

THE RHODE ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STANDARDS
GUIDANCE HANDBOOK SERIES

GUIDANCE HANDBOOK #5:
PLANNING FOR HOUSING

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Comprehensive planning is needed to provide a basis for municipal and state initiatives to ensure all citizens have access to a range of housing choices, including the availability of affordable housing for all income levels and age groups.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsection 45-22.2-3(a)(6)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Guidance Handbook Series is the result of over twenty-four months of cooperation and coordination among state agencies, local planners, and other professionals interested in helping cities and towns craft better comprehensive plans. The guidance development process was overseen by the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee, a dedicated group of planning, land use, legal, and community professionals who worked diligently to develop content on the comprehensive planning process and to review topical content as it was developed. Without this group the manual would not have become reality.

Additionally, the topical content for the guidance handbook series was developed in conversation with numerous experts. These knowledgeable individuals are the reason that the manual is helpful, user-friendly, and thorough.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is meant to be an accompaniment to the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual (“the Standards Manual”), providing additional information on the housing-related standards contained within the manual, as well as general guidance on planning for housing. The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual and the other guidance handbooks in the series can be found online at <http://www.planning.ri.gov/publications/comprehensive-planning-materials.php>.

This manual is split into three sections. [Section 1 - General Information on Planning for Housing](#) provides general information, including the purpose of doing so, relevant documents to review and ways to connect housing and the other topical areas. [Section 2 - Fulfilling the Standards](#) provides information on satisfying the specific standards presented in the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual. [Section 3- Craft a Better Plan](#) provides additional recommendations for addressing housing within a comprehensive plan that are not required for State approval but would strengthen the plan’s overall efficacy.

NOTES

In some cases, this guidebook presents “notes” that are relative to the content being discussed. Each note that occurs within the text will be tagged with a symbol to alert the reader to the note’s purpose, as shown below.



This symbol is used to identify references to the Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL). Blue text within this note provides a link to the actual RIGL citation.



This symbol alerts the reader to something that is required for State approval.



This symbol alerts the reader to potential data sources.



The text following this symbol provides additional suggestions to enhance comprehensive plans.



This symbol alerts the reader to sample goals, policies and actions that would fulfill the requirements.



This symbol indicates general information that is secondary to the main point of the text, but could be helpful to the municipality.



This symbol alerts the reader to a cross-reference within the guidebook series. If a concept is mentioned in the text area and more information on the concept is available elsewhere in the guidebook series, this note will point the reader to where to find it.

This handbook includes standards for complying with the requirements of the Comprehensive Planning Act. A standard may: 1) reiterate a requirement found in the Act; 2) provide specifics to clarify a requirement of the Act; 3) describe processes that if followed will help ensure State approval; or 4) identify information that while not specifically required by the Act, has been identified as vital to supporting the intents of the Act. Those standards that describe processes or information not *required* by the Act are listed as recommendations.

SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON PLANNING FOR HOUSING

WHAT IS HOUSING?

The term “housing” refers to all the structures in which people live – single-family homes, multi-family homes, apartment buildings, condominiums, mobile homes, mixed-use buildings, group homes, homeless shelters, etc. “Housing” includes both market-rate and subsidized units.

Planning for housing within a comprehensive plan requires the assessment of existing and future housing needs for all populations and the development and inclusion of goals, policies and implementation actions for meeting the identified needs. Additionally, planning for housing within a comprehensive plan requires alignment between housing goals and those of the other topical areas of the plan, particularly land use, transportation and services and facilities.

WHY INCLUDE HOUSING?

Communities are made up of neighborhoods, which house residents, permit interactions between neighbors and allow families to build roots and make connections to a place. Housing, therefore, is not only a vital need of all human beings; it can also be a mechanism for building community. Planning for housing within a comprehensive plan gives communities the opportunity to envision their neighborhoods as they want them to be - with safe, healthy, sanitary and well-designed housing for people of all income-levels, ages and abilities, in the appropriate locations to make everyday life easier and more enjoyable.



The required content for related to housing stems from the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsections 45-22.2-6(b)(2) and 45-22.2-6(b)(6). <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE45/45-22.2/45-22.2-6.HTM>.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSING

Throughout this guidebook, the term “affordable housing” is used to describe housing that is generally affordable, meaning that households would pay no more than 30% of their income on housing. The term “low- and moderate-income housing” or “LMI housing” is used to describe housing that has been subsidized and deed- or otherwise-restricted for a term not less than 30 years to ensure long-term accessibility to those of low- and moderate-incomes, as defined by the Low and Moderate-Income Housing Act, RIGL § 45-53-3. Comprehensive plans must address “affordable housing” and, if not yet achieved, include specific strategies to achieve 10% of the housing stock as “low- and moderate-income housing”.

RELEVANT STATE GOALS AND POLICIES

Every comprehensive plan must be consistent with and embody the State’s goals and policies for housing as found in the State Guide Plan and the laws of the State. The goals and policies listed below represent the main themes of the State’s goals and policies for housing and are intended to provide focus as to which aspects of the State’s goals and policies are most important for local comprehensive planning.



See the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsections 45-22.2-6(b)(1) and 45-22.2-9(d)(3). <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE45/45-22.2/45-22.2-6.HTM>

From the State Guide Plan

Ensure the provision of enough housing units to meet population needs.

[State Housing Plan, Goal 1-1-1 B, page 1.1](#)

Provide an adequate number of affordable housing units for low-income citizens, those with severe cost burdens and those with special needs.

[State Housing Plan, Goal 1-1-5 A, page 1.1](#)

Encourage and support stabilization of local neighborhoods and the aggressive renewal of deteriorating areas while attempting to preserve essential indigenous characteristics and preventing unwarranted displacement of low-income citizens.

[State Housing Plan, Policy 1-2-3 A, page 1.2](#)

Encourage and support the optimum use and maintenance of the existing housing stock.

[State Housing Plan, Policy 1-2-4 A, page 1.2](#)

Support the location of new housing relative to existing or planned:

- (1) transportation, water and sewer services, education, and other public services;*
- (2) employment opportunities, commercial and community services;*
- (3) site compatibility with land uses as specified in current local comprehensive plans, and those of bordering communities.*

[State Housing Plan, Policy 1-2-5 B, page 1.3](#)

A minimum of 10 percent of housing in each community is affordable.

[Rhode Island Five-Year Strategic Housing Plan: 2006-2010, Goal, page 21.](#)

Give a majority of the State's residents the opportunity to live in traditional neighborhoods, near growth centers.

[Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, LUO 3A, page 2-7.](#)

Promote low overall densities where public services are unavailable and are not planned. Promote conservation development in areas that lack supporting infrastructure.

[Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, LUP 8, page 2-9.](#)

From the Rhode Island General Laws

Comprehensive planning is needed to provide a basis for municipal and State initiatives to ensure all citizens have access to a range of housing choices, including the availability of affordable housing for all income levels and age groups.

[Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsection 45-22.2-3\(a\)\(6\)](#)

The general assembly finds and declares that there exists an acute shortage of affordable, accessible, safe, and sanitary housing for its citizens of low and moderate income, both individuals and families; that it is imperative that action is taken immediately to assure the availability of affordable, accessible, safe, and sanitary housing for these persons; that it is necessary that each city and town provide opportunities for the establishment of low and moderate income housing; and that the provisions of this chapter are necessary to assure the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens of this State, and that each citizen enjoys the right to affordable, accessible, safe, and sanitary housing.

[Rhode Island Low and Moderate-Income Housing Act, RIGL section 45-53-2](#)

To promote the production and rehabilitation of year-round housing and to preserve government subsidized housing for persons and families of low and moderate income in a manner that: considers local, regional, and statewide needs; housing that achieves a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and age groups; recognizes the affordability of housing as the responsibility of each municipality and the State; takes into account growth management and the need to phase and pace development in areas of rapid growth; and facilitates economic growth in the State.

Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsection 45-22.2-3(c)(3)



For more information on the goals and policies contained in State law, see the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, RIGL section [45-53-2](#); the Homeless Bill of Rights, RIGL subsection [34-37.1-2\(3\)](#); the Holders of Low and Moderate Income Restrictions Act, RIGL subsection [34-39.1-2](#); Expedited Permitting for Affordable Housing, RIGL subsections [42-128.2-1\(a\)](#) and [42-128.2-2](#); Mobile and Manufactured Home Lot Rental Increases, RIGL section [31-44.1-1](#); the Affordable Housing Preservation Act, RIGL subsection [34-45-2\(a\)\(1\)](#) and the Affordable Housing Opportunity Act, RIGL subsection [42-11.2-2\(1\)](#).

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Before beginning assessment of existing conditions, needs and trends, and before developing new goals, policies and actions, communities should review other state and local plans and other documents that are relevant to planning for housing, including:

- Any previous local affordable housing plans that may be available;
- “An Equity Profile of Rhode Island,” available at www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/RHODE_Island_PROFILE.pdf.
- The “Rhode Island 5-Year Strategic Housing Plan,” State Guide Plan Element 423, available at www.planning.ri.gov/documents/guide_plan/shp06.pdf ;
- The “State Housing Plan,” State Guide Plan Element 421, available at http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/guide_plan/shp421.pdf;
- The RI Office of Housing and Community Development and Rhode Island Housing’s “Statement of Policy on Affirmative Fair Housing for Subsidized Low and Moderate Income Housing in Rhode Island,” available at http://www.rhodeislandhousing.org/filelibrary/FHpolicy_jointstatement_062509.pdf;
- Rhode Island Housing’s “Annual Action Plan,” available at <http://www.rhodeislandhousing.org/sp.cfm?pageid=672>;
- Rhode Island Housing’s “10-Year Plan to End Homelessness,” available at <http://ohcdg.ri.gov/>; and
- The RI Housing Resources Commission’s “Opening Doors Rhode Island: Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness,” available at <http://ohcdg.ri.gov/>.

STAKEHOLDERS TO INCLUDE

In addition to the general public, when discussing how best to plan for housing, municipalities may benefit from involving:

- Current residents of low- and moderate-income housing;
- Local community development corporations;
- Providers of rental housing or low- and moderate-income housing within the community;
- Community-based organizations or advocacy groups related to housing and/or homelessness;
- Realtors, architects, home builders, contractors, and/or other real estate professionals;
- Representatives from Rhode Island Housing;
- Representatives from the Department of Health’s Healthy Homes and Environments Team; and
- Representatives from the Rhode Island Office of Housing and Community Development.

TIPS ON STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Productive public conversations about housing often begin by providing background information about the current conditions and future needs of the community. Because low- and moderate-income housing has been a topic of much discussion in recent years, residents may want to speak specifically about that component of planning for housing, rather than housing in general. It is important that preliminary discussions make clear that the comprehensive plan must address all aspects of housing the community, including, but not limited to, the provision of low- and moderate-income housing. Facilitators should be prepared to discuss low- and moderate-income housing needs, but should also be ready to steer the conversation to the broader housing needs.



To help be prepared for a discussion on low- and moderate-income housing in your community, Rhode Island Housing staff is available to review the goals and policies articulated in the Low and Moderate-Income Housing Act with the comprehensive planning team.

MAKING CONNECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE PLAN

Though there are several specific topics that are required to be addressed within a comprehensive plan, it is important that municipalities not consider the topic areas in as segregated elements, but rather as pieces of a larger system. Everything within a community is connected in diverse and varied ways, all of which should be considered when crafting a comprehensive plan. The information provided below is intended to highlight a few of the ways that municipalities should think about the connected nature of the topic areas.

Relationship to Land Use

The single most common use for land is for residences. The locations and densities of these residences will influence the population level of the community and its character. Furthermore, the location and density of housing can affect the level and types of services needed to serve its residents. Where and how a community chooses to locate its housing will have direct impacts on public safety, transportation, energy use, service delivery, and economic development. It is this interrelationship of where people live, and at what densities, with the other topics covered in a comprehensive plan that culminate in the allocation of land on the Future Land Use Map.

Relationship to Services and Facilities

Targeting new residential development in areas that are already served by infrastructure, facilities and municipal services can reduce municipal and resident expenses. Infrastructure extensions - new roads, sewers, water mains, electricity lines, gas mains, etc. - can be expensive, even without taking into account the cost of maintaining the infrastructure over time. While these costs are often not borne by the municipality, they are spread across all rate payers, increasing user fees and the overall cost of living in a community. From an overall cost perspective, the best place to target new residential development is within existing developed areas.

SECTION 2. FULFILLING THE STANDARDS

STANDARD 5.1 (RECOMMENDATION)

PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE EXISTING HOUSING CONTEXT BY INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING DATA POINTS:

- a. Existing housing units, both the number and the relative trend in housing development over the past 10 or more years;
- b. Occupied and vacant housing units, both the number and as a percentage of total housing units;
- c. Year-round and seasonal, single-family and multi-family housing units, both the number and as a percentage of total housing units;
- d. Owner-occupied and rental units, both the number and as a percentage of occupied housing units;
- e. The median age of housing units;
- f. The number of single-family and multi-family units constructed each year for the past 10 or more years;
- g. The current median home sale price, and the general trend in home sales prices over the past 10 or more years; and
- h. The average monthly rental price for one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom rental units, and the general trend in rental prices over the past 10 or more years.

The comprehensive plan should provide a quantitative summary of the community's housing stock, including its general characteristics, and some important associated demographic data. The data identified in the overview can then be the basis from which many of the other required assessments will stem.

The overview must include all of the data points listed above. Recommended data sources are shown in [Table 5-1. Required Data Points and Trends for Housing Context Overview on page 12](#). Municipalities are free to include the data in tables, lists, graphs, narratives, or any format that best suits their planning needs. Also, the information need not be provided in a stand-alone section of the plan; municipalities should organize the data in the way that works best for their plan.



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Communities may also want to look at:

- The number of housing units built prior to 1940 and within each historic 10-year increment since 1940 (e.g. 1980-1989, 1990-1999).



Municipalities are free to use a data source other than those which are recommended, but must explain within the plan why the selected data source more accurately reflects the local conditions.



A short guide about using Community Survey data, can be found at <http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/census/bulletin/Using%20Local%20ACS%20Data.pdf>.

Table 5-1. Data Points and Trends for Housing Context Overview

DATA POINTS AND TRENDS		RECOMMENDED DATA SOURCES
a	Existing housing units , both the number and the relative trend in housing development over the past 10 or more years	Rhode Island Community Profiles; U.S. Census; Local Assessor’s Data; Town or City Clerk
b	Occupied and vacant housing units , both the number and as a percentage of total housing units	Rhode Island Community Profiles; U.S. Census; Local Assessor’s Data; Town or City Clerk
c	Year-round, seasonal, single-family and multi-family housing units , both the number and as a percentage of total housing units	Rhode Island Community Profiles; U.S. Census (for year-round, subtract seasonal units from total units); Local Assessor’s Data; Town of City Clerk
d	Owner-occupied and rental units , both the number and as a percentage of occupied housing units	Rhode Island Community Profiles; U.S. Census; Local Assessor’s Data; Town or City Clerk
e	Median age of housing units	Rhode Island Community Profiles; U.S. Census; Local Assessor’s Data; Town or City Clerk; Local Building Official
f	Number of single-family and multi-family units constructed each year for the past 10 or more years	Local Building Official Data; Local Assessor’s Data
g	The current median home sale price , and the general trend in home sales prices over the past 10 or more years	HousingWorks RI Factbook; Rhode Island Association of Realtors at riliving.com ; Town or City Clerk
h	The median monthly rental price for studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom rental units, and the general trend in rental prices over the past 10 or more years.	HousingWorks RI Factbook; Rhode Island Association of Realtors at riliving.com ; Town or City Clerk

STANDARD 5.2

IDENTIFY EXISTING HOUSING PATTERNS AND CONDITIONS.

(Recommend including a. and b. to fulfill this standard)

- a. Discussing areas of the community, or neighborhoods, in which housing is located and, for each area, the average density, the prevalent housing types, the general condition of housing, and the general age of housing; and
- b. Discussing any condition-related issues that may be occurring within the municipality, such as high rates of foreclosure or abandonment, general neglect or deterioration of the housing stock, overcrowding of housing units, etc.

In addition to the quantitative housing overview, the comprehensive plan should include a qualitative assessment of existing housing patterns and conditions. The term “housing patterns” refers to the location, form and density of housing as it occurs throughout the community. “Housing conditions” includes the quality, safety and general state of the housing units.

It may be easiest for a comprehensive plan to organize the discussion of housing patterns and conditions by neighborhood or district, but this information can be presented in the format that best suits the needs of the community.



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Housing location and conditions play a critical role in the health and safety of residents. The presence of lead or asbestos, inadequate bathroom and kitchen facilities, overcrowding, proximity of units to idling or heavy traffic, general deterioration of building materials and the ability of second-hand smoke to infiltrate multi-family units can all negatively affect health. Therefore, though not required for State approval, communities may also choose to discuss the following, additional housing characteristics as part of this assessment:

- Concentration of lead poisoning incidents or other environmental hazard-related medical issues;
- Concentrations of building code violations; and/or
- Concentrations of residential zoning code violations.



DATA SOURCES

To fulfill this standard, communities may want to use the following data sources:

- Conversations with community members and other key stakeholders.
- Windshield survey of neighborhoods.
- Local building official data on code violations.
- Health data from the Rhode Island Department of Health.

STANDARD 5.3 (RECOMMENDATION)

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING DATA POINTS RELATED TO HOUSING AFFORDABILITY:

- a. The number of households within the community that are housing cost-burdened, meaning that they are paying more than 30% of their income on housing, also as a percentage of total households;
 - b. The number of households within the community that are severely housing cost-burdened, meaning that they are paying more than 50% of their income on housing, also as a percentage of total households;
 - c. The number of low- and moderate-income (LMI) households that are housing cost-burdened, also as a percentage of total LMI households;
 - d. The number of LMI households that are severely housing cost-burdened, also as a percentage of total LMI households;
 - e. The number of cost-burdened LMI households that are currently renting, also as a percentage of total cost-burdened LMI households; and
 - f. The number of cost-burdened LMI households that own their home, also as a percentage of total cost-burdened LMI households.
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DATA SOURCES

Communities may want to use the following data sources:

- Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data, available by query at http://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp/CHAS/data_querytool_chas.html.

STANDARD 5.4

ASSESS EXISTING AND FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS, INCLUDING THE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

(Recommend including a. through g. to fulfill this standard)

- a. Stating how many units will house the future population, either at build-out or at the end of the 20-year planning horizon;
- b. Discussing the ways in which the population is changing in terms of age, ethnicity, income and household size;
- c. Discussing the adequacy of the available range of housing unit sizes and/or types (studio, 1-,2-, and 3-bedroom; rental and ownership; condominium; etc.) in accommodating a range of future population needs;
- d. Discussing the current housing options available within the community for the homeless population, including the number of shelter beds that currently exist;
- e. Discussing the relationship of housing price (both sales and rental) to household income over the past 10 or more years;
- f. Discussing any needs related to risk of homelessness for severely cost-burdened low and moderate (LMI) households, as indicated by the data described under Standard 5.3; and
- g. Discussing the types of affordable housing (for LMI populations, families, the elderly, other populations, rental, etc.) that are in most need within the community, as indicated by the data described under Standard 5.3.

The comprehensive plan's housing inventories and assessments are the basis for determining and pro-actively meeting the community's existing and future housing needs. The information under Standard 5.4 is intended to assist the community in identifying how many housing units will house the future population, determining whether current housing options are suitable for the future population, and considering the general affordability of housing in the municipality. The municipality may also choose to discuss housing needs other than those outlined here, or that have been identified through the public participation process. The results of these assessments should take the form that best suits the municipality's planning process, be it as tables, narratives, graphs, or lists.

The most basic assessment of future needs that must be completed is to determine how many units will house the future population, either at build-out or at the end of the 20-year planning horizon. The result of this assessment should be a single number and it can be rounded to the nearest hundred for simplicity. To calculate this number, the municipality can:

- Divide the projected population for the 20-year planning horizon by the current average household size;
- Divide the projected population for the 20-year planning horizon by the expected average household size; or
- Use the residential unit number calculated as part of the development capacity, or build-out, analysis.

Standards 5.4.b. and 5.4.c. assess housing option suitability. These standards look at whether the available housing types match the needs of the existing population, determined by comparing the characteristics of current residents, the existing housing patterns and the characteristics of the existing housing stock. The goal of this assessment is to identify housing needs over the 20-year planning horizon and to plan to accommodate those needs appropriately.

The data points asked for in Standard 5.3, are intended to assist the municipality in identifying its needs for additional affordable housing, as called for by Standards 5.3.d. through 5.3.g. To assess the risk of homelessness in the municipality, the community needs to consider housing-cost burden and income. High numbers and/or percentages of LMI households with severe housing cost-burdens may indicate a population that is at risk of homelessness.

The CHAS data referred to under Standard 5.3 will also assist in assessing the types of affordable housing that are needed within the community. If a community has a high number and/or high percentage of households that are housing cost-burdened and/or severely housing cost-burdened, it could indicate that there is a need for more housing that is affordable to the general population, as well as more low- and moderate-income housing. If a community has a high elderly population that is cost-burdened, or severely cost burdened, it may indicate a need for more affordable elderly housing options. In most cases, it is safe to assume that occupants of subsidized low- and moderate-income housing are not spending more than 30% of their income on housing and therefore are not housing-cost burdened. Given this, the number of low- and moderate-income households that are identified as spending more than 30% of their income on housing indicates a need for more housing that is affordable to this population, in addition to the low- and moderate-income housing units that are already available within the municipality.



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Communities may also wish to assess:

- Whether there seems to be an overabundance or lack of a certain size and/or type of housing unit;
- Whether units seem to be located in areas of the community that suit population needs (for example, whether a high percentage of the population has limited access to a private vehicle and whether enough housing units are located along transit routes); and
- The ways in which the population is changing in terms of age, ethnicity, income and household size and whether future changes in population characteristics are likely to present any new needs (e.g. an aging population looking to downsize, more families in need of larger units, etc.).

Communities may also wish to assess the condition of the current housing stock, to determine if any needs related to condition are present. This assessment should look at the likely future conditions of housing units, taking into account the effects of time, natural hazards and potential redevelopment. To assess housing conditions, the comprehensive plan could discuss the following:

- The ways in which the condition of the housing stock likely to change due to age, deterioration and/or attrition;
- Any municipal programs that may be in place to assist with rehabilitation of housing units;
- The general condition of existing low- and moderate-income housing units;
- strategy in place for these areas and whether there is likely to be significant displacement of

- Whether there is likely to be any redevelopment of the housing stock, in which neighborhoods or districts redevelopment is likely to occur and whether, without intervention, redevelopment will likely cause the displacement of low- and moderate-income residents; and
- The potential impacts of natural hazards and climate change on the municipality’s housing stock, including where vulnerable units are located and/or concentrated, whether there is a rebuilding residents due to natural hazards and climate change impacts.



DATA SOURCES

To fulfill this standard, communities may want to use the following data sources:

- Municipal and statewide population projections, available from the Division of Statewide Planning available at <http://www.planning.ri.gov/planning-areas/demographics/ri-data-center.php>
- Current household size data, population characteristic data and housing characteristic data from the U.S. Census Bureau, available in an easy to use map format from The Providence Plan at <http://profiles.provplan.org>.
- Local tax assessor data.
- Local population projections broken out by demographic characteristics.
- Data from HousingWorks RI Factbook.
- Data from the Multiple Listing Service (MLS).
- Conversations with residents and key stakeholders.
- Code enforcement records.



Comprehensive plans must use a minimum 20-year planning horizon for all assessments of future needs.



If using a population projection other than the one provided by the Division of Planning, the methodology by which the projection was determined must be provided within the comprehensive plan or as an appendix. If using the expected average household size (versus the current average household size) the comprehensive plan must explain the methodology by which this figure has been determined.



Remember that when comparing prices and costs over time, dollar amounts must be adjusted for inflation. The Consumer Price Index (<http://www.bls.gov/cpi/>), from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, could assist in calculating these adjustments.

STANDARD 5.5

DEMONSTRATE HOW ONE OF THE MANDATED LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME THRESHOLDS WILL BE MET.

(Recommend including a. and b. to fulfill this standard)

- a. For municipalities that have already met one of the mandated low- and moderate-income housing thresholds:
 - i. A statement as to which threshold has been met; and
 - ii. The data necessary to show how the threshold has been met, including the current number of LMI housing units in the municipality and the percentage serving each population type (family, elderly or special needs); or
- b. For municipalities that have not already met one of the mandated low- and moderate income thresholds:
 - i. The existing number of LMI housing units (the number of low- and moderate-income (LMI) housing units that currently exist within the municipality, also as a percentage of the total number of year-round housing units within the municipality);
 - ii. The existing number of LMI housing units by population served (the current number of LMI housing units within the municipality designed to serve families, the elderly and those with special needs, also as percentages of the total LMI housing units within the municipality);
 - iii. The 10% threshold (the number representing 10% of the existing year-round housing stock);
 - iv. The existing deficit (the gap between the 10% threshold and the number of LMI housing units that currently exist within the community);
 - v. The forecasted 10% threshold (the number representing 10% of the forecasted housing units either at the end of the 20-year planning horizon or at build-out);
 - vi. The forecasted deficit (the gap between the existing LMI housing units and the forecasted threshold);
 - vii. Discussion of the general success rate of each previous strategy for providing low- and moderate-income housing units, (if a numeric estimate was given as to how many units would be produced using the strategy, the actual number produced must be compared to the estimate or, if a numeric estimate was not given, stating whether the strategy was highly successful, moderately successful or not successful);
 - viii. Discussion of the factors that affected the success rate of each previously proposed low- and moderate-income housing strategy;
 - ix. A description of all of the strategies that the municipality will implement moving forward to meet or exceed the 10% threshold for low- and moderate-income housing;
 - x. A discussion of the reasons why each proposed strategy is likely to be effective given past experiences, current economic conditions, building trends, etc.;
 - xi. An estimate as to how many low- and moderate-income housing units will likely be produced through the implementation of each proposed strategy that demonstrates numerically that the 10% threshold will be achieved;

- xii. Associated implementation actions within the Implementation Program that present the path by which each proposed strategy will be implemented;
- xiii. A realistic estimate of when the stock of low- and moderate-income housing will equal 10% of the total year-round housing stock; and
- xiv. Interim, time-based benchmarks by which the municipality can measure its progress toward the goal and describe the process by which the municipality will assess whether benchmarks have been met and adjustments will be made.

The Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, RIGL subsection 45-53-3(4), defines the provision of low- and moderate-income housing as being “consistent with local needs” when either of the following thresholds are met:

- For urban cities and towns that have at least 5,000 occupied year-round rental units, which comprise at least 25% of the year-round units, low- and moderate-income housing units must exceed 15% of the total occupied year-round rental housing units.
- For all other cities and towns, low- and moderate-income housing units must exceed 10% of the year-round housing units.

The Low and Moderate Income Housing Act requires that communities not currently meeting the above listed thresholds provide strategies within their comprehensive plans for achieving the applicable threshold. As of 2015, the following communities currently meet one of the two thresholds: Central Falls, Cranston, East Providence, New Shoreham, Newport, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, Warwick, West Warwick, and Woonsocket. All communities that have met one of the above thresholds must include the information listed under Standard 5.5.a.

As of 2015, all of the municipalities that qualify for the first threshold (having at least 5,000 occupied year-round rental units comprising at least 25% of the year-round units) have achieved 15% of their occupied year-round rental housing as low- and moderate-income housing. Therefore, this guidance focuses on the municipalities that must meet the second threshold - achieving 10% of their total year-round housing stock as low- and moderate-income housing.

The Low and Moderate Income Housing Act sets 10% low- and moderate-income housing within each municipality as a minimum standard for all communities. It is likely that some communities in Rhode Island have a need for low- and moderate-income housing that is much greater than 10%. By mandating a minimum of 10% in every community, the State is attempting to ensure statewide affordability for low- and moderate-income populations, recognizing that development conditions vary from place to place, that people migrate for a variety of reasons and that it is the responsibility of each community to contribute to the overall State goal. Also, by providing a minimum of 10% low- and moderate-income housing within a municipality, communities are preparing for future market and economic fluctuations that could affect affordability.

NUMERIC IDENTIFICATION OF THE 10% THRESHOLD AND DEFICIT (Standards 5.5.b.i. through 5.5.b.vi.)

Municipalities should assess the progress that is being made towards the 10% threshold. The first step in assessing progress towards meeting the threshold is to determine the number of low- and moderate-

income housing units that currently exist within the community and the proportions of those units serving families, the elderly and special needs populations (data points b.i. and b.ii.).

Next, comprehensive plans should determine the numeric value of the 10% threshold (data point b.iii.) and the deficit between the 10% threshold and the existing number of low- and moderate-income housing units within the municipality (data point b.iv.).

The assessment should also look forward to determine the forecasted 10% threshold (data point b.v.). Municipalities can use either the end of the 20-year planning horizon or the identified build-out date to determine the 10% forecast. The comprehensive plan should also identify the gap between the forecasted 10% threshold and the number of existing low- and moderate-income units within the municipality (data point b.vi.).

Data sources and calculation methods for the data points are given in Table 5-2 and sample calculations are given in Table 5-3.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PREVIOUS LMI HOUSING STRATEGIES (Standards 5.5.b.vii and 5.5.b.viii)

Since the amendments to the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act in 2004, municipalities have been required to develop and implement strategies to encourage the provision of low- and moderate-income housing. (The term *strategy* is used here to give a general name to sets of policies and implementation actions that are used together to achieve an end. For example, “Inclusionary Zoning” is a strategy that would be supported by specific policies and actions.) Though the effectiveness of proposed strategies has varied throughout the State, all municipalities can learn from the success and/or failure of their previously proposed strategies. Therefore, it is essential for the community to assess the success and effectiveness of previous strategies so that the strategies can be strengthened and, if necessary, new strategies can be developed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGIES TO BE USED IN MEETING THE 10% THRESHOLD (Standards 5.5.b.ix through 5.5.b.xii)

The comprehensive plan should describe all of the strategies that the municipality will implement moving forward to meet or exceed the 10% threshold for low- and moderate-income housing. The strategies identified by the municipality should seek to increase their production of low- and moderate-income units. It may also be appropriate to include strategies that preserve the existing low- and moderate-income units as such.

The estimates as to how many low- and moderate-income housing units will be produced by each strategy can be a single number or a range that considers uncertainties in the calculation. However, ideally, municipalities will demonstrate numerically that the most likely scenario will achieve the 10% threshold.

To determine which strategies are appropriate for your municipality, consider the following guiding questions:

- Which previously proposed low- and moderate-income housing strategies have had the most success?
- How have economic and building conditions changed since the adoption of the previous strategies?

Table 5-2. Required Data Points for Assessing Progress Towards the 10% Threshold

	DATA POINTS	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDED CALCULATION OR DATA SOURCE
b.i.	Existing LMI housing units	The number of low- and moderate-income (LMI) housing units that currently exist within the municipality, also as a percentage of the total number of housing units within the municipality	Rhode Island Housing’s Low- and Moderate-Income Homes by Community chart, available at http://www.rhodeislandhousing.org/sp.cfm?pageid=672
b.ii.	Existing LMI housing units by population served	The current number of LMI housing units within the municipality serving each population type (family, elderly and special needs), also as percentages of the total LMI housing units within the municipality	
b.iii.	The 10% threshold	The number representing 10% of the existing housing stock	Total year-round housing units (standard 5.1.c.) x 10%
b.iv.	The existing deficit	The gap between the 10% threshold and the number of LMI housing units that currently exist within the community	Data point b.iii. - data point b.i.
b.v.	The forecasted 10% threshold	The number representing 10% of the forecasted housing units either at the end of the 20-year planning horizon or at build-out	The 20-year projected total number of units based on projected population x 10%; or the number of housing units projected at build-out x the current percentage of year-round units (standard 5.1.c.) x 10%
b.vi.	The forecasted deficit	The gap between the existing LMI housing units and the forecasted threshold	Data point b.vi. - data point b.i.

Table 5-3. Sample Data Point Calculations for Assessing Progress Towards the 10% Threshold

DATA POINTS		SAMPLE CALCULATION, TOWN OF BURRELLVILLE, 2013
b.i.	Existing LMI housing units	532 units (from Rhode Island Housing chart)
b.ii.	Existing LMI housing units by population served, also as percentages	Family: 262 or 49% (from Rhode Island Housing chart) Elderly: 242 or 46% (from Rhode Island Housing chart) Special Needs: 28 or 5% (from Rhode Island Housing chart)*
b.iii.	The 10% threshold	6,189 x 10% = 619 units
b.iv.	The existing deficit	619 - 532 = 87 units
b.v.	The forecasted 10% threshold	5,992 x 10% = 599 units
b.vi.	The forecasted deficit	599 - 532 = 67 units
DATA POINTS		SAMPLE CALCULATION, TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN, 2013
b.i.	Existing LMI housing units	70 units (from Rhode Island Housing chart)
b.ii.	Existing LMI housing units by population served, also as percentages	Family: 16 or 13% (from Rhode Island Housing chart) Elderly: 0 or 0% (from Rhode Island Housing chart) Special Needs: 54 or 77% (from Rhode Island Housing chart)*
b.iii.	The 10% threshold	3,494 x 10% = 349 units
b.iv.	The existing deficit	349 - 70 = 279 units
b.v.	The forecasted 10% threshold	3,813 x 10% = 381 units
b.vi.	The forecasted deficit	381 - 70 = 311 units

- What type of growth is the municipality likely to experience in the future? Will the municipality likely experience single-family, scattered site development or multiple subdivisions or residential buildings with greater than 5 units?
- What incentives does the municipality currently offer for the development of low- and moderate- income housing? Are they well utilized? How could they be strengthened?
- Are the strategies proposed likely to produce the kinds of housing needed (e.g. rental or homeownership, elderly or family, etc.?)



If the majority of the residential growth within a municipality is in the form of single-family, scattered site development, inclusionary zoning is likely not going to produce many units and the municipality should determine which other strategies could be more effective.

DISCUSS WHEN AND HOW THE 10% THRESHOLD WILL BE MET (Standards 5.5.b.xiii through 5.5.b.xiv)

Taking the strategies collectively, the comprehensive plan should discuss when and how the 10% threshold will be met. The point in the future at which the 10% threshold will be met should be realistic, defensible and align with the community context. The time period for reaching the 10% threshold should fall before the build-out date. Whatever time period is chosen, the comprehensive plan should show, with sound methodology, that a minimum of 10% of the total anticipated future housing stock at that point in time will be low- and moderate-income housing.

The interim benchmarks can be determined at the discretion of the municipality, though 5-, 10- and year benchmarks are recommended. Policies and implementation actions should be included within the Implementation Program for assessing progress towards benchmarks and adjusting the low- and moderate- income housing strategies if necessary.



For more information about build-out analyses, see Guidance Handbook #13 - Planning for Land Use, Standard 13.4 and Section 4 - Additional Resources.



DATA SOURCES

Communities may want to use the following data sources:

- Discussions with city/town officials, residents and other key stakeholders, such as developers, local community development corporations and Rhode Island Housing.
- Data from the RI Office of Housing and Community Development.
- Rhode Island Housing's Low- and Moderate-Income Homes by Community chart, available at <http://www.rhodeislandhousing.org/sp.cfm?pageid=672>.
- Discussions with city/town officials, residents and other key stakeholders, such as developers, local community development corporations and Rhode Island Housing.
- Data from the RI Office of Housing and Community Development.

STANDARD 5.6 (RECOMMENDATION)

DISCUSS THE MUNICIPALITY'S INCLUSIONARY ZONING ORDINANCE BY:

- a. Including a statement as to whether the municipality has an inclusionary zoning ordinance; and
 - b. If the municipality has an inclusionary zoning ordinance:
 - i. Discussing what types of development incentives are currently offered; and
 - ii. Describing how the municipality currently complies with or will comply with the requirements of RIGL section [45-24-46.1\(b\)](#).
-

In 2014, the RI General Assembly made two important changes to the inclusionary zoning law (RIGL section [45-24-46.1](#)) that are pertinent to comprehensive planning. First, zoning ordinances that require inclusionary zoning are now also required to include density bonuses or other incentives that shall offset differential costs of below market-rate units. Second, zoning ordinances may now provide that the low- and moderate-income housing that is required under an inclusionary zoning clause may be provided on-site or that an alternative method of production can be utilized, such as off-site construction or rehabilitation, donation of land, and/or the payment of a fee in-lieu of the construction of the units.

Now, to comply with the law, municipalities that have an inclusionary zoning ordinance must include within that ordinance development incentives (such as density bonuses). For those communities that do have such an ordinance, the comprehensive plan should also discuss what types of development incentives are currently offered, as well as how the municipality complies with or will comply with RIGL section [45-24-46.1\(b\)](#). If no development incentives are currently offered, there are two acceptable options for complying with RIGL section [45-24-46.1\(b\)](#). Municipalities may choose to amend the inclusionary zoning ordinance to include development incentives, or municipalities may choose to repeal the ordinance. Whichever option is chosen, the Implementation Program must provide details on the action that will be taken, as described by Standard 5.8.D.

STANDARD 5.7

INCLUDE GOALS THAT EMBODY THE STATE'S GOALS FOR HOUSING AND POLICIES TO SUPPORT EACH GOAL

Comprehensive plans must include one or more goals that further the State's goals for housing, as well as policies to support each goal. Collectively, the goals and policies provide guidance on several considerations that are necessary to properly plan for housing within a comprehensive plan, including:

- **Quantity** – providing an adequate number of housing units, including affordable and low- and moderate-income units, for the current and future population;
- **Affordability** – ensuring affordability, both for low- and moderate-income populations and the community's workforce;
- **Equity** – preventing displacement of low-income residents and ensuring the equitable distribution of affordable and low- and moderate-income housing units throughout the community;
- **Quality** – Maintaining a housing stock that is safe, healthy and sanitary;
- **Location** – Promoting the use and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock and ensuring that new housing is built in appropriate locations; and
- **Density** – aligning future densities with the characteristics of the land, availability of infrastructure and services, and the densities of surrounding neighborhoods.

The goals and policies that may be appropriate for a community's comprehensive plan will depend on the context of the municipality, including the locations of existing development, the availability of public services and facilities, the desired form of new growth, and the current and future housing needs.

To determine the goals and policies that may be appropriate for your municipality, consider the following guiding questions:

- What is the appropriate amount of residential development for the community?
- Is it important to the community that the character of existing neighborhoods be preserved?
- Are there areas of the community in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment?
- Are there opportunities for infill residential development?
- What is the appropriate mix of residential uses within the community?
- How can the goals of the community demonstrate commitment to the ideal that every resident have an affordable, safe and secure place to live?
- How can the goals of the community help to prevent displacement of existing residents?



For more information on the difference between goals, policies and implementation actions, see Guidance Handbook #1 - The Comprehensive Plan 101.



SAMPLE GOALS

- All residents of our community will have good, affordable housing options.
- At least 10% of all housing units will be affordable to residents earning less than or equal to 80% of area median income.



SAMPLE POLICIES

- Locate housing near existing services and facilities.
- Promote affordable housing strategies for the elderly and single parent families.
- Promote congregate elderly housing and accessory (in-law) apartments.
- Support the development of a mix of housing types, with increased opportunity for multi-family housing, in proximity to job centers and public transit within designated growth areas.
- Support development or redevelopment of a diversity of housing types at varying cost levels, to meet the needs of all households.
- Ensure equal access to housing for all members of the classes protected under the federal Fair Housing Act and other applicable anti-discrimination legislation.
- Identify concentrations of substandard housing within the community and promote rehabilitation or redevelopment in those neighborhoods.
- Promote new housing development within designated growth areas, and provide a mix of uses wherever feasible.

STANDARD 5.8.A

Include implementation actions within the Implementation Program that address:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING UNITS IN ADEQUATE NUMBERS TO MEET FUTURE POPULATION NEEDS, INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MINIMUM OF 10% OF THE YEAR-ROUND HOUSING WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AS LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSING

While the market will likely determine the number of market-rate housing units that are built within a community, the municipality can and must take actions to promote the development of the types of units that are most needed. The assessment of the suitability of housing options, described in Standard 5.4, should be used to determine the types of housing that are needed and can inform the choice of appropriate implementation actions. For example, if the community doesn't have enough rental units, the municipality can adopt higher densities, allow multi-family by right in certain areas, revise regulations to allow in-law suites in single-family zones, or adopt incentives for flat-over-retail style mixed-use development in zones that have been traditionally highway commercial.

To properly address this topic, communities should consider the following guiding questions:

- Do the characteristics of the existing housing stock match the needs of the population?
- What actions can the municipality take to provide a greater variety of housing options to suit population needs?

Also, to embody the State's goals for housing, comprehensive plans must describe the strategies that will be used to provide opportunities for meeting the State's 10% threshold for low- and moderate-income units. Municipalities must commit to implementing the identified strategies by providing implementation actions for each. Also, municipalities must identify implementation actions for assessing the progress being made towards the identified benchmarks and for adjusting the strategies if benchmarks are being missed.

Most of the implementation actions related to this topic will be linked to the low- and moderate-income housing strategies described within the comprehensive plan. However, municipalities are encouraged to adopt additional implementation actions as necessary to improve overall affordability as well.



SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Coordinate housing, planning and implementation under the auspices of a housing advocate within the Planning Department.
- Review ordinances, and amend as needed to support opportunities for congregate living situations for people with special needs.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to allow attached and detached accessory apartments on single-family lots.
- Acquire foreclosed properties for rehabilitation and use as scattered site affordable housing.

- Permit and promote quality multi-family housing development that meets low-to moderate-income affordability standards and incorporates long-term energy efficiency features.
- Explore opportunities to partner with a local non-profit developer and service provider to create new or redeveloped units of affordable, accessible, and supportive housing for the elderly.
- Fund a revolving fund to support a Housing Trust program to acquire and rehabilitate existing houses in order for the homes to qualify as low- and moderate-income housing.
- Formally adopt incentives, such as property tax abatements and funding from a home repair program, to capture existing houses that are affordable to low- and moderate-income households as low- and moderate-income housing units.
- Enable a rent-subsidy program to increase the low- and moderate-income housing count.
- Hold workshops and conduct other public outreach on affordable housing options available in the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to establish density increases for comprehensive permit applications.

STANDARD 5.8.B

Include implementation actions within the Implementation Program that address:

PROMOTING THE USE AND REHABILITATION OF THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK AND MAINTAINING A HOUSING STOCK THAT IS SAFE, HEALTHY AND SANITARY

Tied to the stability and character of existing neighborhoods is the use and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock. Once a community assesses its existing housing conditions, actions must be taken that improve the safety and health of the housing stock.

To determine which implementation actions would be best suited to community needs, consider the following guiding questions:

- What programs does the municipality currently offer to homeowners for housing rehabilitation? Are the programs effective? How can they be improved?
- What new programs could be enacted? Are there any community organizations that could assist in developing and/or delivering new programs?
- How could the municipality strengthen its building code enforcement efforts? How could the municipality be proactive in preventing building code violations?



SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Inform homeowners about available resources to assist with home repair and maintenance needs.
- Create and fund a home repair program designed to assist homeowners with completing necessary home improvements.

STANDARD 5.8.C

Include implementation actions within the Implementation Program that address:

LOCATING NEW HOUSING IN APPROPRIATE AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY AT DENSITIES THAT ARE APPROPRIATE TO THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAND, THE AVAILABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, AND THE DENSITIES OF SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS.

Communities must first decide the best locations for new housing development and then undertake actions that will guide development to these areas. Including residential districts at varying densities on the Future Land Use Map is the first step and must be complimented with additional actions. To determine which actions would be most appropriate to direct new residential growth to desired areas, municipalities should consider the following guiding questions:

- Where within the municipality does infrastructure (water, wastewater, energy, transportation, etc.) exist with the capacity to support the development of new residential units?
- Has the municipality identified any growth centers in which to target new development?
- Has the municipality implemented any regulations or guidelines to offset resident concerns about density (e.g. design guidelines, open space set asides, etc.)?
- What areas of the municipality have the highest risk of being impacted by natural hazards and/or climate change phenomena?



SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Amend the zoning ordinance to allow compact, higher-density housing options in and adjacent to high density areas.
- Adopt ordinance provisions that permit appropriate residential densities and more diverse housing choices in designated growth areas.
- Establish an option for multifamily, townhouses or similar housing options along major corridors through mixed use zoning.
- Inventory vacant or underutilized buildings or properties (brownfields and grayfields) that have potential for redevelopment as multi-family housing, and offer incentives for their redevelopment.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to create a conservation subdivision with a limited density bonus to promote use.
- Amend the zoning ordinance to allow multi-family development within existing commercial areas of the community.

STANDARD 5.8.D

Include implementation actions within the Implementation Program that address:

COMPLYING WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF RIGL SUBSECTION 45-24-46.1(B), IF APPLICABLE.

If the municipality has an inclusionary zoning ordinance and no development incentives are currently offered, the comprehensive plan must include actions within the Implementation Program that either seek to amend the inclusionary zoning ordinance to include development incentives or to repeal the inclusionary zoning ordinance in its entirety.



SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Amend the municipal inclusionary zoning ordinance to offer density bonuses for inclusionary zoning projects.
- Repeal the inclusionary zoning ordinance until appropriate development incentives can be formulated.

SECTION 3. CRAFT A BETTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 5.9

IDENTIFY SPECIFIC AREAS THAT MAY BE SUITABLE FOR FUTURE HOUSING REDEVELOPMENT AND/OR REHABILITATION.

The land use chapter of a comprehensive plan sets the course for future development and redevelopment, including residential. It is critical that housing needs be reflected in the land use chapter and that the community carefully considers where residential redevelopment and/or new residential development is desired before crafting the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). During this process, the community should also consider what forms, or typologies, new residential uses should take (single-family, large-format multi-family, estate-style multi-family, flat-over-flat multi-family, townhouses, residential above commercial, mill rehabilitation, etc.)

Communities may also wish to discuss the particular parcels, buildings or areas that will be suitable, or targeted, for residential redevelopment or rehabilitation. When considering areas in which future housing development or rehabilitation may be appropriate, communities should assess a number of factors, including:

- The location of the Urban Services Boundary designated in Land Use 2025 and/or municipally-designated Growth Centers;
- Presence and capacity of supporting infrastructure and services, such as water, sewer, natural gas, electricity, fire, police and emergency response facilities, educational facilities, etc.;
- Access to public transit, such as bus service and commuter rail;
- Locations of existing parks, open spaces and recreational facilities;
- Proximity to employment opportunities and places to access goods and services, such as medical care, groceries, etc.;
- Vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change impacts; and
- Existing residential densities.



It may also be helpful for the descriptions of the residential land use categories to include a discussion of the residential typologies that are desired within the category. This information may also take the form of a separate map or an overlay on the Future Land Use Map.



More information on the requirements for a comprehensive plan's land use chapter and on designated a growth center can be found in Guidance Handbook #13 - Planning for Land Use.

RECOMMENDATION 5.10

Include implementation actions within the Implementation Program that address:

PRESERVING THE STABILITY AND CHARACTER OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND PREVENTING THE DISPLACEMENT OF LOW-INCOME RESIDENTS

Residential neighborhoods are the building blocks of every community. Preserving the stability and character of existing residential neighborhoods is an important part of planning for housing and should be addressed within the comprehensive plan with policies and implementation actions. Each neighborhood is different, with housing of different ages, residents of different cultures and income levels, and different types of needs, but every existing residential neighborhood is valuable to the community. As communities grow, municipal decision-makers must act pro-actively to support and revitalize existing neighborhoods.

When crafting a comprehensive plan, it is important for the community to recognize which residential neighborhoods are in need of preservation and/or stabilization. Identifying existing housing patterns and determining needs related to housing conditions is the first step in determining what policies and actions can be implemented to support existing neighborhoods.

Additionally, communities should recognize whether existing lower income neighborhoods are facing development pressures and which neighborhoods may be at risk of resident displacement. If such areas exist, the community should develop policies and implementation actions to prevent such displacement, such as requiring new development to provide a higher percentage of low- and moderate-income units.

To properly address this topic, communities should consider the following guiding questions:

- How can the municipality best support each existing residential neighborhood?
- Are there areas of the community in which infill development should be targeted to increase the stability of the neighborhood?
- Are there areas of the community in which development and/or design decisions have contributed negatively to the existing character?
- How can the municipality reduce the negative impacts of redevelopment on low-income populations?



SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Adopt flexible zoning standards to allow architectural encroachments into front yard setbacks, such as porches, stoops, and bay windows, where these features already exist within the neighborhood.
- Create an illustrated guide to designing cottage-style housing, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, multi-family housing, and accessory apartments that fit with the existing character of the neighborhoods.