

## CHAPTER 7: HOUSING ELEMENT

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### **7-01 GOALS**

**7-01-01** Encourage the development, preservation, or replacement of housing stock that is affordable to all economic segments of the community.

**7-01-02** Encourage the development of special-needs housing, especially for the senior population, commensurate with the demand for such housing.

**7-01-03** Protect existing and planned residential areas from adverse impacts associated with incompatible land uses or transportation facilities or activities.

### **7-02 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

**7-02-01** The Growth Management Act (GMA) includes the following goal regarding housing:

“Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.” [RCW 36.70A.020(4)]

**7-02-02** The Growth Management Act requires that Des Moines adopt:

“A housing element ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods that: (a) Includes an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs; (b) includes a statement of goals, policies, and objectives for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing; (c) identifies sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities; and (d) makes adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.” [RCW 36.70A.070(2)]

**7-02-03** The Washington State Housing Policy Act requires that Des Moines:

- (1) Allow accessory apartments (accessory living quarters) within single-family residential zones; and
- (2) Regulate residential structures occupied by persons with handicaps no differently than similar residential structures occupied by a family or unrelated individuals.

**7-02-04** The Countywide Planning Policies for King County (CWPP) require that Des Moines:

- (1) Provide for a variety of housing types and opportunities for all economic segments;
- (2) Estimate the number of net new housing units that will be affordable to the various income groups;
- (3) Demonstrate that local land use regulations allow for the estimated number of affordable units;
- (4) Share in the responsibility for ensuring an equitable distribution of affordable housing;
- (5) Participate in the development of countywide resources to address the large demand for affordable housing;
- (6) Apply policies or strategies to provide its share of affordable housing;
- (7) Identify existing low-cost housing that may be lost due to redevelopment and develop strategies to preserve or replace low-cost housing; and
- (8) Annually determine the number of new units constructed and affordability of those units.

**7-02-05** The Land Use Element of the City of Des Moines Comprehensive Plan provides the adopted polices regarding residential densities, unit mix, location, and future population.

**7-02-06** The Growth Management Planning Council of King County and the City of Des Moines Buildable Lands Report estimates that growth in the number of households will continue in Des Moines throughout the current planning horizon. (The current numbers of housing units are provided in Appendix A; household growth targets and the Buildable Lands Report are in Appendix B).

**7-02-07** The City of Des Moines Buildable Lands Report (Appendix B) provides an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs in the City and identifies developed and undeveloped land appropriate for housing.

**7-02-08** Much of Des Moines is impacted by aircraft noise related to Sea-Tac International Airport (STIA). Virtually all of the City of Des Moines is within the 65 Ldn noise contour, and large portions of the City are within the 70 or 75 Ldn noise contour (STIA Existing Noise Exposure Map, 1991). Existing and projected noise contours constrain the amount of land appropriate for residential use. As part of the Port of Seattle (POS) Noise Remedy Program, hundreds of dwellings in Des Moines have been purchased and relocated outside Des Moines by the POS. While land uses within the City of Des Moines will be urban in nature as directed by

GMA and the Countywide Planning Policies, residential densities will be less than would occur in the absence of STIA.

**7-02-09** Environmental noise levels generated by STIA operations necessitated that Des Moines adopt Sound Transmission Control requirements (chapter 14.08 DMMC, International Building Code). These construction standards, which require interior noise reduction levels of 30-35 dBA, contribute to housing construction costs within Des Moines. As a result, opportunities to provide housing affordable to all segments of the community may be constrained by existing noise levels.

**7-02-10** Des Moines has several assisted-living facilities that provide housing opportunities for senior citizens and others requiring special-needs housing.

**7-02-11** Mobile/manufactured home parks can provide housing opportunities for low and very low income households. Seven mobile home parks exist within the City. Properties presently occupied by mobile home parks are reasonable locations for these types of dwellings.

**7-02-12** Manufactured homes can be placed in residential zones within the City of Des Moines; however, they must meet Des Moines' Sound Transmission Control requirements and other applicable codes and manufacturer requirements.

### **7-03**        **POLICIES**

**7-03-01** Continue to assist regional, multi-jurisdictional efforts to address the region's need for low and moderate income housing, and special-needs housing. Assist the private sector, non-profit agencies, and public entities in the planning and development of affordable and special-needs housing within and near Des Moines.

**7-03-02** Encourage equitable distribution of low-income and special-needs housing throughout southwest King County and especially in nearby jurisdictions.

**7-03-03** Promote the repair and maintenance of existing housing to preserve and enhance Des Moines' housing stock and retain the availability of safe, sanitary, and affordable units.

**7-03-04** Residential areas should be protected from adverse impacts associated with incompatible land uses or nearby transportation facilities/activities.

**7-03-05** Promote compliance with the Land Use Element's residential policies regarding density, population, housing mix, locational criteria, etc.

**7-03-06** Promote compatible residential development that is affordable to all economic segments of the Des Moines community. Ensure City codes and development regulations do not create unnecessary barriers to affordable housing.

**7-03-07** In order to protect new dwellings from existing noise impacts associated with STIA, ensure that new residential construction includes Sound Transmission Control Requirements.

**7-03-08** Allow the siting of mobile/manufactured homes within mobile home parks when all applicable regulations can be satisfied.

**7-03-09** Accessory living quarters can provide low-cost housing opportunities when potential adverse impacts can be mitigated satisfactorily.

**7-03-10** Continue to require on-site recreation areas within new single family subdivisions and multifamily developments.

**7-03-11** Continue to allow home occupations as specified by the DMMC.

## **7-04** **STRATEGIES**

**7-04-01** Work cooperatively with other King County cities/agencies to address regional housing issues.

**7-04-02** Evaluate the formation of a South County organization such as ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing) to address housing and other social service issues related to housing.

**7-04-03** Assist social service organizations that provide housing for low income and special needs populations, operate emergency shelters, or provide other housing-related services available to Des Moines residents.

**7-04-04** Review the appropriateness of techniques for providing housing affordable to all income groups, such as regional, state and federal housing programs, housing trust fund, inclusionary zoning, development incentives, fee waivers, fast-track processing or assistance to housing agencies.

**7-04-05** Continue to implement the residential policies of the Land Use Element regarding dispersion of housing types, unit mix, future population, etc.

**7-04-06** Protect existing and planned residential areas from unmitigated adverse impacts that may be generated by nearby incompatible land uses or transportation facilities or activities.

**7-04-07** Coordinate with neighborhood-based groups and other organizations to promote preservation and rehabilitation of existing residential areas.

**7-04-08** Ensure that the Port of Seattle (POS) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) mitigate the impacts of environmental noise upon Des Moines' residential areas.

**7-04-09** Use local Capital Improvement Program funds, grants, and other funding sources to provide needed capital improvements, such as sidewalks, street lighting, and neighborhood parks in existing residential neighborhoods.

**7-04-10** Continue code enforcement programs.

**7-04-11** Publicize King County’s housing rehabilitation program available to low and moderate income residents of Des Moines.

**7-04-12** As required by state law, eliminate/prohibit regulatory barriers to the siting of group homes, foster care facilities, and facilities for other special populations. Ensure that residential structures occupied by persons with disabilities are not regulated differently than structures for persons without disabilities. Strive for equitable distribution of special-needs housing among neighboring jurisdictions, and among Des Moines’ neighborhoods.

**7-04-13** Continue to allow dwelling units as permitted by the Zoning Code. Review and revise accessory dwelling unit regulations for limitations that are unnecessary. Amend the Zoning Code to allow for kitchen facilities in accessory dwelling units when these and other criteria are met.

- a) Minimum lot size
- b) Parking
- c) Owner-occupied units
- d) Size of unit
- e) Density
- f) Height

**7-04-14** Consider revising the Zoning Code to allow cottage housing in single family and multifamily zones when this and other appropriate criteria can be met

- a) Minimum lot area
- b) Unit size
- c) Parking
- d) Homeownership required
- e) Separation between cottage housing developments
- f) Density
- g) Height

**7-04-15** Allow mobile/manufactured and modular homes within Des Moines when such structures satisfy all applicable health and safety codes.

**7-04-16** Continue to allow planned unit developments as provided by the DMMC. Consider textual code amendments that would allow administrative approval of final development plans, and reduce or eliminate minimum site area requirements.

**7-04-17** Continue to allow townhome developments. Consider textual code amendments that would allow the design review process of townhome developments to occur during the final plat process, rather than during preliminary review. Continue to require a conceptual site plan at time of preliminary review.

**7-04-18** Encourage site and building designs that promote the safety and security of residents and visitors.

**7-04-19** Encourage the establishment of Block Watch programs in all residential areas.