

DRAFT MATERIAL

The following draft goals and objectives have been compiled from the November through February focus group meetings along with feedback from listening session worksheets. Please note that similar statements/concepts have been combined and some statements have been sorted into either broad goal statements or more specific objective statements. Also, some statements may have been edited to clarify the meaning, provide consistency in style and format or to conform with legal concepts. Further refinement, consolidation, and even shifting of statements to other focus groups is anticipated.

Housing Topics, Goals & Objectives

Topic 1: Affordable Housing

There is a high demand for affordable housing units from households with low wages, seniors on fixed incomes and population growth. This demand exceeds the existing housing supply of affordable homes and results in higher rents and home prices. Often, the affordable housing that is available is in poor condition. To meet the demand for affordable housing, a variety of housing types is necessary to accommodate a diverse population and to allow for movement within the housing market. For example, if affordable single-family homes are available it will allow renters to become homebuyers and this will free-up rental units. It is important to have an inventory of affordable housing options to attract employees for businesses and to accommodate growth in the community.

Goal

Meet the needs of a growing and diverse population in regards to age, income, physical abilities and family size by having a sufficient supply of housing and developing a variety of housing types

Objectives

1. Identify mechanisms, innovative zoning provisions, incentives and financing tools to promote the construction of permanent affordable housing.
2. Develop affordable housing opportunities, such as condominiums and micro-apartments, for older adults seeking to downsize.
3. Increase the overall supply of decent, safe and affordable homes for renters and homebuyers through new construction and improved maintenance of the existing affordable housing stock.
4. Increase the availability of rental subsidies to meet housing needs of the low to moderate income households.
5. Increase accessibility in new construction and including design features to accommodate seniors and disabled individuals.
6. Increase the inventory of housing for seniors including affordable housing and graduated senior housing communities.
7. Encourage upgrades to mobile home parks to meet current safety standards and as potential redevelopment areas for other affordable housing types.

8. Increase the number of affordable, safe housing options for students that are located in close proximity to the University of Montana campus.

Action Items

1. Provide education and outreach to the community on issues associated with housing affordability.
2. Create a program to assist homeowners with home safety assessments.
3. Provide information on financial and technical resources to make necessary home improvements.
4. Develop a rental safety inspection program for all rental units in Missoula.
5. Update codes to meet ADA requirements and includes design standards for “visitability”.
6. Encourage home improvements that will allow for seniors to remain in their homes for longer periods.

Topic 2: Housing and Transportation Linkage

Transportation costs are an important component of the household budget that contribute to the overall affordability of housing. Housing that is located near employment and retail centers have lower transportation costs due to lower commute times. Public transit, bicycle trail networks and walkability reduce reliance on automobiles and results in lower transportation costs, improved health and better air quality.

Goals

Goal 1: Missoula will have a transportation system that reduces the cost of living through land use patterns that lower commute times and through increased options for public transit.

Goal 2: Strive to increase the proportion of residents who have access to a multi-modal transportation network that provides accessibility for pedestrians, bicycles, transit and as well as vehicles.

Objectives

1. Locate higher to mid-density housing convenient accessibility to transit/biking/walking routes.
2. Support a system of complete streets in all neighborhoods.
3. Increase transportation options for population that is unable to drive.
4. Work with University of Montana to meet the transportation needs of students.
5. Maintain the rail right-of-way between Missoula and Hamilton as a potential transit route.
6. View parking as a system and revise parking standards to reflect future land use needs and variable demand for parking in different parts of the city.

Action Items

1. Provide education and outreach to educate the public on the benefits of public transit.
2. Explore the possibility of a car share program for individuals who cannot afford to own a car.
3. Reduce parking requirements for affordable transit-oriented housing.
4. Increase public transit options through more routes and expanded hours near affordable housing areas to reduce transportation costs for households.
5. Provide education and outreach to educate the public on the benefits of bike and pedestrian trails.

Topic 3: Land Use/Zoning/Neighborhood Design

Zoning provides predictability and is an important tool to accomplish community goals regarding preserving neighborhood character while meeting housing needs. There is a need to identify appropriate areas for different types of housing rather than review these on an ad-hoc basis. Due to lack of available land for multi-family units, apartments are being built in commercial areas and this creates issues of compatibility, reduction in commercial land supply, and residential pockets that lack access to parks and other services. Lack of adequately zoned land for housing creates a supply shortage and results in higher housing costs.

Goals

Goal 1: Provide for the diverse housing needs in the community while making protecting the strong sense of place in the community and neighborhoods through compatible residential developments.

Goal 2: Strategically provide infrastructure will support the development of new housing developments where desirable.

Objectives

1. Create zoning districts and rezone land to allow for diverse housing that is compatible with the surrounding areas such as a mixed-use developments and mid-range residential densities with access to neighborhood commercial services.
2. Modify land use regulations to provide more options for affordable housing such as revised minimum lots sizes.
3. Cultivate leadership to support for rezoning of land to allow for multi-family residential units in appropriate areas.
4. Encourage redevelopment of vacant lots in approved subdivisions for affordable smaller lot development.
5. Encourage cohesive and diverse neighborhoods through constructive neighborhood involvement in land use decisions.
6. Amend land use regulations to reflect sustainable design, smart growth and new building practice with tools such as form-based zoning.
7. Work with state, local and federal agencies to redevelop brownfield sites to allow for residential redevelopment.

8. Enhance neighborhoods in the urban fringe by providing a wider variety of housing types and convenient local commercial services.
9. Adopt an annexation policy consistent with the Urban Fringe Development Area Plan that establishes appropriate zoning and development standards and provides for the cost of urban services in these areas.
10. Reduce costs of transportation and providing city services through compact housing development and in-fill development.

Action Items

1. Educate the community on the cost of population growth and impacts on infrastructure investment.
2. Identify areas in the city where it would be appropriate to rezone land to allow a diverse mix of housing types.
3. Identify areas in the city where it would be appropriate to rezone land for compact, small lot single family or townhome development.
4. Provide education and outreach to the community regarding multi-family housing development.
5. Clean up hazardous sites in residential neighborhoods.
6. Conduct housing needs assessment to identify demand for affordable housing.
7. Amend regulations to allow planned neighborhood communities with small lot development.
8. Identify appropriate areas in the community to develop higher density housing.
9. Amend regulations to allow planned neighborhood communities with small lot development.

Topic 4: Housing – Economic Development Relationship

Work force housing is necessary to attract businesses and allows businesses to increase wages. A strong and vibrant social and business environment will allow Missoulians to have job opportunities and build assets through home ownership.

Goal

Meet the housing needs for all income levels by developing an inventory of a wide range of housing types to support economic growth.

Objectives

1. Adopt a “dig once” policy to install conduit during road construction to facilitate the deployment of fiber optic cable throughout the city.
2. Amend regulations to allow innovative housing developments and sustainable building technologies that will promote work force housing.

3. Promote live-work opportunities through home businesses, telework and mixed use developments.

Action Items

Educate the community on the issues that associate housing with economic development.

Topics that still need review

Topic 5: Homelessness

Economic disparity is an issue in the community which often results in homelessness issues. There are higher rates of poverty among the younger and older population segments. There is a lack of support services for the homeless population and a need for more temporary/transient housing. Focusing on prevention of homelessness is an effective strategy.

Goal 1: Missoula will have a coordinated support strategy to help prevent people from becoming homeless.

Goal 2: Missoula will assist people in finding suitable housing when they are homeless.

Objectives:

1. Develop safe, affordable and permanent housing for homeless families.
2. Develop safe – transitional housing to address the needs of the homeless population.
3. Encourage the concept of phased transitional housing.
4. Develop rental assistance programs with assistance agents to help homeless individuals and families find suitable housing and other support services.
5. Develop a model of small size multi-family unit developments for homeless housing with services and housing subsidy.
6. Build government-private partnerships to build housing for the homeless population.
7. Work with housing agencies and non-profits to identify strategies to assist displaced households when mobile home parks or old downtown motels are redeveloped.
8. Support implementation of 10-year plan to end homelessness.

Topic 6: Downtown Housing

Housing is an important component of downtown development. Downtown residents support businesses. There is a segment of the population that would prefer to live downtown but the cost to develop multi-dwelling downtown is higher and may require incentives or other programs to make building feasible.

Goal 1: There will be higher density residential and mixed-use projects in the downtown area in order to diversify housing options and allow residents to enjoy downtown amenities.

Goal 2: Development of downtown housing will increase the residential base that will support downtown businesses.

Objectives :

1. Develop upscale housing in the downtown area to attract single professionals.
2. Work with the Missoula Redevelopment Authority to offer incentives and assistance in developing affordable housing in the downtown consistent with the downtown plan.
3. Increase apartment housing for older adults in the downtown that is close to general services, medical services and shopping.
4. Amend regulations to allow higher density housing in the downtown consistent with the recommendations of the downtown plan
5. Incorporate affordable housing projects as part of the downtown plan that can be marketed to University students.
6. Require inclusion of below market rate housing units in new commercial and residential developments in the downtown area.
7. Create a transition zone between the downtown and traditional neighborhoods to clearly define edges and to allow innovative designs in transition areas.
8. Encourage mixed use developments that allow for live-work opportunities in the downtown.
9. Work with University of Montana to coordinate facility planning that university development complements and supports the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Topic 7: Compact Development

It is easy to get places in Missoula. Services, employment centers and amenities are conveniently located and accessible by car, transit, and bicycles. As the city grows there should be an emphasis to maintain this compact development and discourage sprawl. Compact development reduces transportation costs and is a more cost effective way to provide city services and pay for infrastructure.

Goal 1: Mid to higher density housing development will be conveniently located to nodes of retail services, transportation and parks.

Goal 2: Costs of transportation and providing city services will be reduced through compact housing development and in-fill development.

Objectives:

1. Identify appropriate areas in the community to develop higher density housing.
2. Amend regulations to allow planned neighborhood communities with small lot development.
3. Eliminate parking requirements for housing developments.
4. Create zoning associated with transit oriented development along popular corridors.