



Affordable Housing Vision, Goals & Strategies

Draft – April 23, 2021

A fundamentally important component of the comprehensive plan will be developing the plan's visions, goals, and strategies related to each plan element. This draft document, which focuses on affordable housing, lays out initial ideas that have been identified in existing plans and programs (e.g. 2014 Affordable Housing Goals and Strategies (last updated 2019), 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan Orange County, and Orange County 2017-2022 Master Aging Plan), discussions at Task Force and AHAC meetings, input from the Community Workshops held on November 19, 2020 and March 18, 2021, meeting with the Orange County Housing Coalition, and interviews with various stakeholders. Items that have come from a particular source are identified below. Other items paraphrase input that has been raised or are best practices from other communities working on similar challenges and initiatives. Racial equity will be included as an overarching vision and associated goals and strategies will be embedded throughout each topic. The following terms are used in the document:

Vision – the big picture of what Carrboro wants to be

Goal – outcome-focused “what” Carrboro is trying to achieve

Strategy – “how” Carrboro will achieve the goal

Project – specific initiatives that will be undertaken to implement the strategy

Vision:

Affordable Housing Vision: There is a home for everyone in Carrboro. Carrboro is affordable, safe and welcoming for all households who want to live in the community, works to prevent displacement of existing residents, advances racial equity and accessible housing, and has a full range of affordable options for all life stages. (language from Task Force and AHAC meetings)

Definition of Affordability:

Access to quality housing to households who could not afford to pay the rent or mortgage without assistance.

Standard: units for which a family would pay no more than 30% of their income for rent and 2.5x their annual income to purchase

Goal 1: Increase the number of homeownership units that are permanently affordable with targeted strategies to serve households earning 80% or below with priority to historically disadvantaged and BIPOC households (Source: Goals & Strategies)

Strategy 1.1 Investigate the number of affordable units needed for households up to 80% of AML. (Source: best practice)

- a) Identify projected demand for affordable units at each price point at five-year intervals. (Source: best practice)
- b) Match housing strategies to targeted needs by price point and household type. (Source: best practice)

Strategy 1.2 Reduce barriers to first-time homebuyers and to homeownership retention, particularly among seniors and historically marginalized groups. (Source: Goals & Strategies)

- a) Expand partnerships with organizations that provide housing counseling, credit counseling and down payment assistance (Source: Task Force)
- b) Encourage cooperative / limited equity housing models to develop or redevelop housing for low- and moderate-income. (Source: Interviews)

Strategy 1.3 Fully evaluate and reduce housing density restrictions to slow the increase of housing prices and diversify housing stock. (Source: AHAC and Task Force)

- a) Investigate set-backs, floor area ratio, minimum lot area requirements and parking standards in the Land Use Ordinance to identify opportunities to strategically support higher density levels in appropriate locations (Source: AHAC and Task Force)
- b) Increase incentives such as the affordable housing density bonus to provide more units of affordable units in new development and redevelopment. (Source: AHAC and Task Force)
- c) Work with partners to seek legislative authority for inclusionary zoning policies that requires either on-site affordable units or fee-in-lieu for off-site units. (Source: Task Force and Interviews)

Strategy 1.4 Support and build upon the land trust model and investigate other models to acquire and keep housing permanently affordable such as cooperative housing. (Source: Interviews)

- a) Investigate ways to expand the reach of models such as Community Home Trust, Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, and others to more households and at different income thresholds (Source: Interviews)

Goal 2. Increase number of rental units that are permanently affordable to individuals and families earning up to 60% of AMI with a particular focus on those earning less than 30% AMI. (Goals & Strategies)

Strategy 2.1 Create targeted rental programs for extremely low-income households (less than 30% AMI) (Goals & Strategies)

- a) Support programs that expand use of vouchers and landlord acceptance of housing vouchers (Source: Consolidated Plan)
- b) Prioritize housing applications to Affordable Housing Fund that reserve at least 20% of its units to extremely low-income households (Source: AHAC)

Strategy 2.2 Ease the pressure on rental prices by increasing rental housing stock, particularly in high-transit areas (Source: Goals & Strategies)

- a) Consider proactive rezoning for greater density near transit nodes and priority growth and redevelopment areas (Source: Task Force)
- b) Partner with existing rental developments to investigate strategic additions of new affordable units (Source: best practice)
- c) Create redevelopment incentives that include affordable housing set-asides for rental housing units. (Source: Task Force)

Strategy 2.3 Continue to support rental housing development through the Affordable Housing Fund and leveraging other resources

- a) Invest in rental housing projects that provide additional units for targeted income groups up to 60% AMI and historically marginalized communities. (AHAC)
- b) See ways to expand rental units in existing developments through providing additional financial resources and incentives. (Task Force)

Goal 3: Diversify and expand a variety of housing options throughout Carrboro using a mixture of affordable housing types (Source: AHAC, Interviews and Task Force)

Strategy 3.1 Preserve and promote the availability of affordable housing near transit. (Source: Task Force, AHAC)

- a) Work with Chapel Hill Transit to continuously improve public transit access, with a particular eye to moderate-income homeownership communities and developments with an affordability component (Source: Goals & Strategies)
- b) Consider proactive rezoning for greater density near transit nodes, consider the reduction of parking requirements and consider priority growth and redevelopment areas in accessible locations (Source: Task Force)
- c) Investigate a transit overlay zoning district to allow greater density (Interviews)

Strategy 3.2 Reduce negative effects of parking requirements on housing costs (Source: Goals & Strategies)

- a) Investigate the trade-offs of lowering residential parking requirements to reduce impervious surfaces and enhance affordability (Source: Task Force)

- b) Support transportation alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel and increased transit service to serve residents such as expanded flexible transit options like van pools, shared vehicles, etc. (Source: Task Force)

Strategy 3.3 Pursue concerted land use planning/small land use plan for high priority/high potential areas (Source: Goals and Strategies)

- a) Develop small land use plans for strategic nodes that promote Carrboro Connects principles including more affordable housing, land conservation, and improved walkability (Source: Goals and Strategies)

Strategy 3.4 Expand the allowance of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and tiny homes (Source: Task Force and Interviews)

- a) Consider allowing ADUs on larger lots and permitting more than one unit in single family zones (within the appropriate setbacks and height requirements) (Source: best practice)
- b) Determine whether a new zoning district should be created for smaller lots to allow for tiny home developments (Source: best practice)

Strategy 3.5 Support affordable housing options for older adults and persons with different abilities (Source: Master Aging Plan - MAP)

- a) Identify sites for active adult, age-restricted housing and accessible housing including criteria such as access to transit, sidewalks, neighborhood amenities, access to food, health care and services (Source: MAP-with additions)
- b) Work with partners to identify funding sources for affordable housing for older adults (Source: MAP)

Strategy 3.6 Preserve existing mobile home parks and identify possible locations for additional mobile and manufactured housing (modified Goals & Strategies)

- a) Preserve existing mobile home parks and develop strategies for replacement units or relocation in cases of redevelopment. (Source: Task Force)
- b) Identify appropriate locations for manufactured housing and mobile home parks. (Source: Task Force)
- c) Explore the creation of an overlay district to preserve mobile home parks. (Source: best practice)

Goal 4. Improve the development process to support the creation of more affordable housing (Source: Task Force and Interviews)

Strategy 4.1 Set transparent goals and standards for a more predictable development review process (Source: Interviews and Task Force)

- a) Review Land Use Ordinance to identify areas in which clearer standards can be drafted for items that have been frequently addressed by advisory boards and Town Council (Source: best practice)

b) Draft clear development review standards for each advisory board involved in the development review process (Source: best practice)

c) Consider creating an expedited process for projects with at least 50% of its units are affordable at 60% rental units or 80% for-sale units (Source: AHAC)

Strategy 4.2 Assist with acquisition of land for affordable housing (Source: AHAC)

a) Identify existing Town-owned lands that can be conveyed to affordable housing developers (Source: AHAC)

b) Partner with affordable housing developers to acquire land for development (Source: best practice)

c) Encourage market-rate developers to team with affordable housing developers (Source: best practice)

Goal 5. Increase energy and water conservation in new construction and rehabilitation to reduce costs to homeowners and renters (Source: Modified from Climate Action Plan)

Strategy 5.1 Expand weatherization efforts for existing homes and apartments; offer free or low-cost to income eligible households (Source: Modified from Goals and Strategies)

a) Seek resources to expand weatherization programs to reduce housing-related costs (Source: Goals and Strategies)

Strategy 5.2 Provide grants for fixture replacement and home-based stormwater projects to income-eligible households (Source: best practice)

a) Encourage OWASA to seek resources for fixture replacements to improve water conservation to reduce costs for low- and moderate-income households (Source: best practice)

Goal 6. Maintain and improve the quality of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) (Source: modified Goals & Strategies)

Strategy 6.1 Preserve existing for-sale naturally occurring housing.

a) Continue to provide home repair grants to income-eligible and aging-in-place households (Source: Task Force)

b) Work with Home Trust to allow homeowners to donate their land (while they maintain ownership of their residence) in exchange for grants to maintain units as affordable at resale. (Source: best practice)

Strategy 6.2 Reduce erosion of rental housing quality and affordability (Source: Goals & Strategies)

a) Expand use of Home Trust and work with property managers to include purchase rehab of rental units to reach lower income levels and as a transition to homeownership (Source: best practice)

Strategy 6.3 Ensure property owners maintain older rental properties and investigate ways to add additional affordable housing units (Source: Task Force)

a) Work with existing rental property owners to determine ways to add additional affordable housing units and what regulatory and/or financial assistance may be needed (Source: best practice)

Goal 7: Ensure that all homeless individuals and families have access to safe housing, appropriate services and a path to permanent housing

Strategy 7.1 Ensure emergency care and shelter is provided when needed (Source: Consolidated Plan)

a) Work with the Continuum of Care partners to address the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless individuals and families (Source: Consolidated Plan)

Strategy 7.2 Help people experiencing homelessness transition to permanent housing (Source: Consolidated Plan)

a) Help people experiencing homelessness (especially people and families experiencing chronic homelessness; families with children; veterans and their families; and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again. (Source: Consolidated Plan)

Strategy 7.3 Prevent homelessness

a) Help low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care (such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); or, receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs. (Source: Consolidated Plan)

Goal 8. Expand resources targeted to affordable housing

Strategy 8.1 Continue to invest and improve the Affordable Housing Fund

a) Provide annual reports on the impact of the Affordable Housing Fund

b) Monitor the property tax rate to support the Affordable Housing Fund

- c) Develop a campaign to solicit private investments in the Affordable Housing Fund

Strategy 8.2 Explore passage of an Affordable Housing Bond

- a) Educate the community on the importance of and need for affordable housing
- b) Determine the programs and projects that could be supported through an Affordable Housing Bond
- c) Determine public support for passing an Affordable Housing Bond
- d) If there is public support, place the Affordable Housing Bond referendum on the ballot

Strategy 8.3 Explore a teardown fee to support affordable housing

- a) Investigate the creation of a teardown fee or demolition tax in which proceeds are invested in the Affordable Housing Fund

Strategy 8.4 Pursue state and federal housing grants and programs

- a) Pursue all relevant grant programs that meet the Town's priorities
- b) Advocate for greater affordable housing resources at the state and federal level