

HOUSING ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES

GOAL H-1: *ENSURE THE PROVISION OF SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND ADEQUATE HOUSING FOR ALL CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS OF WALTON COUNTY.*

Objective H-1.1: Develop a market that ~~will~~ provides ample, diverse housing types for various resident income levels.

Policy H-1.1.1: Walton County shall encourage a broad range of housing opportunities through a variety of land uses that allow single-family homes, multifamily homes, mixed use developments, accessory dwelling units, and live/work units.

Policy H-1.1.2: Walton County shall facilitate mixed use developments comprised of residential, commercial, and civic uses, through the application of appropriate development standards, design flexibility, compatibility review, and regulatory incentives.

Policy H-1.1.3: Walton County shall coordinate review of new development and redevelopment activities with water and sewer utility providers; provide linkage of urban land use designations in areas where adequate infrastructure is in place or planned for in the utility master plans so that developments of higher densities will have infrastructure in place to support demands.

Policy H-1.1.4: Walton County shall establish and maintain residential development standards in the Land Development Code that support housing production while promoting the vitality of established neighborhoods.

Policy H-1.1.5: Walton County shall establish permit process metrics, and continuously monitor fees to assess their effect on residential development and ensure that they facilitate greater predictability in project decisions, timelines, outcomes, and costs related to County review and approvals.

Policy H-1.1.6: Walton County shall promote equal access to an open housing market for all persons at all income levels, regardless of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, family status, marital status, handicap, or age consistent with the Fair Housing Act.

Policy H-1.1.7: The County shall support economic solutions to affordable housing, such as establishing job training and job creation programs to assist extremely low, very low, low- and moderate-income households, to include workforce housing. The County shall investigate and support grant funding for the development of such programs if determined to be beneficial.

Policy H-1.1.8: Manufactured housing, modular units or factory-built housing shall be allowed in any land use designation permitting residential development under the same siting, density, and location standards as conventionally constructed housing consistent with Section 553.38 F.S.

Policy H-1.1.9: Walton County shall maintain countywide land development regulations that continue to provide for affordable housing options such as manufactured housing (mobile homes), modular housing, factory-built housing, multifamily housing, utilizing zero lot lines,

clustering housing units on less adverse development areas, and planned unit developments that include affordable housing units.

Objective H-1.2 Walton County shall evaluate and implement innovative policies, funding programs, and other incentivizing measures supporting affordable housing.

Policy H-1.2.1: Completion of a housing relocation plan shall be an element of any County program or project that requires relocation, and shall provide assistance for persons displaced by public and private relocation housing programs and projects.

Policy H-1.2.2: Walton County shall collaborate with nonprofit organizations, private developers, employers, special needs groups, state agencies, and federal agencies to increase the supply of affordable housing; assist and encourage public/private partnerships with community-based nonprofit agencies to enhance the production of housing units.

Policy H-1.2.3: Walton County shall actively facilitate community participation and regional participation in helping solve the housing needs of households with incomes less than the area median income.

Policy H-1.2.4: Walton County shall pursue funding sources, including public/private partnerships, to support affordable housing. Walton County shall encourage affordable rental housing by offering incentives and technical assistance, where feasible.

Policy H-1.2.5: To the extent feasible, Walton County shall expedite the approval process for affordable housing projects by granting them priority in the review process. This may include reduced review procedures for development projects that provide only affordable housing units. Walton County shall prepare and produce a project approval process flow chart to expedite development activities and set an approximate timeframe for completion of approval process for all projects designed to provide affordable housing for extremely low, very-low, low, and moderate income persons, including workforce housing. Walton County shall also grant priority to development projects providing housing for the elderly, the mentally or physically handicapped and/or the disabled.

Policy H-1.2.6: Walton County will shall distribute publicly assisted housing equitably throughout Walton County to provide a wide variety of neighborhood settings for extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income persons, including workforce housing, and to avoid undue concentration in any neighborhood.

Policy H-1.2.7: Walton County shall encourage the development of affordable housing in proximity to supporting civic, public and private infrastructure, and services.

Policy H-1.2.8: The Future Land Use and Housing Element data and analysis, goals, objectives and policies, and future conditions maps shall be updated periodically, but no less often than every evaluation and appraisal report period. This allows Walton County to monitor the number of affordable housing units being created by the public and private sectors and ensure that progress is being made in meeting Walton County's current and projected affordable housing needs.

Policy H-1.2.9: Walton County shall support private sector efforts to provide affordable housing through coordination and technical assistance during project planning and/or funding application.

Policy H-1.2.10: Walton County shall establish and use housing density bonus systems to reward residential developers that propose projects containing affordable housing. These bonuses shall be actively encouraged in those areas that are already substantially developed and where there is excess capacity in the public infrastructure; and shall be provided in newly developing areas consistent with public infrastructure availability. No density bonus shall have the effect of increasing development within any environmentally sensitive area.

Policy H-1.2.11: Walton County shall establish a Workforce Housing Program to allow new residential developments the opportunity to provide housing units for lower income households, as a means to meet the county's affordable housing needs and to disperse that needed housing throughout the unincorporated county. This program shall be based on incentives to developers whose developments meet certain criteria. To be eligible for incentives, Workforce Housing developments must include, but are not limited to, the following criteria:

1. Affordable housing means housing types that are affordable to a person(s) or households in keeping with the State requirements identified in F.S. Chapter 420.
2. Affordable housing units that are co-located with market-priced units must be integrated within the project and meet overall compatibility standards;
3. Rental unit and resale unit affordability controls shall be guaranteed for a period of 10 years for ownership units and 20 years for rental units;
4. Affordable housing projects as defined in this section may be located in any residential Zoning District except: Residential Preservation (RP), Estate Residential (ER), Rural Residential (RR), Large Scale Agriculture (LSA), Conservation Residential (CR 2/1, 1 / 2.5, and 1/10), and General Agriculture (GA).

Developer incentives may include one or more of the following as determined by the Planning and Development Services Division:

1. An expedited permit review and/or site plan approval process including engineering, development review, and platting procedures;
2. Density bonuses of up to 100% of the permitted density may be allowed based on the project's location, and infrastructure availability. Permitted density bonuses shall be set in the land development code for each category.

Policy H-1.2.12: Walton County may apply for and use federal, state or local funding for site acquisition and improvement for extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income housing, to include workforce housing and infrastructure needed to accommodate said housing.

Objective H-1.3: Special Housing Needs: Walton County shall meet the County’s special housing needs through continued coordination of public, private and nonprofit sectors involved in housing service delivery.

Policy H-1.3.1: Walton County ~~will~~ shall support private sector efforts to secure federal and state funds to provide housing for children, elderly, disabled and/or physically or mentally handicapped residents, and homeless citizens.

Policy H-1.3.2: Walton County shall support the development of accessible and affordable senior rental housing in close proximity to supporting civic, public and private infrastructure and services to enable the elderly to remain in their own neighborhoods as their needs change by supporting co-housing, shared housing, accessory dwellings, smaller homes and other assisted residential living arrangements and by informing seniors on market-based options to remain in their homes.

Policy H-1.3.3: Walton County shall encourage design and construction standards that allow the housing stock to be adapted to enable households to remain in the same home or neighborhood throughout all their different life cycles.

Policy H-1.3.4: Walton County shall assist local entities such as homebuilders associations in maintaining special needs housing units through measures such as expedited permitting and inspections.

Policy H-1.3.5: Community residential facilities serving in excess of 14 residents must have commercial or institutional land use and be located in close proximity to supporting civic, public and private infrastructure and services.

The Land Development Code guides the location of community residential homes and foster care facilities licensed or funded by the Florida Department of Children and Family Services that foster non-discrimination. Such criteria shall allow the development of community residential alternatives to institutionalization and shall include requirements for supporting infrastructure and public facilities. Group homes shall be located consistent with the requirements of Chapter 419 F.S., as follows:

1. Group homes (community residential facilities) which house six (6) or fewer residents shall be permitted in any residential zoning district or Future Land Use Map category; and
2. Group homes (community residential facilities) housing seven (7) or more residents shall be permitted in any zoning district or Future Land Use Map category where multi-family dwellings are permitted, including the mixed use land use categories. Foster care facilities may be located in any residential zoning district or Future Land Use Map category.

Policy H-1.3.6: Walton County shall work with local institutions of higher education to encourage the development of housing accommodations for students, faculty, and employees that reflect their housing needs and preferences.

Objective H-1.4: To reduce or eliminate substandard dwelling conditions within Walton County.

Policy H-1.4.1: Walton County shall periodically review the county's housing to identify substandard units as defined within the American Housing Survey data on the physical characteristics of units within Walton County.

Policy H-1.4.2: Walton County shall continue to participate in the State Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP) Program including strategies for substantial rehabilitation, first time homebuyer assistance, and replacement housing.

Policy H-1.4.3: Walton County shall continue to enforce the Walton County Land Development Code and all other state and federal codes to ensure safe and sanitary housing conditions and to maintain aesthetics of residential areas.

Policy H-1.4.4: Walton County shall coordinate with appropriate local entities such as the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee and other building industry stake holders to maintain and improve the quality of the existing housing stock.

Policy H-1.4.5: Walton County shall apply for and utilize federal, state and/or local funds for conservation, demolition, and rehabilitation activities.

Policy H-1.4.6: Walton County shall maintain existing land use regulations that address the preservation of residential areas by providing for residential infill development and protecting residential areas from encroachment of nonresidential uses while allowing the development of appropriate neighborhood commercial uses.

Policy H-1.4.7: Walton County shall monitor those areas with sound housing conditions or only minor deficiencies and shall develop appropriate strategies working with local, regional, and state agencies.

Policy H-1.4.8: Walton County may preserve existing housing inventory through utilization of state and federal rehabilitation programs.

Policy H-1.4.9: Walton County shall coordinate code enforcement activities and support as needed with Walton County's rehabilitation and housing assistance programs.

Policy H-1.4.10: Walton County shall continue participation in the Community Development Block Grant program and other similar programs.

Policy H-1.4.11: Walton County shall evaluate alternate sites or consider requiring the redesign of federal, state, or locally funded projects in order to avoid the displacement of persons from their homes or places of business.

Policy H-1.4.12: Walton County shall support public and private actions that improve the physical and social environment of areas that have a concentration of very-low and low-income households or lack infrastructure.

GOAL H-2: SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

Objective H-2.1: Strive to fulfill Walton County's housing needs while promoting a sustainable, and interconnected compact ~~community~~ communities to promote public safety and healthy lifestyle choices.

Policy H-2.1.1: Walton County shall ensure a compatible relationship between new housing and circulation patterns and encourage pedestrian and bicycle interconnectivity and transit friendly communities in order to minimize traffic impacts and promote healthy lifestyles.

GOAL H-3: TO IDENTIFY AND IMPROVE HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES OF WALTON COUNTY.

Objective H-3.1: Protection of Historic Resources: Develop procedures through the Walton County's land development regulations for the protection of historically significant housing sites and structures, including structures that are significant examples of the architectural design of their period. Continue to update Walton County's survey of historical resources, including historically significant housing.

Policy H-3.1.1: Walton County shall identify housing that merits protection or preservation due to its unique characteristics or representative nature. Identify these structures on an historic resources map to be used as a reference in revising the Walton County's comprehensive plan and applicable ordinances.

Policy H-3.1.2: Walton County shall investigate state and federal programs for possible funding and historic structure assistance.

Policy H-3.1.3: Walton County shall coordinate historic resources with economic, educational, and tourism strategies.

Policy H-3.1.4: Walton County shall identify areas with historic district designation potential and take measures to have the district placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Policy H-3.1.5: Walton County shall seek feasible alternatives for reuse of structures that contribute to the historical character of Walton County.