

CHAPTER

9

HOUSING ELEMENT

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This update of the Solano County Housing Element is broken into three chapters, including this **Introduction** chapter, a chapter that outlines the County's **Goal, Objectives, Policies and Programs**. This Housing Element also incorporates by reference a separate **Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix A) and Review of Previous Housing Element (Appendix B)**, which was prepared as background report for the Housing Element Update and contains data and analyses required by State law to accompany the Housing Element.

Housing Element Background

Purpose. The purpose of the Housing Element is to establish a comprehensive plan to address housing needs in the unincorporated area of Solano County, with a focus on meeting the housing needs of all economic segments of the community, including low- and moderate-income households who may have trouble affording market rate housing and populations with special housing needs that may not necessarily be met through conventional housing products.

Housing Element Planning Period. This Housing Element Update is intended to address the County's housing needs through the planning period from January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2014. This planning period was established for Solano County and other Bay Area jurisdictions by state law. This Housing Element will remain in effect until such time as the County adopts an updated Housing Element.

Statutory Requirements. According to state law, the Housing Element is one of seven elements that must be included in a California General Plan, along with any number of optional elements that a jurisdiction may wish to include. The mandated elements are included in the county's Resource Conservation and Open Space Element, Health and Safety Element (Seismic Safety, Safety and Noise), and Land Use and Circulation Element. In addition to the mandated elements, the County has adopted several optional elements and specific plans. These include the Scenic Roadway Element, Energy Element, Parks and Recreation Element, and the Collinsville-Montezuma Hills area Plan and Program.

As one of the County General Plan Elements, the Housing Element is a very important policy document for the County, not only for its specific provisions as they relate to housing, but also because the other elements included in the General Plan must also be consistent with the Housing Element. Should the adopted Housing Element Update create internal inconsistencies with other portions of the Solano County General Plan, the County will subsequently undertake amendments to the other affected elements in order to bring about consistency among all General Plan Elements.

In addition to identifying the Housing Element as one of the required General Plan elements, state law also includes specific guidance as to the



Public Hearings

The Board of Supervisors will review the Housing Element on July 21, 2009 and provide comments and authorize the Housing Element be forwarded to HCD for its 60-day review. This meeting will be televised and available for review on the County's web site. Once the Housing Element is submitted to HCD, a copy of it will be available for review on the County's web site as well.

Public Comments

No public comments have been received as of June 11, 2009.

Relationship to Other Elements

State law requires that "the General Plan and elements and parts thereof comprise an integrated, internally consistent, and compatible statement of policies." The purpose of requiring internal consistency is to avoid policy conflict and provide a clear policy guide for the future maintenance, improvement, and development of housing within the County.

This Housing Element is part of the comprehensive Solano County General Plan. All elements of the Solano County General Plan have been reviewed for consistency, and the Housing Element was prepared to assure compatibility with the remaining elements.

Review of Previous Element

Government Code, Section 65588(a)(2) "Review and Revision" requires that each local government review its Housing Element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of the Housing Element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives. For a complete list of the status of all programs in the Housing Element, see Appendix B (Review of Previous Housing Element).

CHAPTER 2. GOAL, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

This portion of the Housing Element establishes the County's policy direction for housing within its jurisdiction. This chapter first states the County's housing goal and then describes a series of objectives, policies and programs that are intended to focus the County's efforts to achieve that goal.

Goal

It is the county's goal to promote and ensure adequate housing in a satisfying environment for all residents of Solano County.

In order to achieve the intent of this statement, it is necessary to establish short-term objectives and policies that will overcome the major obstacles that prevent realization of the goal. In addition to listing a set of policies that can serve as a general framework for County planning and decision-making on a range of issues (e.g., land use, public services, capital improvements, etc.), the Housing Element also includes a set of programs that call for the County to undertake or promote specific actions that will help to achieve housing element objectives. Thus, this chapter summarizes major housing issues identified in the Housing Needs Assessment chapter and in the prior Housing Element and then lays out objectives, policies, and programs that, taken together, are intended to focus the County's efforts to achieve its housing goal by addressing the identified housing issues.

The objectives, policies, and programs that follow are organized under one of nine subject areas, as follows:

Objective, Policy, and Program Subject Areas

- A. Housing Conservation and Rehabilitation
- B. Opportunities for Housing Production
- C. Affordable Housing Assistance
- D. Special Housing Needs and Equal Housing Opportunity
- E. Governmental and Non-Governmental Housing Constraints
- F. Housing Location, Density and Timing
- G. Public Facilities and Services
- H. Environmental Quality
- I. Energy Conservation

For each subject area, there is a discussion of related housing issues followed by an outline of the policies and programs that the County intends to implement in order to address the identified housing issues. At the heart of each issue area are the following core programs themes:

Financial Assistance. Providing financial assistance is one of the County's key mechanisms to help increase the supply of affordable housing in the current planning period. In exchange for contributing public financial assistance to affordable housing projects, the County will also seek agreements to keep assisted units permanently affordable, so that the units remain a part of the County's affordable housing stock for the long term. Furthermore, an injection of locally-controlled public funds is often the catalyst that allows an affordable housing project to leverage additional public and private funds that are necessary to expand the local affordable housing stock.

Program Partnerships. Due to its limited resources, the County will seek to implement housing assistance programs through actively developing and participating in program partnerships with other local public and private organizations. The County's existing partnership with Mercy Housing California to operate the County's Community Development Block Grant and HOME housing rehabilitation programs, its partnership with the City of Vallejo to implement a joint Redevelopment Project Area, and its participation in the Solano County Continuum of Care are all examples of program partnerships that allow the County to utilize its available resources in the most efficient manner possible. In addition, the County has recently entered into a partnership with the City of Vacaville Housing Authority to provide management of the County's HUD Section 8 program.

Housing Assistance Outreach. Although housing assistance resources are almost always in short supply relative to the need, it is important that the County make efforts to publicize the available assistance programs to those individuals and households who are most likely to need help. Effective outreach can help to ensure that limited resources can get to those who need them most. Housing assistance outreach is another example of an activity that should be implemented through program partnerships.

These three core program themes can be found throughout the nine subject areas. This provides opportunities for the County to streamline its implementation activities by consolidating related activities under a single program. For example, a Financial Assistance program includes components for rehabilitation projects and for new affordable housing production. In addition to the core program themes that deal with general implementation needs, there are programs and activities that deal with specific regulatory requirements, such as making the County's regulations regarding second units (i.e., granny flats) consistent with State law, or that deal with specific local housing needs that have been identified in the Housing Needs Assessment.

funding, redevelopment funds, and other state and federal programs. In unincorporated, urbanized areas adjacent to cities, rehabilitation programs would be seen as a means of upgrading communities that would encourage their eventual annexation to cities.

Objective

A. Conserve existing affordable housing units and rehabilitate the existing housing stock of unincorporated Solano County.

Policies

A.1 The County shall work to conserve its existing affordable housing stock and reduce substandard housing through ongoing housing rehabilitation programs targeted to assist low- and moderate-income households.

A.2 The County shall seek to coordinate its housing conservation and rehabilitation plans and programs with those of other public and private agencies.

Programs

A.1 Financial Assistance - Rehabilitation. To assist private property owners in rehabilitating the housing stock, the County will consider applying for Community Development Block Grant funds and other funding sources as available including funding from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, the State Department of Housing and Community Development, local redevelopment funding, and other governmental or private sources.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: The County will consider applying for funds annually and as Notice of Funding Availability (NOFAs) are released.

Funding Source: CDBG, HOME, Rehabilitation Loan Pool,

A.2 Program Partnerships - Rehabilitation. The County will seek to maintain its existing supply of assisted housing through the development of programs in coordination with other public and private non-profit housing agencies. The County will seek to expand rehabilitation opportunities by coordinating and working with financial institutions and non-profit agencies to expand the supply of funding available and by recycling program income from existing programs into future rehabilitation programs.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: The County previously contracted with Mercy Housing to monitor rent limitation agreements under the County Housing Rehabilitation Program but their contact expired in June 2008. The County may need

to contract with a consultant in a year or two depending on interest in the program.

Funding Source: Rehabilitation loan pool

A.3 Housing Assistance Outreach – Rehabilitation. As the County applies for and receives funding to provide rehabilitation loans they will notify the public of available housing rehabilitation programs in coordination with city housing authorities, redevelopment agencies and other public and private agencies.

Responsibility: Resource Management, County Housing Authorities, City Redevelopment and Housing Authorities adjoining project areas.

Target Date: 2009-2014 and ongoing as funding is available.

Funding Source: CDBG, HOME, Rehabilitation Loan Pool

A.4 Upon notification of a potential sale of a mobile home park and/or at the request of mobile home resident organizations or nonprofit housing agency, the County will provide assistance in seeking funding through the Mobile Home Park Resident Ownership Program for the purchase the mobile home park or spaces by the tenants

Responsibility: Resource Management, County Housing Authority

Target Date: 2009-2014, this program will be implemented upon notification of a potential mobile home park sale.

Funding Source Mobile Home Park Resident Ownership Program (MPROP)

B. Opportunities for Housing Production

The County of Solano and its incorporated cities have a joint responsibility to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing to meet projected countywide housing needs. As developable land becomes scarcer and increasingly costly in the inner Bay Area, demand continues to increase for housing within Solano County jurisdictions, including the unincorporated areas.

A primary measure of Solano County's need for new housing production is the Regional Housing Needs Allocations produced by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) for the January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2014 time period. ABAG allocated the unincorporated part of Solano County the following housing needs:

Household Income Category	# of Units	% of Total
Extremely Low-Income (0-30% of AMI)	13	13%
Very Low-Income (31-50% of AMI)	13	13%

Low-Income (51-80% of AMI)	16	16%
Moderate-Income (81-120% of AMI)	18	18%
Above Moderate-Income (120%+ of AMI)	39	39%
Total	99	100%

To satisfy housing needs, the County and the cities each have historically played distinctive roles. The County has primarily provided for housing which has been agriculturally related or rural in character. Higher density single-family and multiple-family developments, on the other hand, have been provided primarily in the cities. This has resulted from General Plan policies and servicing constraints which have limited the range and quantity of housing which can be provided in the unincorporated area.

Historically, the principal type of housing provided by the County is the single family home, which is usually self-supporting relative to water and sewer service. Multi-family residential development in the unincorporated area is located only in those areas where community water and sewer systems are available to support the more intensive infrastructure needs of higher density development, principally in the Vallejo unincorporated area. In addition, the County Zoning Code allows certified manufactured homes to be placed on foundations in any zoning district where a single-family dwelling unit is allowed, and temporary mobile homes are also permitted in the unincorporated area, primarily as secondary living units, or temporary farm labor or caretaker housing.

The County allows secondary living units in Exclusive Agricultural, Rural Residential, Residential Estate and Single-Family (RS) zoning districts. Analysis conducted as part of the Housing Needs Assessment indicates that these types of smaller dwelling units, which can be constructed on parcels already containing a primary residence, can be produced at costs that would make them affordable to moderate-income households, and in some cases low-income households.

It is evident that if the County is to ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet its varied housing needs, a cooperative program between the County and cities that sets forth each jurisdiction's role and responsibilities must be clearly defined. The policies of the County General Plan specifically define the County's role as one that is designed to complement the housing efforts of the cities rather than to compete with them by attempting to provide a full range of housing choice in the unincorporated area thereby duplicating necessary services. The County and the cities have recognized that infrastructure capable of supporting urban growth has not been provided in the unincorporated areas, consistent with smart growth principles that call for directing growth to cities. These principles also dictate that urban infrastructure not be extended into unincorporated areas in the future, because of its growth and sprawl-inducing effects. These policies help confine urban development to existing urban centers where supporting services are presently available and provide for better access to employment and service facilities. These policies have been further reinforced with the passage of Proposition A (Ordinance 1230) in 1984, the Orderly Growth Initiative in 1994, and Measure T in 2008.

Objective

B. The County will provide sufficient land to accommodate Solano County's projected housing needs. As of June 2009, the County's remaining unmet need is as follows. (See the resources section of appendix A for a complete analysis)

**Table 36
Progress Towards Achieving RHNA**

Income Group	ABAG Allocation	Constructed Units	Remaining Need
Extremely Low	13	14 ¹	0
Very Low	13	38 ²	0
Low	16		
Moderate	18	18 ³	0
Above Moderate	39	31 ³	8 ⁴
Total	99	101	8

¹ 14 second units affordable to extremely low-income households.

² 38 manufactured homes; affordable to low- and very low-income households.

³ 49 total single family homes: 18 single family homes have been allocated towards the moderate income housing need and 31 towards the above moderate income need.

⁴ There is approximately 19 acres available for the development housing affordable to of above moderate-income households.

Policies

B.1 The County shall seek to achieve coordination of housing goals, objectives, policies and plans between the County and the cities within the County. The County shall maintain an inventory of sites adequate to satisfy its remaining unmet need for housing production through the remainder of the Housing Element Planning period. Should the County satisfy all of its housing need allocations through production in the unincorporated area or by transferring responsibility to cities, the County shall maintain information regarding vacant land available within the unincorporated areas, such as English Hills and Homeacres, that is available and appropriate to accommodate additional housing development.

B.2 The unincorporated County's principal housing role shall be to accommodate future residential development that constitutes an accessory use to agriculture (farm residence and farm labor quarters) and a moderate amount of rural residential development.

B.3 Housing units in the unincorporated County shall consist primarily of single-family homes. These include conventional stick-built homes as well as manufactured dwellings certified under the National Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standard Act which meet minimum County architectural and development standards.

B.4 Manufactured homes may be used in the unincorporated County as permanent structures for secondary living units, and farm labor and caretaker housing.

B.5 The County shall actively encourage and facilitate the development of secondary dwelling units, as a means to expand the overall supply of housing, especially as a means of providing relatively affordable housing

for people employed in the agricultural areas, or for the elderly or disabled, who may need to receive assistance from a relative or caregiver residing on the same property.

Programs

B.1. Countywide Housing Production and Coordination. The County will coordinate its planning and program efforts with the cities to ensure that adequate quantities of various housing types are provided to meet the County's total projected housing needs. The County inventoried its available sites for housing development and identified sites by zoning category that are available to exceed its housing need allocation for the Housing Element Planning period. The inventory summarized in Appendix A includes sites for housing by income category.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: 2009-2014, continue to provide sites to meet the County's RHNA allocation of 99 units

Funding Source: County General Fund

B.2 Secondary Dwelling Unit Program. To maximize the potential for housing development on its existing residentially zoned land, the County will continue to implement streamlined permitting processes for these types of units. The County will actively promote the opportunities provided to develop these types of units, by distributing information to advocates and service providers for the elderly and disabled populations and farmworkers as well as distributing this information within the agricultural community in general.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Ongoing, distribute information annually.

Funding Source: County General Fund

C. Affordable Housing Assistance

Housing affordability is a nationally recognized problem, and programs at both the state and national level have been designed to provide assistance for the provision of low- and moderate income-housing. In the 1979 Housing Element, a program was set forth to establish a County Housing Authority to enable the County to participate in many of these programs. The Housing Authority was established in 1979. At present, the Housing Authority provides Solano County as a whole, 250 Housing Choice vouchers per year for rental assistance. The County has recently switched its contract for the operation of the County Housing Authority from the City of Vallejo Housing Authority to the City of Vacaville Housing Authority.

Because of the current downturn in the housing market and increasing costs of providing new affordable housing, it is important to conserve the existing supply of affordable housing. Most of the County's "affordable"



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housing involves market-rate housing located in older established neighborhoods and in scattered locations throughout the agricultural region. Most of these units are single-family structures, though some multiple family units exist in the Vallejo unincorporated area. Historically, the County has not had publicly regulated affordable housing units; however, the Air Force has recently constructed 228 housing units in the unincorporated area near Fairfield which accommodate moderate-income military personnel.

While the County has taken steps to address the problem of affordable rental housing for existing households through the Section 8 rental assistance program, this need far exceeds available funding. In addition, if the experience in other jurisdictions where allowable Section 8 rents are not keeping pace with market rate rents is an indicator, in the coming years it may become even more challenging for the County Housing Authority's Section 8 rental assistance program clients to locate suitable privately-owned rental units whose owners are willing to participate in the program. However, the County Housing Authority has been successful in achieving full utilization of its available Section 8 vouchers, and the County will seek to obtain allocation of additional Section 8 vouchers, so that the program can serve additional local households in need of assistance.

In addition, service constraints make it difficult to provide new affordable owner and renter occupied housing for lower income households. The County is not equipped in most areas to provide the necessary supporting facilities and services for new assisted and subsidized housing. However, regardless of these service constraints, the County recognizes its responsibilities to address the needs of lower income households in obtaining suitable affordable housing.

The policies and programs suggest an approach to overcome many of the constraints to affordable housing. The County must maintain, conserve and improve its existing supply of available housing. The County must also work closely with the cities in designing and administering programs to provide affordable housing to lower income households. Funding available to the County for housing assistance will be channeled through the most appropriate agency for administration in either the unincorporated area or within a city jurisdiction. In some cases it is expected the County will undertake joint programs with local agencies in order to make most effective use of available funding and to provide housing assistance at the most appropriate locations. Through provisions of the zoning code, manufactured housing units and secondary dwelling units, including units incidental to agricultural uses can be utilized to provide opportunities for low cost housing. In accordance with state law, the County will establish regulatory incentives, such as relaxing site development standards or providing permit fast-tracking, to encourage affordable housing production by private developers.

Objective

C. Provide housing to meet the needs of all economic segments of the community, including extremely low-, very low-, low-, moderate-, and

above moderate-income households. While the County, will provide sites to accommodate its full housing need allocation for the planning period, it is recognized that the County does not directly participate in production of most new housing units and that the ultimate number of new housing units is highly dependent on factors beyond the County's control.

Policies

C.1 The County shall make every effort to reduce the cost of housing to lower and moderate- income groups through local, state and federal housing assistance programs.

C.2 The County shall support the construction of new subsidized housing units in those areas which are best equipped to provide the necessary services and facilities to support such development, such as the Homeacres area.

C.3 Manufactured, modular, and innovative housing designs that make use of new technologies and materials that bring about cost and energy efficiency shall be encouraged by the County.

C.4 The County shall work and coordinate with public and non-profit housing groups to maintain the County's existing supply of assisted housing.

C.5 The County shall work and coordinate with public and non-profit agencies and the private sector in seeking solutions to providing affordable housing.

C.6 Consistent with State laws, the County shall provide regulatory concessions for qualifying affordable housing developments.

Programs

C.1 Financial Assistance - Affordable Housing Production. The County will utilize available local funding sources for affordable housing, primarily involving application for CDBG funds from the state, HOME funds, and seeking to expand the County's Section 8 voucher program. Because of the competitive nature of the CDBG, HOME, and the Section 8 programs, it is not possible to estimate the amount of funding that could be obtained from these sources through the remainder of the Housing Element planning period. To leverage local subsidy sources, the County and County Housing Authority will seek funding for low-income housing assistance through state and federal housing programs in the development of local housing assistance programs.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: The County will continue to apply for funds annually and as Notice of Funding Availabilities (NOFAs) are released.

Funding Source: Section 8, CDBG, HOME, and other funding sources as they become available.

C.2 Regulatory Incentives for Affordable Housing. The County will continue to work with developers of affordable housing projects to provide regulatory incentives consistent with Sections 65915 and 65917 of the California Government Code and AB 1866, signed into law in September 2002.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: 2009-2014, provide regulatory incentives to affordable housing projects on a case-by-case basis as projects are processed through the Resource Management Department.

Funding Source: General Fund

C.3 Zoning Codes and Development Standards to Encourage and Facilitate Alternative Housing. To create opportunities for the private marketplace to produce additional affordable housing for extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate-income households, including farm workers and the elderly, the County will continue to implement building and zoning codes to accommodate manufactured dwelling units and secondary dwelling units in all residential zoning districts by-right.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: 2009-2014, continue to allow manufactured housing and second units.

Funding Source: General Fund

C.4 Preservation of Existing Assisted Housing Units. Currently, the 228 units of recently constructed military housing in the unincorporated area near Fairfield is the only assisted housing subject to rent restrictions in the unincorporated area, and this housing is not subject to conversion to market rates in the next ten years. Should other publicly-assisted affordable housing units be produced in the future, the County will monitor its status, identify any units at risk of conversion to market rate, and work pro-actively to preserve them, working with interested affordable housing developers and making preservation activities a priority use of available federal, state, and local financing sources in cases where it is more cost-effective to preserve affordable units than to build replacement affordable units.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Ongoing, as projects are built and have affordability covenants on them they will be monitored.

Funding Source: General Fund

C.5 Program Partnerships – Affordable Housing. The County will work to ensure coordination between County and other public and private

housing assistance programs and affordable housing developers, including coordinating resources for affordable housing production.

The County will continue to work with the City of Vacaville to administer the Section 8 program; the County also applies for Mortgage Credit Certificates (MCC) from the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee, with the program administered by the City of Fairfield for first time homebuyers. The County has allocated some of the bond authority to the CRHMFA Homebuyers Fund which also provides for downpayment assistance.

Responsibility: Resource Management and Housing Authority, City of Vacaville for Section 8 administration and City of Fairfield for first time homebuyer program.

Target Date: 2009-2014, continue to apply for funding as it becomes available.

Funding Source: General Fund

C.6 Housing Assistance Outreach – Affordable Housing. The County will notify the public of available affordable housing programs in coordination with city housing authorities, redevelopment agencies and other public and private agencies.

Responsibility: Resource Management and Housing Authority

Target Date: Notify public of available programs through flyers and the newspaper on a quarterly basis and post information on the County’s website by January 2010.

Funding Source: General Fund

D. Special Housing Needs and Equal Housing Opportunity

Particular groups within unincorporated Solano County have special housing needs. These include the elderly, large family households, female head of households, handicapped, military, farm laborers and the homeless. To ensure that adequate housing is available for all the citizens of the County particular attention will need to be given to these groups.

A major constraint to meeting special housing needs is that the particular housing problems of these groups are not easily identifiable and are thus not readily perceived by the public. Data from the Census and other sources presented in the **Appendix A the Housing Needs Assessment** provides some indication of the nature and extent of the housing problems facing these groups as follows:

Large Families (unincorporated county): 980 households

Military Workers (total county): 7,260 individuals

Based on information regarding off-base housing allowances provided to Travis military personnel, it appears that lower ranking enlisted personnel with dependents may not receive adequate housing allowances to afford market rate housing of suitable size within the County. This may necessitate overcrowding or commuting to more distant locations that offer more affordable housing.

An additional problem faced by special groups as a whole is discriminatory real estate practices that may exclude them from certain segments of the housing market. In addition to housing discrimination based upon race, sex, marital status or national origin, cases of discrimination against the elderly and families with children are frequent.

The County has instituted programs to address some of the needs of special groups. With respect to housing needs of the elderly and disabled, the county instituted changes to its zoning code to allow a secondary dwelling unit to be established in certain zoning districts, in addition to the principal single family residence which can be used for the elderly and the handicapped.

In expanding the existing programs and developing new programs, special consideration must be given to the unique problems faced by each of these groups. Providing assistance to the elderly and handicapped may best be accomplished by administration of available funding through the Solano County Housing Authority. The elderly and handicapped often are in need of easy access to public transportation and commercial and recreational facilities, and additional supporting facilities and services. These facilities for seniors and handicapped are generally not available in the unincorporated area.

In addressing the problems of large family households and female head of households, special consideration should be given to these groups under low-income housing assistance programs. In addition, the private sector should be encouraged to give full consideration to the needs of large families in their developments.

During the previous Housing Element Planning period, the County adopted revisions to the Agricultural Zoning District in 2001. The revisions were prepared with the County Agricultural Advisory Committee. To address the need for farm worker housing, new provisions for Agricultural Employee Housing were enacted. The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that additional Agricultural Employee housing be provided as a manufactured dwelling unit on a temporary basis through a use permit approval process. The Committee felt the proposed Agricultural Employee housing provisions would best meet the farm worker housing needs within Solano County. Under the new zoning code provisions, Agricultural Employee Housing is subject to the condition that the property owner and lessee employ the occupants of the dwelling, they have rent deducted from their wages, and that the unit meets setback requirement. There are no additional site requirements design



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standards or development standards required other than meeting building code requirements for foundations and providing adequate sewage disposal and water facilities for the unit. Further amendments to the Agricultural Zoning District were enacted to allow farm worker housing under a permit from the State Department of Housing and Community Development as an allowed use within the zoning district without requiring a use permit from the County. In developing additional programs for farm worker housing, the County met with Mercy Housing, a non-profit housing organization, to explore viable options for producing additional farm worker housing. Potential sites were reviewed including County owned sites along with the potential expansion of the Dixon Migrant Center facility. None of the potential sites reviewed had available services including sewer, water, transit, nor were they in close proximity to social services. Because of the lack of facilities and services at these sites, the cost associated with their development, including the extension and provision of supporting services, the most viable option appears to be potential expansion of the Dixon Migrant Center. The Dixon Migrant Center has existing sewer and water service and supporting social service programs are made available at the site. The County, in developing programs for migrant farm labor housing, will seek to coordinate additional programs and funding through the Dixon Housing Authority. In addition, the County will also provide assistance to the farming community in obtaining funding and establishing farmworker housing. In addition, the proper maintenance of private migrant farm labor camps through periodic onsite inspection programs is ensured by the State Department of Housing and Community Development through its inspection and enforcement program. The County also can provide assistance in obtaining loans and grants for the rehabilitation or establishment of new farm labor housing as needs are demonstrated.

In cooperation with cities and other agencies, Solano County helped establish the Continuum of Care and Solano Safety Net Consortium – Community Action Agency to address special housing needs within the County. These organizations are a collaborative of local service agencies from the public and private sectors that provide services to the homeless and others in need of emergency and transitional housing. The purpose of the agencies is to coordinate service delivery and resources. The County will continue to coordinate and expand its homeless programs through this public/private collaboration.

The County has amended the Zoning Code to encourage emergency shelters and transitional housing by explicitly providing for such facilities under its definition of community care facility. Under the current Zoning Code, and future revisions required to implement the General Plan update, facilities with six or fewer persons are considered a residential use of property rather than a community care facility and are exempt from use permit requirements. Facilities of this size are permitted by right, consistent with allowances for other residential uses in a residential zone. Further, transitional housing constitutes a residential use and is subject to only those restrictions that apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone (this point will be clarified through zoning revisions, implementing the General Plan update). Facilities with seven or more

persons are considered a community care facility and are subject to a use permit. The County has reviewed its use permit process for community care facilities and does not believe it constitutes a constraint on the provisions of emergency shelters and transitional housing. Use permit applications are evaluated against a standard to ensure that there is not an over concentration of such facilities in any one area of the County. A community care facility proposed on a parcel may not be less than 400 feet from another parcel containing a community care facility. The average parcel within the Rural Residential (RR) zoning districts is between 163 feet (RR-2.5) and 223 feet (RR-5) in width where 80 percent of the available sites are located. Given the average parcel widths, this requirement does not unduly restrict the siting of these facilities. In the Residential Estate (RE) zoning districts the average site width varies from 80 to 120 feet where another 14 percent of the available sites are located. The Inventory Site analysis found a total of 141 sites within the County's residential zoning districts that could accommodate community care facilities.

Pertaining to emergency shelters, the County will further review and explore its range of options to provide for emergency shelters in non-residential zoning districts. This will occur during the zoning ordinance update process, following the General Plan Update.

The County supports fair housing through enforcement of equal opportunity provisions under County operated housing programs. Solano County Housing Authority contracts with the City of Vacaville Housing Authority to provide housing services to the unincorporated area. As part of the services provided by the City of Vacaville assist the County in promoting fair housing opportunities through Vacaville's Housing Counseling Program. The City's HUD certified Housing Counseling Program provides information and referral to landlords, tenants, homeowners, on a number of topics including landlord/tenant disputes, finding and securing housing, housing discrimination (including referral to the appropriate investigative and enforcement entity), foreclosure prevention counseling etc. to residences in the unincorporated area. The Housing Counseling program will actively promote fair housing education by sponsoring in partnership with others, Fair Housing Workshops, Landlord Training and Tenant Credit Repair Workshops and Tenants' Rights Clinics. Because of the high percentage of Spanish speaking households in the unincorporated area, special workshops have and will continue to be conducted for Spanish speakers.

Objective

D. Provide housing to meet the special needs of the elderly, disabled, large family, single female-headed, homeless, military, and farm workers.

Policies

D.1 The County shall support and comply with Federal Civil Rights law on discrimination in housing on the basis of ethnic background, age, disability or sex.

will continue site inspections of migrant farm labor camps to ensure proper maintenance.

Responsibility: Resource Management and HCD

Target Date: Ongoing, develop an informational brochure explaining options, permitting process and possible funding sources for the development of farmworker housing by August 2010. The County will also contact agricultural stakeholders and the non-profit community to discuss possible options for locating suitable and available sites for farmworker housing by the end of 2010.

Funding Source: General Fund, USDA Rural Development and State D CDBG and HOME funds

D.3 Sites for Special Needs Housing. The County will continue to provide opportunities for development of facilities for emergency shelters ("community care facilities" with seven or more persons) in all residential zones with a use permit. The County's zoning regulations recognize residential care facilities with 6 or fewer persons as residential uses of property and therefore allow the development of a residential care facility (emergency shelter) with 6 or fewer persons as a permitted use subject to the same development standards as all other residential use types. The County's definition of community care facilities specifically includes emergency shelters, transitional housing and facilities for persons with disabilities. The County's Zoning Regulations identify emergency shelters as a residential care facility use type as part of the definition of a community care facility. In addition, the County will continue to fund the development of emergency shelters in neighboring incorporated cities that provide adequate water and sewer services.

The County will continue to provide for the development of farmworker housing in its Agricultural zoning districts. The County amended the County Zoning Code to provide for farm worker housing that is permitted under State Department of Housing and Community Development as an allowed use.

Currently the County's Zoning Code allows transitional and supportive housing under the community care facilities designation by right in all residential zones, for facilities with 6 or fewer people. Pursuant to SB 2 the County must explicitly allow both supportive and transitional housing types in all residential zones. The County shall update its Zoning Code to include separate definitions of transitional and supportive housing as defined in the Health and Safety Code Sections 50675.2 and 50675.14(see definitions below). Additionally, the County will amend the Zoning Code to allow both transitional and supportive housing types as a permitted use subject to only the same restrictions on residential uses contained in the same type of structure.

Transitional housing is defined in Section 50675.2 of the Health and Safety Code as rental housing for stays of at least six months but where the units



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are recirculated to another program recipient after a set period. It may be designated for a homeless individual or family transitioning to permanent housing. This housing can take many structural forms such as group housing and multi-family units and may include supportive services to allow individuals to gain necessary life skills in support of independent living.

Supportive housing is defined by Section 50675.14 of the Health and Safety Code as housing with linked on-site or off-site services with no limit on the length of stay and is occupied by a target population as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 53260 (i.e., low-income persons with mental disabilities, AIDS, substance abuse or chronic health conditions, or persons whose disabilities originated before the age of 18). Services linked to supportive housing are usually focused on retaining housing, living and working in the community, and/or health improvement.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Amend the Zoning Code by June 2010.

Funding Source: General Fund, CDBG, and HOME

D.4 Program Partnerships – Special Housing Needs. Through the Continuum of Care and Solano Safety Net Consortium – Community Action Agency (SSNC-CAA), the County will continue to cooperate and work with other governmental and non-governmental organizations to encourage, promote, and facilitate the provision of emergency shelters, transitional housing, and housing to meet other special housing needs. The SSNC-CAA receives funding from CDBG, HUD, FESG, EHAP, United Way and other sources. Funds are used to provide housing assistance (in the form of rental assistance), hotel vouchers, tenant rights assistance, credit clean-up, budget sessions, job developing, etc. These services are in place to keep housing clients in their homes.

Through the collaborative efforts of the Continuum of Care (CofC), the County will continue to assess the magnitude of the homeless problem and to coordinate and promote housing assistance programs for the homeless. The County will promote the use of community facilities and continue to work with service agencies to provide short-term emergency housing for the homeless (rotating church space, hotel/ motel vouchers, armories, public spaces, emergency shelters for natural disasters and special need shelters such as battered women's shelters, sober housing, etc.). The County will continue to encourage and work with and assist non-profit housing development corporations to promote, assist or sponsor housing for the homeless. The County will also explore the feasibility of using its Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to provide seed money to assist non-profit agencies in these efforts. Through its Zoning Code, the County will continue to provide opportunities for sites to accommodate emergency shelters and transitional housing in all of its residential zoning districts through the use permit process and to accommodate farmworker housing in the Agricultural zoning districts.

Responsibility: Resource Management, Health and Social Services, Continuum of Care and Solano Safety Net Consortium – Community Action Agency

Target Date: Ongoing

Funding Source: General Fund, HUD, FESG, EHAP, CDBG, United Way

D.5 Housing Assistance Outreach – Special Housing Needs. Consistent with State law, the County has identified sites that can accommodate development of new farm worker housing, new emergency shelters and new transitional housing. The County will continue to provide opportunities for development of facilities for emergency and transition housing (“community care facilities” with seven or more persons) in all of its residential zoning districts through the use permit process. The County will continue to provide for development of farm worker housing in its Agricultural zoning districts. In addition to the primary residence on parcels under Agricultural zoning, the County provides for a “secondary dwelling unit” as an allowed use by right for either farm worker or non-farm worker housing. For additional housing above the two units allowed by right, the County’s agricultural zoning districts also includes provisions for temporary manufactured dwelling units for agricultural employee housing through the use permit process. The zoning code has been amended to allow farmworker housing permitted by the State Department of Housing and Community (HCD) development by right without a use permit.

The County has reviewed the Health and Safety Code Section 17021.5 and the County’s zoning is consistent with these provisions. Within the Agricultural zoning districts, two residential units are allowed by right as either farm worker or non-farm worker housing with no use permits required. Beyond these two units, no additional residential units are allowed within the Agricultural zoning districts except for farm worker employee housing through the use permit process. As a result of providing additional residential allowances specifically for farmworker housing, the uses permitted in the zoning ordinance go above and beyond requirements under the Employee Housing Act. To address group quarters under Health and Safety Code Section 17021.6, the County will continue to allow Group Quarters as an allowed use when a HCD permit is obtained.

In addition, the County will notify the public of available special housing needs and emergency shelter assistance programs and equal housing opportunity programs in coordination with the CofC and SSNC-CAA, city housing authorities, redevelopment agencies and other public and private agencies. The County will develop an informational brochure explaining options, permitting process and possible funding sources for the development of farmworker housing.

Through the Solano County Housing Authority contract with the City of Vacaville Housing Authority, the County will continue to provide fair housing services in the unincorporated area. In coordination with the City



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of Vacaville Housing Authority, the County will continue to assist the public in matters concerning fair housing issues and referrals to appropriate investigative and enforcement agencies. The County will promote equal housing opportunities through the distribution and posting of fair housing information in coordination with other agencies at public building and facilities and other locations throughout the entire County. Through the Housing Counseling program, the County will continue to promote fair housing education through Fair Housing Workshops, Landlord Training and Tenant Credit Repair Workshops and Tenants' rights Clinics at various locations throughout the County.

Responsibility: Resource Management, Vacaville Housing Authority, Redevelopment Agencies

Target Date: Develop an informational brochure explaining options, permitting process and possible funding sources for the development of farmworker housing by June 2010.

Funding Source: General Fund, Continuum of Care, Solano Safety Net Consortium – Vacaville Housing Authority

D.6 Extremely Low-Income Households – Special Needs Housing.

Assembly Bill 2634 requires the quantification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs of extremely low-income households and requires Housing Elements to identify zoning to encourage and facilitate supportive housing and single-room occupancy units (SROs).

Currently, the County does not explicitly define SROs in the Zoning Code, but defines “rooming or boarding house” in the Zoning Code as “A dwelling, other than a hotel, where lodging or meals, or both, for four or more persons are provided for compensation.” The County’s Zoning Code currently permits rooming or boarding houses in the R-M and R-E zones. The County will amend the Zoning Code to include SROs under the definition of “rooming and boarding houses” and allow them in the same zones as “rooming and boarding houses”. In addition, to support the development of single room occupancy units or other types of housing affordable to extremely low-income households, the County will prioritize and leverage federal and state funding for the development of these units.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Amend the Zoning Code to define single-room occupancy units by June 2010.

Funding Source: General Fund, state and federal programs

D.7 Child Care – Special Needs Housing. In cooperation with private developers, the County will evaluate the feasibility of pairing child care centers with new multifamily developments on a case by case basis.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Ongoing

Funding Source: General Fund

E. Governmental and Non-Governmental Constraints

The Housing Needs Assessment found that Solano County does not face any unusual non-governmental constraints to housing. As with most other jurisdictions in this part of the state, the unincorporated part of Solano County has experienced increasing housing land costs and increasing costs for building materials, services, and labor, which have contributed to increasing housing costs. At the same time, the residential development industry has benefited from near-record low financing costs and there is no evidence of a lack of available financing for sound development projects.

In terms of governmental constraints, the Housing Needs Assessment observed that processing and permit procedures, fees and exactions, site improvement requirements, and building codes and enforcement in the unincorporated parts of Solano County are in line with standard practices in other communities, do not impose any unnecessary burdens on new residential development, and are generally processed in a timely manner. The Housing Needs Assessment did note that a general scarcity of sites for urban density residential development in the unincorporated areas can be viewed as a form of governmental constraint on housing production. This situation reflects the consensus among Solano County and the cities that urban development should be directed to the cities, where services and infrastructure appropriate to serve urban development are located, preserving the unincorporated areas primarily for continued agricultural and open space uses. LAFCO polices and requirements under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act limits the ability of cities to extend services to unincorporated areas unless annexed to the city. This further limits the ability of the County to provide necessary services to support residential development in the unincorporated area. To mitigate the impact that these policies have on the availability of sites for residential development in the unincorporated area, Solano County has entered into agreements with the cities of Vacaville, Benicia, Rio Vista and Fairfield, to provide adequate sites to accommodate increased shares of the County's housing need, thus relieving the County of the need to provide these sites within the unincorporated area.

Objective

E. Where consistent with Solano County's local "smart growth" philosophy to direct most development to the cities, minimize constraints to the production of housing within the unincorporated areas of the County where limited residential development is appropriate.

Policies

E.1 Consistent with the requirements of SB 520, remove constraints and allow for "reasonable accommodations" for the disabled in housing development standards.

F.2 Rural residential development in areas without public water systems shall occur on minimum building sites of 5 acres or larger.

F.3 Rural residential development in areas with public water systems shall occur on minimum building sites of 2.5 acres or larger.

F.4 Urban density single-family development and multi-family development in the unincorporated County shall be located in those areas with infrastructure and services best suited to provide the level of services necessary to support such urban development, such as Homeacres.

F.5 Clustering of development meeting overall density standards shall be applied in the unincorporated areas when necessary to preserve open space and environmental quality, to provide for the efficient delivery of services and utilities, and to mitigate potential health and safety hazards.

F.6 Clustering of development meeting overall density standards shall be applied in the unincorporated area to protect farmable units in agricultural areas.

F.7 The County shall provide for residential development in an orderly manner within the timeframe of the General Plan and the goals and objectives of the County Capital Improvement Program.

F.8 The County shall phase future residential development giving first priority to those undeveloped areas zoned and designated for residential use and where residential development has already been established; second priority to undeveloped areas designated but not zoned for rural residential use and where rural residential development has already been established; and third priority to those undeveloped areas designated for rural residential use but thus far undeveloped.

F.9 The County shall promote the development of emergency shelters, and homeless housing in locations in close proximity to the homeless population and where essential services are readily available to the homeless community.

F.10 The County shall ensure that policies and programs of the Solano County Housing Element are consistent with other elements of the County's General Plan.

F.11 The County shall seek to achieve coordination between the County and the Cities to ensure the proper location and timing of future residential development.

F.12 The County shall not oppose the annexation of urbanized unincorporated areas adjacent to Cities where County housing assistance is provided, as long as annexation is not contrary to the wishes of a majority of the affected residents.

belief that cities can provide urban services more efficiently. This policy is at the heart of the General Plan policies which encourage city centered growth with residential development provided in close proximity to employment and commercial centers minimizing urban sprawl, travel distances, energy consumption and noise and air pollution.

Public facilities and services policies call for a continuation of rural residential development which is primarily self-sufficient with on-site septic and water systems. The policies also recognize that in some areas designated for rural residential use, ground water supplies may be limited or unavailable. Therefore, in implementing the County's housing program, consideration should be given to identifying present water supply and future water needs of designated residential areas. Where limited water supplies are found to exist, alternative solutions will need to be explored. In other areas where ground water quality problems exist, alternative water supplies may be required. In areas with poor soil conditions, increased residential populations may reach a point where individual septic systems can no longer be relied upon and some form of community sewage disposal may be required. Where changes in water and sewer systems are required, steps should be taken to ensure the protection of surrounding open space and agricultural lands. Care must also be exercised to ensure adherence to all other General Plan policies including timing of development.

The County must also evaluate the cost of new residential development and its impact on County services as opposed to the revenues generated from such development. As part of this analysis, consideration should be given to any additional services or facilities which might be required due to increases in residential densities that are made possible by future upgrades to water or sewer systems. In addition, consideration should be given to more specifically identifying areas that need improved public facilities and services traditionally provided by the County. Such mechanisms as a Capital Improvement Program can provide a useful tool for more specifically identifying and prioritizing such needs.

Objective

G. Provide for residential development that is generally self-sufficient in regard to water supply and sewage disposal, requiring only minimal public facilities and services essential for health, safety, and welfare.

Policies

G.1 Rural residential development should be designed and located in a manner that minimizes the need for increased County services.

G.2 Domestic water for rural development shall be provided principally through on-site individual wells. When individual well systems in an area of the unincorporated County become marginal or inadequate for serving domestic uses, public water service may be permitted in conformance with the General Plan. In such cases, public water service shall be provided and managed through a public agency. If lands proposed for water service are not within the boundaries of an existing public water

While redevelopment project areas have been established in some of these communities to address many of these blighting conditions, the County does not have a definite program for improving the environmental quality in many of these areas. In addressing the problems of community blight, the County should seek to establish cooperative programs between public or private agencies for the improvements of the environmental amenities within its residential communities

Environmental constraints need to be taken into account in the location of future residential development within the County. Essential agricultural lands are the principal environmental constraint to the location of future residential development. County agricultural policies are directed to preserving essential agricultural lands for strictly agricultural uses. In addition, environmental constraints relating to geologic hazards, areas of unstable soils, fire hazards, flood hazards, noise and scenic views and community buffers must be considered when siting future residential development, in order to preserve the County's environmental amenities and to protect the health and safety of Solano County residents.

Objective

H. Enhance and preserve the environmental quality of residential areas.

Policies

H.1 The County shall support programs which seek to reduce community blight.

H.2 The County shall seek to preserve the rural character, flavor and identity of its residential communities.

H.3 The County shall encourage the design and construction of residential dwellings that minimize the adverse visual, social and environmental impacts upon the residents of the dwellings and the surrounding community.

H.4 The County shall ensure consistency between residential designated areas in the general plan and residential zoning districts.

Programs

H.1 Blight Removal. The County will apply for Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funding to be earmarked for foreclosed homes and to allow first time home buyers access to these homes at a reduced cost. The County will continue to utilize HOME funds to upgrade dilapidated housing for qualified homeowners, thus helping to eliminate future potential blight concerns.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Apply for NSP funds by June 2010 and continue to apply for HOME or CDBG funds annually.

Funding Source: General Fund





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H.2 Hazard Abatement. The County will continue to enforce health ordinances, and weed, fire and inoperative automobile abatement ordinances.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Ongoing as projects are processed through the Resource Management Department, 2009-2014.

Funding Source: General Fund

H.3 Architectural Review. The County will continue to implement architectural review to ensure future development within rural communities is harmonious with existing development.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Ongoing as projects are processed through the Resource Management Department, 2009-2014.

Funding Source: General Fund

H.4 General Plan Conformity. The County will review residential projects for conformity with General Plan policies.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Ongoing as projects are processed through the Resource Management Department, 2009-2014.

Funding Source: General Fund

I. Energy Conservation

In 2008 Solano County adopted an Energy Element as a part of the Solano County General Plan Update. The primary purpose of the Solano County Energy Element is to identify and document the energy needs and problems in the unincorporated County area and to establish energy policies, strategies, and programs to address the identified problems and need and promote public awareness of energy conservation.

The average unincorporated area household uses more electrical energy than the average incorporated area household because (a) there is a higher proportion of single-family homes, which tend to be larger and consume more energy for heating, cooling, and other domestic use than multifamily units; (b) the newer homes are larger than newer homes in the incorporated areas; and (c) additional electricity is needed to pump household water in unincorporated areas. The highest potential for energy use conservation is in a heated swimming pool which can consume more energy than any other residential use. If solar energy were used for pool heating, substantial amounts of fossil fuels could be conserved.

To meet the County's conservation goals, some of the conservation techniques which could be used include weather stripping and insulation techniques, shading techniques (such as wider eaves, exterior shutters, shades and awnings), and wind deflectors (such as landscaping, beams, screens and fences). Also, architectural techniques which take advantage of site orientation and window placement to maximize winter heat gain and minimize summer heat gain could be applied. Among these techniques, weather stripping and increased insulation could be particularly effective retrofits for existing older buildings.

Objective

I. Promote energy conservation in new and existing residential units.

Policies

I.1 The County shall encourage the use of siting, construction and landscaping of structures to minimize energy consumption in housing.

I.2 The County shall encourage improvements in the energy efficiency of existing residential structures through the installation of cost effective conservation measures.

I.3 The County shall Promote reduction of energy use and cost through energy conservation assistance programs for low-income households.

Programs

I.1 Energy Conservation Outreach. The County will continue to have representation on the Green Building Committee, made up of Building Officials, the Building Standards Commission, the CEC, and the CA Building Officials Association. The committee will be doing public outreach by explaining to local agency building officials, staff, developers, contractors, architects, and engineers the Green Building program and greenhouse gas reduction program.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Quarterly public outreach efforts.

Funding Source: General Fund

I.2 Standards and Guidelines for Energy Efficiency and Conservation. The County will ensure that all new residential construction meets or exceeds the State Title 24 standards for energy efficiency. The County will continue to implement provisions of the California Solar Rights Act of 1978 and the State Solar Shade Control Act through the County's subdivision ordinance to assure that solar access is protected in major and minor subdivisions in residentially zoned areas. The County will provide staff assistance with site planning, landscaping and vegetation plantings for new residential units.

Responsibility: Resource Management

Target Date: Ongoing

Funding Source: General Fund



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Quantified Objectives

Based on the policies and actions outlined above, the following objectives represent a reasonable expectation of the maximum number of new housing units that will be developed, rehabilitated, or conserved and the number of households that will be assisted over the next five years. The County should be able to facilitate the construction of 8 new units and assist with the rehabilitation of 5 units between 2009 and 2014.

**Table 1
Summary of Quantified Objectives**

Task	Income Level					Total
	Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	
New Construction ¹	0	0	0	0	8	8
Rehabilitation ²	0	0	5	0	0	5
Preservation ³	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	5	0	8	13

Notes: ¹ Remaining RHNA for the planning period (January 1, 2007 through January 1, 2014).

² The County plans to use HOME funds to provide loans to rehabilitate housing units.

³ Currently there are no at-risk projects in the unincorporated area of the County.