

# Chapter 10

## Housing

The Housing Element provides an indication of the need for housing in the community, particularly the availability, affordability, and adequacy of housing. This Housing Element serves as a strategy to address housing needs across the economic and social spectrum of the City of West Hollywood.

### STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The West Hollywood Housing Element as a mandated chapter of the General Plan has been designed to satisfy the requirements of State law. Section 65583 of the California Government Code establishes the required components for a Housing Element. The Housing Element consists of the following four sections: (1) Statutory Requirements; (2) Context and Strategies; (3) Goals and Policies; and (4) Housing Programs. The Technical Background Report (bound separately) provides a detailed assessment of the City's existing and projected housing needs, constraints and opportunities for addressing those needs, and an evaluation of the City's achievements under the prior 2000-2005 Housing Element (extended by legislation to cover through June 30, 2008).

This Housing Element covers the planning period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2014. The Housing Element is designed to achieve the following objectives set forth in State law:

1. Identify adequate sites for a range of housing opportunities;
2. Assist in the development of adequate and affordable housing;
3. Address constraints to meeting the City's housing needs;
4. Conserve and improve the condition of housing; and
5. Promote housing opportunities for all persons

The "Context and Strategies" summarizes the City's housing needs based on the detailed review of population and housing stock characteristics contained in the Technical Background Report. The Technical Background Report contains specific information on the community's housing needs, constraints to housing development, and resources available for the delivery of housing services and affordable housing. A key component of the detailed analysis contained in the Technical Background Report is the City's ability to provide adequate sites to meet its share of the regional housing needs assigned to the City by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

Having documented the extent of housing needs related to population growth and changes, as well as market conditions in the Technical Background Report, the Housing Implementation

Plan sets forth goals and policies to address the identified housing needs and remove/mitigate constraints to the preservation and development of affordable housing. Specific housing programs designed to implement the City's goals and policies are identified in the section entitled "Housing Programs."

### **Relationship to Other General Plan Elements**

According to State planning law, the Housing Element must be consistent with other General Plan elements. While each of the elements is independent, the elements are also interrelated to a degree. Certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of issues throughout the General Plan creates a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Housing Element is most closely tied to the Land Use Element as residential development capacities established in the Land Use Element are incorporated into the Housing Element.

This Housing Element builds upon other General Plan elements and is entirely consistent with the policies and goals set forth by the General Plan. When an element in the General Plan is amended, the Housing Element will be reviewed and modified if necessary to ensure continued consistency among the various elements.

Pursuant to new State law requiring the inclusion of flood issues in the General Plan upon the next Housing Element update, the General Plan includes a Public Health and Safety Element to address flood hazards and flood management policies.

## **CONTEXT AND STRATEGIES**

The City of West Hollywood is well recognized as one of the most progressive and inclusive communities in the region. As a leader in many aspects relating to the provision of housing, the City takes pride in its proactive efforts in addressing the needs of all socioeconomic segments of the community.

### **Changing Housing Needs**

West Hollywood is a dynamic community with extensive and changing housing needs. The elderly, persons with disabilities, and persons living with HIV/AIDS and other medical conditions continue to represent significant components of the population. However, these residents often have limited incomes and are therefore less equipped to compete in the market for decent housing. Providing affordable housing and alternative housing arrangements (e.g., assisted living, residential care) for the seniors to age in place and for other persons with special needs to remain in the community is an important goal of the City.

In recent years, the City has also seen a relatively steady number of families in the community. Providing suitable housing for families requires a diversification of the City's housing stock. Through new construction, the City will facilitate a range of housing options to meet the varied needs of all residents.

### **Aging Housing Stock**

Almost 90 percent of the City's housing stock is at least 30 years of age, a threshold when housing generally shows signs of aging, requiring major upgrades to the physical structures and systems (such as electrical and plumbing). Specifically, close to half (48 percent) of the housing stock is at least 50 years old. In a tight housing market where the demand for housing is high, there is little incentive to make improvements to the properties. Many of the City's rental housing developments have not gone through any major upgrades.

In addition to maintenance and upkeep issues, the age of the housing stock also means that the City has a large number of soft-story structures that would present safety concerns in the event of an earthquake.<sup>1</sup> A typical soft-story building in West Hollywood is an apartment building with "tuck-under" parking. Seismic improvements to upgrade these structures can be costly.

The City should also consider a comprehensive strategy to address the aging of the housing stock. The strategy would explore incentives, financial and technical assistance, and monitoring efforts to facilitate rehabilitation of the City's aging housing stock. In addition, acquisition/rehabilitation of deteriorating housing and housing at risk of opting out of the rental market (being Ellised) represents a key strategy that works to improving the quality of the housing stock while providing long-term or permanently affordable housing.

### **Loss of Affordable Housing**

West Hollywood has extensive needs for affordable housing. Appropriately 60 percent of the City's households earn low and moderate incomes. As of 2010, West Hollywood has approximately 16,550 rent stabilized units and 1,000 publically assisted rental housing units. In addition, close to 1,000 households in the City are recipients of Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers. With rising housing costs in the region, the City must make all feasible efforts to protect its affordable housing stock. Upward market pressures (until recently) and creative mortgage financing schemes have resulted in the removal of rent-stabilized units from the rental housing market through the Ellis process. In replacement are typically large, luxury condominium units. While this development trend has expanded housing options for upper income households in the community, housing options available to the City's workforce, elderly, persons with disabilities, lower income families, and other persons with special needs have remained limited. Ownership housing is beyond the reach of most lower and moderate income households in the community.

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<sup>1</sup> A soft-story building is a multi-story building with openings in places where a shear wall would currently be required for stability as a matter of earthquake engineering design.

To provide permanent affordable housing in face of diminishing housing funds from the federal and state levels, the City relies heavily on its locally generated funds. The City's Inclusionary Housing program plays a key role in creating permanent affordable housing that meets the needs of the community. However, as one of the most densely developed communities in the southland, the City must balance the need for new housing with the need to protect the quality and integrity of existing neighborhoods.

### **Neighborhood Integrity**

Many neighborhoods in the City are developed with a mix of uses and underdeveloped properties face development pressure to be redeveloped into higher intensity uses. In recent years, the high sale prices of newly developed housing have made it feasible for developers to purchase and demolish single-family homes and other underdeveloped properties to make room for condominium developments that do not necessarily address the demographics of the community.

The City values its residential neighborhoods. As a strategy to facilitate new construction, the City will direct future housing development away from the residential neighborhoods. Mixed-use and transit-oriented developments in commercial areas along transportation corridors will be encouraged through land use planning and incentives.

## **GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Goal H-1: Provide affordable rental housing.**

*Intent: To protect the existing supply of affordable rental housing.*

1. Address the effects of the vacancy de-control regulation (aka Costa-Hawkins) on the rent stabilized housing stock through local measures and legislative efforts.
2. Retain and maintain existing affordable rental housing.
3. Work to prevent or minimize displacement of existing residents.
4. Encourage the replacement of multi-family housing that is demolished with housing that is affordable to a wide spectrum of households.
5. Maintain a condominium conversion ordinance aimed at preserving the City's rental housing stock, and providing tenant protections for units approved for conversion.

**Goal H-2: Maintain and enhance the quality of the housing stock and residential neighborhoods.**

*Intent: To maintain and enhance the quality and integrity of existing residential neighborhoods through programs and incentives to assist in rehabilitation efforts.*

1. Assist landlords and other property owners in maintaining and improving their properties through the City's residential rehabilitation assistance programs and State programs (such as the Mills Act).
2. Update the amnesty program for existing housing units constructed without building permits in the City provided that the unit meets health and safety requirements.
3. Promote strong, on-site management of apartment complexes to ensure the maintenance of housing and neighborhood quality.
4. Require construction to maintain compatibility with existing buildings.
5. Establish and maintain development standards that support housing and mixed-use developments while protecting and enhancing the quality of life goals.
6. Continue to support healthy neighborhoods by addressing public health and safety issues in cooperation with other public agencies and performing ongoing property inspections.

**Goal H-3: Encourage a diverse housing stock to address the needs of all socioeconomic segments of the community.**

*Intent: To provide adequate housing to meet the diverse needs of the community, with due consideration for households with special needs.*

1. Facilitate the development of a diverse range of housing options including, but not limited to, single-family homes, second/accessory units, multi-family rental housing, condominiums and townhomes, live/work units, and housing in mixed use developments.
2. Support the development of affordable housing by non-profit organizations through financial assistance and/or regulatory incentives.
3. Continue to implement the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance to ensure that new housing developments expand affordable housing opportunities for lower and moderate income households.
4. Promote universal design and green building features in the construction of new housing and rehabilitation.

5. Facilitate the development of housing with on-site supportive services for seniors, persons with disabilities and other medical conditions, and other persons with special needs.

**Goal H-4: Provide for adequate opportunities for new construction of housing.**

*Intent: To provide adequate housing sites through appropriate land use and zoning designations to accommodate the City's share of regional housing needs.*

1. Encourage and provide incentives for the development of housing in mixed use and transit-oriented developments.
2. Provide adequate sites to meet the City's share of regional housing needs and the housing needs of special groups, including seniors, persons with disabilities or other medical conditions, the homeless, single parents, and large households.
3. Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing structures for residential purposes.

**Goal H-5: Provide for a government environment that facilitates housing development and preservation.**

*Intent: To mitigate potential governmental constraints to housing development, preservation, and affordability.*

1. Provide incentives where feasible to offset or reduce the costs of affordable housing development, including density bonuses and flexibility in site development standards.
2. Periodically review City fees and regulations to ensure that they do not unduly constrain housing development.
3. Consider planning and development fee reductions for developments that meet the affordable and special housing needs of the community.
4. Continue to provide for timely and coordinated processing of residential and mixed use development projects in order to minimize project holding costs.

**Goal H-6: Promote equal access to housing for all.**

*Intent: To promote equal opportunity for all residents to reside in the housing of their choice.*

1. Prohibit discrimination in the sale or rental of housing to anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, age, family status, marital status, parenthood, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, occupancy by a minor child, ancestry, ethnic origin, national origin, citizenship, religion, source of income, status as a student, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability,

political affiliation or opinion, medical conditions including, but not limited to AIDS or AIDS-related conditions.

2. Continue to provide housing for people with disabilities, including AIDS/HIV and the frail elderly.
3. Support non-profit service providers that help meet the diverse housing and supportive service needs of the community.
4. Assist in settling disputes between tenants and landlords.

## HOUSING PROGRAMS

The goals and policies presented earlier are implemented through a series of housing programs offered primarily through the City's Rent Stabilization and Housing Department, Community Development Department and Redevelopment Agency. Housing programs define the specific actions the City will undertake to achieve the stated goals and policies.

### Preservation of Existing Housing

#### 1. Code Compliance

Code compliance is a means to ensure the character and quality of neighborhoods and housing is maintained. The City implements an active code compliance program to identify properties in violation of the City's Property Maintenance Code to work with property owners to rectify substandard conditions. However, many multi-family rental housing properties in the City have not undergone any major systems upgrade, and many substandard conditions, such as aging electrical and plumbing systems, are not visible without in-depth inspections. Moreover, in most cases (smoke detectors being a notable exception), the City cannot mandate that property owners upgrade building systems to current standards.

#### *Timeframe and Objectives:*

- Continue to implement the Code Compliance program to ensure routine property maintenance and eliminate substandard building conditions.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a Rental Housing Inspection program that focuses on physical/structural conditions. (This program will work hand-in-hand with the City's efforts to facilitate multi-family rehabilitation described later.)

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

## 2. Housing Conditions Survey/Multi-Family Rehabilitation Study

Aging housing stock is a major housing concern in the City. Preserving the City's existing housing requires an understanding of the extent of the issues and the feasibility and costs of preservation, and then devising an appropriate strategy to address the issues.

### ***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Conduct a citywide multi-family housing conditions survey to identify the number of soft-story structures and properties with rehabilitation needs, including electrical and mechanical systems.
- Conduct a study to determine the feasibility of providing seismic upgrades to soft-story structures and making electrical and mechanical system improvements to deteriorating multi-family structures. The study will evaluate the cost-effectiveness of various prototypical ways to perform upgrades and identify potential funding sources, including 80 percent tax increment funds.
- Establish a multi-family housing rehabilitation program that incorporates green building standards and offers incentives and financial/technical assistance to encourage participation.
- Provide financial assistance to nonprofit housing providers to upgrade the City's affordable housing stock with green building improvements. (The City recently provided \$500,000 to the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation (WHCHC) to make improvements to several WHCHC buildings.)

***Funding Sources:*** Affordable Housing Trust Fund; Redevelopment Housing Set-Aside; other State and federal funds

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

## 3. Multi-Family Rehabilitation and Acquisition/Rehabilitation

The acquisition and rehabilitation of deteriorated residential properties or properties at risk of being Ellised is a key program in West Hollywood's overall strategy to provide long-term affordable housing for lower income families and/or special needs households, including seniors, disabled persons, persons with HIV/AIDS, single parents and large families.

Under this program, the City provides funds and/or regulatory incentives to non-profit housing providers to purchase deteriorated properties or properties at risk of being demolished or otherwise removed from the rental housing market, for example, through the Ellis process. The non-profits in turn coordinate the rehabilitation, maintenance, and management of the projects as long-term affordable housing for special needs and/or lower income households. As an example, the City is currently facilitating the acquisition/rehabilitation of 1234 Hayworth Avenue by WHCHC. This property was Ellised, with tenants being thrown out, and the property was left abandoned for five years. The City has committed Housing Trust Fund and HOME funds to assist in the acquisition/rehabilitation.



**Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Through the Code Compliance program and Housing Conditions Survey/Multi-Family Rehabilitation Study program, identify apartment complexes in need of rehabilitation and support non-profits in acquisition and rehabilitation.
- Acquire approximately 50 units for rehabilitation, with a portion of the units targeted for extremely low income households and persons with special needs.
- Annually explore funding availability from State and federal sources for acquisition/rehabilitation activities.

**Funding Sources:** Affordable Housing Trust Fund; Redevelopment Housing Set-Aside

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

**4. Homes and Gardens Program**

The City's residential façade rehabilitation program, known as Homes and Gardens, provides owners of single- and multi-family dwellings with financial and technical assistance to address code violations and make façade and landscaping improvements. The goals of the program are: (1) to preserve and upgrade the City's housing stock; and (2) to revitalize, stabilize and improve the appearance of the City's residential neighborhoods. Only residential properties located in the City's East Side Redevelopment Project Area. The property owner must enter into an agreement with the City to conform to the City's Property Maintenance Standards.

The Homes and Garden Program is divided into two components:

- **Façade Rehabilitation Grant:** This component of the program provides up to \$20,000 per residential property in financial assistance through a five-year vanishing loan and technical assistance from architects and city staff. For each year that the property owner is in compliance with the City's maintenance standards, one fifth of the loan is forgiven. Types of work that might be funded are painting, stucco work, replacement of windows, fencing and landscaping improvements.
- **Residential Rehabilitation Loans:** This component of the program provides loans of up to \$20,000 per residential property to address health and safety issues. The loans bear zero percent interest and payments are deferred until the end of the 20-year term, or at sale, transfer or refinance of the property. The loan will also become due if the property owner does not comply with the City's maintenance standards or program guidelines are violated. Eligible types of work include seismic bolting, roof repair, plumbing and electrical system upgrades and bathroom and kitchen upgrades.

**Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Provide rehabilitation assistance to improve 20 homes over the planning period.

- Continue to market the program online and at public counters, and coordinate with code enforcement staff to provide assistance to eligible property owners.

**Funding Sources:** Redevelopment Housing Set-Aside; Affordable Housing Trust Fund

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

## 5. Home Secure Program

Offered as a component of the case management services through the Jewish Family Services at the Senior Center, the Home Secure Program offers free security devices and home protection measures, including door locks, grab bars, peep holes, and smoke detectors, to lower income residents, especially seniors and persons with disabilities.

### **Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Assist 50 households annually.
- Continue to advertise the availability of this program on the City's website and provide brochures at public counters.
- Continue to conduct community outreach and make referrals to promote use of the program.

**Funding Sources:** CDBG

**Responsible Agencies:** Jewish Family Services

## 6. Mills Act Contracts

Mills Act contracts are offered to owners of properties, which are designated as Cultural Resources within the City. Under these contracts, the basis for property tax assessments is changed from last sale price to an analysis of the income stream of the property for rental units (or a presumed income stream for owner-occupied units), in recognition of the higher maintenance costs for historic properties. In exchange for lowered property taxes, the property owner agrees to a ten-year maintenance plan for the building.

### **Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Conduct outreach efforts to owners of historic properties annually.
- Continue to advertise the availability of this program through brochures at public counters.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division

## Preservation of Affordability

### 7. Rent Stabilization Ordinance

The City enacted the Rent Stabilization Ordinance in June 1985 to maintain the affordability of rental housing in West Hollywood. The Ordinance regulates residential rent levels, requires that rental units meet specific maintenance standards, and protects tenants from certain types of eviction. Under the Ordinance, the Maximum Allowable Rent (MAR), the most a landlord could charge, is the initial rent charged for the tenancy plus any intervening general adjustments allowed by the City that the landlord charged to the tenant.

In 1995 the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act was passed to enforce gradual Statewide decontrol of rent-controlled housing as vacancy occurs. Full implementation of Costa-Hawkins began in 1999. Between 1999 and 2008, the average rent of the stabilized units increased 35 percent.

#### ***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to maintain a Rent Stabilization program, and work towards alleviating the effects of State mandated vacancy decontrol through legislative action and local incentives to maintain affordable rents.

***Funding Sources:*** Departmental budget

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

### 8. Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)

The Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly known as Section 8 Certificates) is designed to assist extremely low and very low income households in making their monthly rental payments by providing a rent subsidy directly to the participating property owner in the private sector. The objective of the program is to provide the means for decent, safe, sanitary rental housing for families who might not otherwise be able to afford this type of housing. The Los Angeles County Housing Authority administers the Section 8 program for the City of West Hollywood. As of January 2010, approximately 1,000 households in West Hollywood were receiving Housing Choice Vouchers. The vast majority of these recipients were seniors and/or persons with disability. Based on HUD regulations, 70 percent of the new voucher recipients must be extremely low income households.

#### ***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to participate in the Housing Choice Vouchers Program and encourage local landlords to accept rental vouchers.
- Undertake proactive measures to ensure the continued availability and usefulness of Housing Choice Vouchers for West Hollywood residents. Specifically, work with the Los

Angeles County Housing Authority to maintain and increase the payment standards for vouchers to reflect the actual cost of renting in West Hollywood.

**Funding Sources:** HUD funds

**Responsible Agencies:** Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles

## 9. Preservation of At-Risk Assisted Housing

There are 959 publicly assisted units in multi-family developments in West Hollywood, consisting of 266 WHCHC units, 365 County-managed housing units, and 328 units owned by other housing providers. Of these units, three project totaling 295 senior units have Section 8 contracts that are expiring. However, two of the projects (800 Kings Road and Fairfax Tower) have already applied for renewal of the Section 8 contracts and the third project (1123 Fuller) has also affirmed its intention to renew the contract. Furthermore, HUD has assigned priority for funding to renew Section 8 contracts for senior housing. Therefore, the conversion of these projects to market-rate housing is highly unlikely. However, for purposes of the Housing Element law, these projects are defined as at risk due to the expiring Section 8 contracts.

### **Timeframe and Objectives:**

- *Monitor At-Risk Units:* Semi-annually monitor the at-risk projects by continuing to maintain close contact with the property owners regarding their long-term plan for the projects.
- *Conduct Tenant Education:* Educate the public regarding “at-risk” housing. It has been a long-established City strategy to create permanent affordable housing in the City. Virtually all affordable housing units in the City are available either in perpetuity or for a very long term. For the three projects that require short-term renewal of subsidy contracts, communicate to the public regarding the limited potential for and required process of conversion and available tenant protection and assistance. In the unlikely event that the owners decide not to renew the Section 8 contracts, work with tenants of at-risk units and provide them with education regarding tenant rights and conversion procedures.
- *Work with Potential Purchasers:* Should the property owners be interested in selling the properties, provide financial and technical assistance to the WHCHC or other non-profit organizations interested in purchasing and/or managing the units at risk.
- *Pursue State and Federal Funding:* Assist non-profit organizations in pursuing State and federal funds for the preservation of at-risk units.

**Funding Sources:** Affordable Housing Trust Fund; Redevelopment Housing Set-Aside; State and federal funds

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

## 10. Condominium Conversion Ordinance

Apartment projects proposed for conversion to common interest developments are subject to the City's condominium conversion regulations. These regulations require a permit for conversion, and compliance with current zoning requirements for newly developed condominiums, including parking requirements. The Ordinance further makes provisions for protecting the rights of tenants currently residing in the units that are approved for conversion. These provisions comprise specific purchasing rights for the tenants as well eviction clauses to which they must adhere.

### ***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to enforce the Condominium Conversion Ordinance.
- Monitor conversion activities to ensure the ordinance continues to work effectively in the protection of the City's rental housing stock and tenant rights.

***Funding Sources:*** Departmental budget

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division

## 11. Residential Referral List

As an attractive, diverse urban community, West Hollywood has a tight rental market, with very low vacancies and high rent levels. To assist those seeking rental units in West Hollywood, the City publishes and updates weekly a list of residential units available for rent. The list is compiled based on information provided by local landlords and apartment management companies. The list is available online and emailed to persons registered to receive the updates.

### ***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to make available and update weekly the residential referral list of rental units.
- Continue to encourage landlords to participate in this program to expand access to information by prospective tenants.

***Funding Sources:*** Departmental budget

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

## Production of Housing

### 12. Mixed Use and Transit-Oriented Development

A key policy direction of the City's new General Plan is to ease the development pressures from single-family neighborhoods, while providing opportunities for new housing construction by encouraging mixed use and transit-oriented along commercial corridors. Mixed use development standards in the commercial areas are flexible, with the intention of accommodating a range of unit types and sizes.

As part of this General Plan update, the City proposed rezoning and upzoning portions of La Brea Avenue, Santa Monica Boulevard, Fairfax Avenue, Robertson Boulevard, Beverly Boulevard to encourage commercial, mixed use, and transit-oriented developments (where existing high levels of transit services are provided, and where future subway stations are anticipated). Most of these areas have been proposed to receive a 10-foot, one story height increase. Select parcels on La Brea Avenue, next to the potential subway station, will receive a 30-foot height increase. To incentivize mixed use developments in commercial areas, the City proposes to continue an existing mixed-use development bonus FAR of 0.5, except in the CN2 zone where an additional 0.5 FAR is provided to incentivize creative office uses.

#### ***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Encourage mixed use development using a bonus FAR and flexible development standards.
- Assist interested developers in site identification and as appropriate, support developers in funding applications such as the Infill Housing Grants from the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

***Funding Sources:*** Departmental budget

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division;  
Rent Stabilization and Housing

### 13. Inclusionary Housing Ordinance

The Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requires residential developers to set aside a portion of units in each new housing development for lower and moderate income households. This set-aside is 20 percent for projects with over ten units and one unit for projects with ten or fewer units. For projects with ten or fewer units, however, the City allows the option of paying an in-lieu fee that is deposited into the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. In addition, under certain circumstances, projects of any size can apply to provide inclusionary units off site.

To encourage the construction of affordable housing, the City provides developers who include inclusionary units in their projects with density bonuses. In addition to the standard bonus (per State density bonus law), bonuses can allow density increases up to 100 percent above the

maximum density permitted by the underlying zone, if certain provisions are met. The Inclusionary Housing Ordinance also provides the following regulatory incentives: reduced requirements in the form of “concessions” or modifications to development standards (height, setbacks, open space), and permit lower minimum parking requirements. The Inclusionary Housing Ordinance should be periodically monitored for full conformance with the State density bonus requirements.

***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to implement the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.
- Review the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance within one year of Housing Element adoption to confirm that it fully addresses the requirements of the State density bonus law.
- Monitor market conditions and development trends periodically to ensure that the Ordinance works effectively to provide affordable housing in the community but does not unduly constrain housing development in general.
- Continue to prioritize inclusionary housing units for tenants displaced due to Ellis.

***Funding Sources:*** Departmental budget

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division;  
Rent Stabilization and Housing

#### **14. Affordable Housing Development through Partnerships with Non-Profits**

WHCHC plays a major role in providing affordable housing in West Hollywood. Established in 1986, the WHCHC was formed to build, rehabilitate, and manage affordable housing developments for lower income and special needs households in the City. WHCHC has been recognized for its attractive developments and high standard of property management. WHCHC leverages local funds provided through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and redevelopment set-aside with other outside funding, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). In addition to financial assistance, WHCHC receives regulatory incentives from the City, including reduced parking requirements and waiver of development fees for affordable projects.

In addition to WHCHC, the City has worked with other non-profits including Menorah Housing, Los Angeles Housing Partnership, and Alternative Living for the Aging, and is interested in continuing to support non-profits in the provision of affordable housing.

***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to support WHCHC and other non-profit organizations in the development of affordable and special needs housing through the provision of financial and regulatory incentives.

- Facilitate the development of 100 affordable units over the planning period, with a portion of the units targeted for extremely low income households and persons with special needs.

**Funding Sources:** Affordable Housing Trust Fund; Redevelopment Housing Set-Aside; LIHTC

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing; West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation

### 15. Workforce Housing and Ownership Housing Opportunities

The City provides affordable rental housing for lower income households through its Rent Stabilization Ordinance; Inclusionary Housing Ordinance; partnership with nonprofits to develop, acquire, and rehabilitate affordable housing; and housing choice vouchers. Homeownership remains out of reach for most of the City's lower and moderate income households. Housing options for young families and the City's workforce are limited in the community.

In the past, the market conditions had made it financially infeasible to provide affordable ownership opportunities. With the current market situation, the City is providing eight affordable ownership units at the pending Ramona project and will continue to pursue additional opportunities through the City's Inclusionary Housing program.

**Timeframe and Objectives:**

- As appropriate and feasible, pursue a portion of the inclusionary housing units as affordable ownership units.
- Encourage the use of Mortgage Credit Certificates (MCC). This program is administered by the County Community Development Commission. The qualified homebuyer who is awarded an MCC may take an annual credit against their federal income taxes paid on the homebuyer's mortgage. The credit is subtracted dollar-for-dollar from his or her federal income taxes. The qualified buyer is awarded a tax credit of up to 15 percent with the remaining 85 percent taken as a deduction from the income in the usual manner.
- Explore funding potential for homebuyer assistance from other State programs that can complement the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

**Funding Sources:** Affordable Housing Trust Fund; Redevelopment Housing Set-Aside; State and federal funds

**Responsible Agencies:** Los Angeles County Community Development Commission; Rent Stabilization and Housing



## 16. Commercial Development Impact Fee

In conjunction with the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, the City has established a Commercial Development Impact Fee to mitigate the impact of new commercial development on the need for affordable housing and generate additional revenues for affordable housing activities. Under this program, new commercial developments in West Hollywood are required to provide housing affordable to employees or pay an in-lieu impact fee, which is placed in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to be used for a variety of housing activities, including rehabilitation and new construction.

### ***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to implement the Commercial Impact Fee program.
- Monitor market conditions and development trends periodically to ensure that the Commercial Impact Fee works effectively to provide affordable housing in the community but does not unduly constrain development in general.

***Funding Sources:*** Departmental budget

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division

## 17. Green Building

West Hollywood adopted one of the nation's first mandatory Green Building Ordinance and it became effective on October 1, 2007. The ordinance ensures that new buildings will be healthier for residents, and use energy and resources more efficiently. Flexibility, responsiveness to local conditions, and cost-effectiveness are key features of the ordinance. The City has created a Green Building Manual to help guide developers through the process.

The Green Building Requirements and Incentives for Private Development Ordinance focus on the following:

- Establishes new development standards that apply to all development, including all new residential and commercial projects, as well as remodels and tenant improvements;
- Develops a point system for new construction with incentives for projects that achieve "exemplary" status; and
- Implements "green building" education and outreach program.

The "green" development standards are green building requirements for remodels, tenant improvements, additions and new construction. These standards were incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance so that all projects incorporate elements such as drought-tolerant landscaping, low-flow plumbing fixtures, and energy efficient appliances.

The green building point system is applied to all new structures, with incentives for projects that go above and beyond minimum requirements. The requirements are structured as a point system to allow for maximum flexibility and the points allowed reflect West Hollywood's unique opportunities and constraints. Specifically, the point system was designed to emphasize locally-available materials, encourage green elements to be incorporated early into project design and provide flexibility to alter green elements as the project evolves.

***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Continue to implement the Green Building program that offers incentives and flexibility for compliance.
- Promote green building standards in the City's affordable housing stock by providing financial assistance for improvements.

***Funding Sources:*** Departmental budget

***Responsible Agencies:*** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division and Building and Safety Division

## **18. Potential Sites for RHNA**

The City will continue to use specific plans and zoning to ensure that adequate sites are available (as defined by state housing element law, Government Code section 65583) to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for all income groups. Each year, as part of the City's annual evaluation of its implementation of the General Plan, the City will monitor the City's progress in meeting the RHNA with production and remaining capacity in development potential in relation to the City's remaining RHNA. As of January 2010, the City has already met the majority of its RHNA, a remaining need of only 14 very low income units. Specifically, the City met a portion of its RHNA through the acquisition/rehabilitation of the 48-unit project at 1234 Hayworth Avenue. This project has been Ellised and the tenants were evicted; the project has been abandoned for five years.

***Timeframe and Objectives:***

- Ensure that adequate capacity exists to accommodate the remaining RHNA of 14 very low income units. As part of this Housing Element update, the City identified an inventory of potential sites where higher density residential and mixed use developments are appropriate to further the City's housing goals. The City will maintain this inventory and provide information to interested developers.
- Annually evaluate the land availability to meet the remaining RHNA.
- Encourage mixed-use in the Commercial Neighborhood and Commercial Community zones, and within the Transit Overlay.
- To receive credits against the RHNA, the 1234 Hayworth Avenue project must meet the following timeline and requirements:

- Conduct a public hearing and commit financial assistance (\$10.3 million in Affordable Housing Trust Funds and \$1.5 million in HOME funds) for the acquisition/rehabilitation of 1234 Hayworth Avenue by June 30, 2010.
- Review status of the project by June 30, 2011. If project is not implemented by June 30, 2011, the City will ensure adequate sites are available by June 30, 2012 to make up the 48-unit capacity required for the RHNA.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing; Community Development/Planning Division

### 19. Second Dwelling Unit

Second dwelling units can be an important source of affordable housing for the elderly, persons with disabilities, single individuals, or single-parents. In the City of West Hollywood, a second permanent dwelling unit is defined as a unit accessory to a primary dwelling on the same site. A secondary residential unit must include complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, sanitation, and parking. A second unit cannot exceed 750 square feet and may be rented.

**Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Provide technical assistance to homeowners by developing prototypical site designs that can be used on typical R1A properties.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division

## Removal of Governmental Constraints

### 20. Zoning Ordinance Update

Extremely low income households and households with special needs have limited housing options. Housing types appropriate for these groups include: emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing, and single-room occupancy (SRO) units. Pursuant to State law, the City will amend its Zoning Ordinance to make provisions for such housing.

**Timeframe and Objectives:**

Pursuant to State Law, the Zoning Ordinance will be amended, within one year of the adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element, to address the following:

- *Emergency Shelters:* Pursuant to State Law, amend the Zoning Ordinance to permit homeless shelters with a ministerial permit within an overlay zone to be created over

the City's Community Commercial district along Santa Monica Boulevard. Pursuant to State law, the City may establish standards such as:

- The maximum number of beds/persons permitted to be served nightly;
- Off-street parking based on demonstrated need, but not to exceed parking requirements for other residential or commercial uses in the same zone;
- The size/location of exterior and interior onsite waiting and client intake areas;
- The provision of onsite management;
- The proximity of other emergency shelters, provided that emergency shelters are not required to be more than 300 feet apart;
- The length of stay;
- Lighting; and
- Security during hours that the emergency shelter is in operation.

The overlay zone will encompass at least 100 properties to include areas with older structures that can be renovated to accommodate an emergency shelter. The City will ensure that standards established will be the same as for similar uses in the same zone.

- *Transitional Housing:* Pursuant to State law, amend the Zoning Ordinance to address transitional housing and differentiate the different forms transitional housing can take (group quarters versus regular housing developments). For transitional housing facilities that operate as regular housing developments, meeting the Health and Safety Code definition, such uses will be permitted by right where housing is permitted.

For transitional housing facilities that operate as group quarters, such facilities will be permitted as large residential care facilities. Potential conditions for approval of transitional housing for more than six persons in a group quarters setting may include hours of operation, security, loading requirements, noise regulations, and restrictions on loitering. Conditions would be similar to those for other similar uses and would not serve to constrain the development of such facilities.

- *Supportive Housing:* Pursuant to State Law, amend the Zoning Ordinance to address supportive housing and differentiate the different forms supportive housing can take (group quarters versus regular housing developments). For supportive housing facilities that operate as regular housing developments, meeting the Health and Safety Code definition, such uses will be permitted by right where housing is permitted.

For supportive housing facilities that operate as group quarters, such facilities will be permitted as residential care facilities. Potential conditions for approval of transitional housing for more than six persons in a group quarters setting may include hours of operation, security, loading requirements, noise regulations, and restrictions on loitering. Conditions would be similar to those for other similar uses and would not serve to constrain the development of such facilities.

- *Single Room Occupancy (SRO)*: Pursuant to State Law, amend the Zoning Ordinance to conditionally permit SROs in the R3 and R4 zones. Criteria that would be used to review CUP applications for SROs pertain to performance standards and will be specific to the proposed use. Potential conditions for approval of these facilities may include hours of operation, security, loading requirements and management. Conditions would be similar to those for other similar uses in the same zones and would not serve to constrain the development of such facilities.
- *Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance*: The City of West Hollywood does not have a formal procedure for a reasonable accommodation request. A formal procedure would include a specified process that would be determined based on the following factors:
  - Special need created by the disability;
  - Potential benefit received by the modification;
  - Potential impact on surrounding uses;
  - Physical attributes of the property and structures;
  - Alternative accommodations that may provide equivalent benefits;
  - Whether the targeted accommodation would place an undue financial or administrative burden on the City; and
  - Whether the requested accommodation would require a fundamental alteration in law, policy or procedure of the City.

The City will amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a formal procedure that utilizes administrative procedures to provide for reasonable accommodation requests.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division

## 21. Streamlined Processing

Residential development in West Hollywood requires permits and/or approvals from various City departments, such as a permit to remove rental units from the Rent Stabilization and Housing Department, and Planning Commission approval of a subdivision map and site plan. In order to streamline project processing, the City requires Planning Commission review of apartments and projects with five or more units in R1, R2, and R3 zones, or nine or more units in R4 zones.

### **Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Periodically review the City's permit processing procedures to further streamline the review and approval process.
- Provide a development handbook to guide developers through City processes and requirements.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division;  
Rent Stabilization and Housing

## 22. Fee Waivers for Affordable Housing

The City levies various impact fees on new developments to address deficiencies in community amenities, such as parks, transit-related facilities, and art. To ensure that impact fees do not constrain affordable housing development, the City exempts WHCHC projects and residential developments with more than 25 percent affordable housing units from the art, park, and transportation fees (per Section 9594.f of the Zoning Ordinance). In addition, the City has adopted a policy waiving all City-imposed plan check and other fees for nonprofit-sponsored projects that are 100 percent affordable.

### **Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Continue to waive art, park, and transportation fees for WHCDC and projects with 25 percent or more affordable units.
- Continue to waive all City-imposed plan check and other fees for nonprofit-sponsored projects are 100 percent affordable.
- Periodically review the City's various planning and development fees to ensure they are reasonable and do not unduly constrain housing development.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Community Development/Planning Division

## Equal Housing Opportunity

### 23. Fair Housing Program

As a participating jurisdiction in the Los Angeles County CDBG program, fair housing services are coordinated by the County Community Development Commission on behalf of the City. The County contracts with the Housing Rights Center, a non-profit organization, to identify, mediate, investigate, and if necessary, prosecute landlords and property owners in violation of fair housing laws. The Housing Rights Center also provides information to the public about housing discrimination and landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities.

### **Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Continue to provide fair housing information to the public via the public counters, message boards, City website, and neighborhood watch, and in response to telephone inquiries.

- Continue to provide referral to the Housing Rights Center, State Fair Employment and Housing, HUD Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity division, and other legal services as appropriate.
- Coordinate with the Apartment Owners of Association of Greater Los Angeles, Realtor Associations, and other housing organizations to provide education and outreach on fair housing issues.

**Funding Sources:** CDBG; Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

#### 24. Tenant/Landlord Mediation

Mediation is an informal and voluntary way of resolving disputes between tenants and landlords. The City offers a mediation program as an alternative means to settle disputes regarding maintenance, housing services, and other tenant/landlord issues. Mediation is free, voluntary, and informal. Mediation is conducted by the Legal Services Division in a neutral setting. The City also contracts additional service from Dispute Resolution Services. The mediator is an impartial third party who serves to facilitate the discussion and focus on all the issues. The tenant and landlord have the opportunity to communicate openly and directly with each other to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement.

**Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Continue to offer the mediation program and provide information on City website and program brochures at public counters.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Human Services Department and Dispute Resolution Services

#### 25. Tenant Eviction Protection Program

The City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance limits the grounds on which a tenant may be evicted to the following: nonpayment of rent; creating a nuisance or using a rental unit for illegal purposes; subleasing without a landlord's permission; failure to provide the landlord with reasonable access; violating the rental agreement; and failure to renew a rental agreement. Tenants may also be evicted when the owner seeks to withdraw the entire property from the rental housing market pursuant to the Ellis Act. Certain of these evictions entitle the tenant to receive relocation assistance from the tenant's landlord.

**Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Continue to prevent unlawful eviction and fund legal aid organizations that provide tenant education and representation regarding landlord/tenant disputes.

- Periodically review current laws and recommend any needed modifications to ensure protection of tenants to the maximum extent legally possible.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing

## 26. Services for Special Needs Populations

The City financially supports various non-profit services providers that help meet the supportive services needs of West Hollywood residents, including lower income households, seniors, disabled persons, persons with HIV/AIDS, and the homeless. Major non-profit service providers active in West Hollywood include Alternative Living for the Aging, Menorah Housing, Being Alive, and AID For AIDS. Services currently offered through these organizations include roommate referrals, senior nutrition sites, home improvement assistance, health center, in-home supportive services, peer counseling, short-term financial assistance for rent and utilities, and legal services.

To assist in meeting the special housing needs of the homeless, Human Services Department provides shelter referrals to various facilities, including: PATH (People Assisting the Homeless); and the Year-Round Emergency Shelter Hotline. Referral is also provided for medical needs, food distribution, case management, and counseling.

The Human Services Department publishes on-line a social services directory to provide the community with detailed information on assistance or services available, including food and shelter, AIDS education, pre-school, job placement, legal services, mental health services, and homeless services. These services are provided by contracts with local non-profit agencies and by in-house programs. The directory can also be obtained by contacting the Human Services Department.

### **Timeframe and Objectives:**

- Continue to provide financial support to non-profit services providers that help meet the supportive services needs of West Hollywood's diverse community.
- Regularly update the social services directory, and make it available to residents at public counters and on City website.

**Funding Sources:** CDBG; Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Human Services Department



## 27. Services for Special Needs Populations

The Enhanced Management Program is administered by WHCHC at all of its projects. This program combines standard property management practices with referral to community service agencies, information about supportive services and community building activities. At each WHCHC development, a Resident Services Coordinator is available and responsible for maintaining contact with residents and monitoring their need for social services.

### *Timeframe and Objectives:*

- Continue to coordinate with WHCHC to continue the Enhanced Management Program at all current and future housing projects.
- Encourage other nonprofit housing providers to follow the WHCHC model.

**Funding Sources:** Departmental budget

**Responsible Agencies:** West Hollywood Rent Stabilization and Housing; Human Services

### Summary of Quantified Objectives

The following table summarizes the City's quantified objectives for the period of 2008 through 2014.

	Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
Units to be Constructed (Total RHNA)	78	64	91	99	252	584
Units to be Rehabilitated	30	30	30			120
Units to be Preserved (At-Risk Units)	148	147				295