local plans;
  - B. promote compact, efficient development;
  - C. direct development to locations with basic services, and;
  - D. minimize the conversion of agricultural land to residential use. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
2. Make sure the Department of Planning and Development maintains the ability to provide technical assistance and support to cities and villages to facilitate sensible and efficient growth; and direct county resources to that end. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
3. Review and amend county zoning ordinances and permitting procedures to encourage and facilitate infill development and evaluate the impact of land use policies on housing. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
4. Amend the County Land Division Ordinance (Chapter 75, Dane County Code) to create a conservation subdivision ordinance to encourage rural density by clustering housing development and reducing lot size, in order to preserve the environment and agricultural land. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
5. Continue to consider a permanent, countywide Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program to promote compact residential development that protects environmental corridors and open space. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
6. Continue to develop a permanent, countywide Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to protect environmental corridors and open space. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
7. Develop an integrated set of model community and neighborhood design principles to help new development and redevelopment meet the goals and objectives of the *Dane County Comprehensive Plan*. Distribute model design guidelines to town, village and city government, builders, realtors and developers. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
8. Develop an educational campaign about the development approval process to demonstrate the community benefits of high quality compact development for developers, residents and communities in Dane County.
  - A. Promote group land ownership opportunities, including opportunities for mobile homes/ manufactured housing owners, condominium owners, cooperatives, and co-housing through educational opportunities and marketing.
  - B. Encourage and educate communities about the use of accessory dwelling units in residential neighborhoods.
  - C. Promote the development of housing and communities that integrate childcare facilities; educate the housing industry about the need for childcare to be located within neighborhoods.
  - D. Encourage appropriately scaled multi-family residential development.
  - E. Promote the use of land conservation principles (such as erosion controls, storm water management, buffer zones, natural area protection, compact development and greenways) and planning to meet existing and future needs for housing.
  - F. Support increased housing densities to make efficient use of the land, and educate communities and stakeholders about the benefits of compact development.



9. Provide incentives for development and/or infill in established transportation corridors to promote workforce accessibility between residential and commercial centers.
  - A. Expand the BUILD program to include funding for housing in high-need areas.
10. Provide non-monetary incentives for builders and developers to incorporate green building practices into their projects. (*See Chapter 8: Land Use.*)
11. Protect undeveloped areas near existing, planned or officially mapped transportation corridors from unplanned development. Review development for consistency with the Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's *Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)*, the *Dane County Land Use and Transportation Plan/Vision 2020* (or its successors), as well as local municipal plans.



## **Maintenance of Existing Housing Stock**

### **Goal**

1. *Promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing stock in Dane County.*

### ***Policies and Programs***

1. Expand funding to encourage the re-habilitation of housing for low-income households.

- A. Create a revolving loan fund to upgrade property for low-income households at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI).
  - B. Encourage the Wisconsin Legislature to provide assistance through property tax credits to homeowners to rehabilitate aging-declining homes.
  - C. Continue county CDBG programming to maintain housing stock and healthy neighborhoods.
2. Promote the rehabilitation of housing stock as a means to maintain existing affordable housing, as well as to increase affordable housing.
  - A. Analyze financial benefits to restoration and enhancement of existing structures and provide information and materials to Dane County residents.
  - B. Identify resources for the rehabilitation of housing stock to promote affordability for the purposes of:
    - (1) upgrading internal and external structures;
    - (2) reducing environmental hazards such as lead paint and asbestos, and;
    - (3) increasing energy efficiency.

## **Neighborhood and Community Design**

(*See also Chapter 8: Land Use.*)

### **Goal**

1. *Promote housing that maintains and improves the quality of life for all.*

### **Supporting Objectives**

- A. Encourage mixed-use communities and neighborhoods.
- B. Encourage communities and neighborhoods to locate housing close to jobs and mass transit, and provide pedestrian and bicycle friendly transit options.
- C. Promote economically and culturally diverse housing in communities and neighborhoods.

- D. Promote a balance of employment and housing opportunities within communities.
  - E. Promote housing development that protects environmental corridors and promotes open space.
  - F. Support the enhancement and preservation of the character and livability of neighborhoods.
  - G. Support the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic buildings and structures.
  - H. Promote and enhance community identity and create a sense of place.
  - I. Promote cooperation and reduce competition between communities to provide a balance of employment and housing opportunities among communities.
- 5. Develop a stronger institutional framework for historic preservation, and improve the tools available for the county to use in protecting significant historic resources. (*See Chapter 5: Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources.*)
  - 6. Work with the financial services community to explore the implementation of a targeted Location Efficient Mortgage (LEM) program in Dane County and make information and material available.

## **Policy and Demographic Research**

### ***Policies and Programs:***

#### ***Policies and Programs***

- 1. Identify and promote linkages between housing policies and economic development programs to educate individuals, communities and employers about siting business and housing together.
  - 2. Expand and enhance the ability of the Department of Planning and Development to provide low-cost or free planning services directly to rural town governments, to provide a broader range of tools and resources to meet local challenges (*See Chapter 8: Land Use*).
  - 3. Make sure the Department of Planning and Development maintains the ability to provide technical assistance and support to cities and villages to facilitate sensible and efficient growth; and, direct county resources to that end (*See Chapter 8: Land Use*).
  - 4. Develop an integrated set of model community and neighborhood design principles to help new development and redevelopment meet affordable housing community design and quality of life goals and objectives of the *Dane County Comprehensive Plan*. Distribute model design guidelines to town, village and city government, builders, realtors and developers (*See Chapter 8: Land Use*).
- 1. Study and evaluate all the factors that influence housing prices in Dane County.
    - A. Every three years produce a housing demand and forecast analysis report to determine:
      - (1) existing housing stock;
      - (2) trends in population growth and income;
      - (3) the impacts on demand for housing, and;
      - (4) information about what qualifies as affordable housing to Dane County communities.
    - B. Provide a housing demand analysis forecast for the aging and retiring demographic so that the housing industry can plan for the future.
  - 2. Create an inclusive ad hoc committee to report on the implications of the housing forecast report as well as the impacts from legislation on the housing market.
  - 3. Develop a system to regularly monitor, evaluate and report on the performance of the housing portion of the comprehensive plan to make improvements to the plan. (*See Chapter 9: Implementation.*)