
SECTION IV: HOUSING ELEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

The Housing Element's goals and policies establish the City's commitment to maintaining its residential character, while insuring that a variety of housing alternatives are provided where possible. The following four major issue areas are addressed by the goals and policies of the Housing Element:

- New Housing Opportunities Within Existing Constraints
- Maintenance and Preservation of Existing Housing
- Compatibility of New Housing with the Environment and Neighborhoods
- Equal Housing Opportunity.

Each issue area and its supporting goals and policies are identified and discussed in the following section.

NEW HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

The City encourages the preservation of the community's low-density, single-family character, but also supports housing opportunities for various income groups which are compatible with that character. The high development costs, topography, market pressures and lack of sewers and water service, noted in Section II of this Element, impose constraints on many forms of affordable housing.

Therefore, the City expects that future affordable housing needs will be found in mixed use residences and Accessory Living Quarters (second units). Specific actions have been taken in recent years to facilitate the development of Accessory Living Quarters. In 1994 the City will be updating its Zoning Code to address standards to enable mixed use residential development in

its commercial and transitional areas. In so doing, the City will introduce greater balance into its housing stock, in a manner consistent with the community.

In FY 94/95 the City will also review the long term needs of seniors with respect to housing. This study will address the following questions:

- Is there a long term need in La Cañada Flintridge for senior housing? To what extent can such need be suitably served within the City?
- What are the characteristics of an appropriate location in the City for such alternatives? Is there a need for an overlay to encourage private development to create such alternatives within the community?

GOAL 1.0: Provide a variety of types and adequate supply of housing to meet the existing and future needs of City residents.

Policy 1.1: Provide a range of residential development types in the City, including low density single-family homes, Accessory Living Quarters (second units), moderate density apartments and condominiums and mixed use residential development, in accordance with the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

Policy 1.2: Encourage the private sector to produce housing with particular emphasis on underserved segments of the community.

Policy 1.3: Facilitate the development of low and moderate income housing by allowing developers a density bonus, as established by State law.

Policy 1.4: Assist residential developers in identifying land suitable for new housing development.

Policy 1.5: Support the dispersion of Accessory Living Quarters throughout the City's lower density single family neighborhoods.

Policy 1.6: Encourage the development of residential units which are accessible to handicapped persons or are adaptable for conversion to residential use by handicapped persons.

Policy 1.7: Locate higher density residential development in close proximity to public transportation, other public and private services and recreation.

Policy 1.8: Continue to support the development of childcare facilities to provide improved housing conditions benefitting single parent and two-income households.

Policy 1.9: Examine the needs of seniors for specialized services and accommodations to determine which needs may impact the City's future housing policy.

Policy 1.10: To the greatest extent possible, identify the degree to which the long term needs of seniors are not adequately met by existing and proposed services and facilities in surrounding communities.

Policy 1.11: Monitor all regulations, ordinances, departmental processing procedures and fees related to the rehabilitation and/or construction of dwelling units to assess their impact on housing costs.

MAINTENANCE, PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

The goal of housing maintenance, preservation and enhancement is to protect the existing housing stock and to avoid physical decline that could adversely affect the character of the community. Maintenance and preservation efforts also avoid larger rehabilitation efforts in the future, including adversarial code enforcement efforts by the City.

Included in this effort is an awareness that the development of very large homes on smaller lots ('mansionization') may adversely effect the quality of the neighborhood, as well as the long term affordability of homes. The introduction of new or remodeling of existing houses to a scale that is much larger or out of scale with its site or neighborhood has been referred to as

"mansionization". Neighborhoods in the City of La Cañada Flintridge are beginning to recycle into larger, more costly residential units, partially due to the scarcity of vacant land.

GOAL 2: Maintain and enhance the quality of existing residential neighborhoods in the City.

Policy 2.1: Promote increased awareness among property owners and residents of the importance of property maintenance to long-term neighborhood quality and housing values.

Policy 2.2: Amend the development standards of the R-1 zone in order to better relate development to the size and shape of the lot and scale of the surrounding neighborhood in order to discourage mansionization, consistent with the goals and policies of the Land Use Element.

Policy 2.3: Continue to use the City's code enforcement program to bring substandard units into compliance with the City's Property Maintenance Ordinance and other codes, and to ensure the maintenance of the overall condition of the City's residential neighborhoods.

Policy 2.4: Encourage property owners to consider the benefits of home repair and remodeling using design and materials consistent with the existing or historic character of the residence.

ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY

As a built-out community, the City can accommodate increased densities only within existing development. It is an on-going concern of the City to ensure that residential growth is sensitive to the existing lower density setting. Development will only be accepted when coordinated with available community resources and infrastructure, and when designed to minimize impacts on the built and natural environment.

GOAL 3.0: Ensure that new housing is sensitive to the existing natural and built environment.

Policy 3.1: Ensure that Accessory Living Quarters (second units) are compatible in design with single family residential areas, and are consistent with the existing neighborhood character.

Policy 3.2: Protect residential neighborhoods from excessive noise, through traffic, and incompatible land uses.

Policy 3.3: Require that new residential development is coordinated with the provision of infrastructure and public services.

Policy 3.4: Improve standards for adequate off-street parking space for vehicles (including garages for single family dwellings), with safe access to streets and highways.

Policy 3.5: Encourage the use of energy conservation devices and passive design concepts which make use of the natural climate to increase energy efficiency and reduce housing costs.

Policy 3.6: Regularly examine new residential construction methods and materials, and upgrade the City's residential building and design standards as appropriate to ensure energy efficiency.

FAIR HOUSING

In order to make adequate provisions for the housing needs of all economic and social segments of the community, the City must ensure equal and fair housing opportunities are available to all residents. The City of La Cañada Flintridge is served by the San Fernando Valley Fair Housing Council, 8134 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 110, Panorama City, CA. 91402, (818) 373-1185.

GOAL 4.0: Promote equal opportunity for all residents to reside in the housing of their choice.

Policy 4.1: Cooperate with local fair housing agencies, including the San Fernando Valley Fair Housing Council, to enforce fair housing laws.

Policy 4.2: Inform the San Fernando Fair Valley Housing Council of any known violations of applicable Federal and State laws.

Policy 4.3: Refer individuals concerned with possible violations of applicable fair housing laws to the San Fernando Valley Fair Housing Council to ensure timely and effective response to such concerns. Publish information on these services at least annually.