

THE ASSEMBLY’S HOUSING VISION

The Municipality of Anchorage has affordable, abundant, and diverse housing opportunities, so everyone who wants to live here can find a home that fits their needs and preferences.

We Want More Housing!

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Cottage houses | Duplexes, 3- and 4-plexes | Supportive housing | Housing for seniors | Starter homes | Condominiums |
| Affordable rentals | Multi-generational housing | Walkable neighborhoods | Innovative design | New ownership models | Apartments |

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Attainable home ownership
- Housing quality, choice, stability and accessibility
- Quality rental options
- Community where everyone belongs
- Distinct neighborhoods
- Economic prosperity
- Engage the whole community in solutions
- Innovation & collaboration
- Government that works

GOALS

1. Increase the supply of housing units for sale and for rent.
2. Diversify the housing market: housing types, sizes, price points, locations, accessibility, and ownership models.
3. Increase the share of resident-occupied housing throughout the year and reduce the number of vacant units.
4. Reduce housing cost burdens and ensure safe, affordable, high-quality permanent housing for all residents.
5. Make the Municipality a better partner in the development process.

STRATEGIES

1. Remove Barriers to Infill and New Construction
2. Encourage Reuse and Redevelopment
3. Develop Funding Streams for Infrastructure and Public Utilities
4. Focus Incentives & Public Investment to Increase Housing Stock
5. Expand Housing Affordability, Accessibility and Stability
6. Streamline Municipal Processes

ASSEMBLY TOOLBOX FOR IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

- **Policy** – code changes, resolutions, policy direction; remove barriers that the Municipality has control or influence over.
- **Investment** – incentivize desired end products; disincentivize other choices; direct investment (funding, budget decisions); indirect investment (tax exemptions, fee reductions or waivers).
- **Communication** – two-way feedback with the community about their needs and steps the Assembly can take to address those needs; education on existing issues and the Assembly’s work to address the issues.
- **Advocacy** – build relationships across all levels of government, champion policies and needed investments in housing and community infrastructure
- **Convening and Collaboration** – bring together partners and stakeholders for problem-solving and action; engage the community in solutions; facilitate and negotiate multi-stakeholder agreements.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The Assembly will track the following indicators, and focus our efforts, investments, and policy decisions to help the community achieve the following targets.

| Indicator | 3-5 Year Target | Data Source |
|---|--|---|
| 1 Number of new housing units constructed: > Detached (single family) housing > Duplex, triplex and fourplex > Multi-unit (5+) buildings > Accessory Dwelling Units | Increase | Permit Center, Building permits; track by # units, Registration |
| 2 Number of renovated housing units. | Increase | Permit Center, Building permits |
| 3 Number of housing units created from conversion and reuse of existing properties. | Increase | Permit Center, Building permits |
| 4 Number of subdivided residential lots. | Increase | Planning Dept., Platting Cases |
| 5 Housing voucher waitlist, Anchorage | Decrease | Alaska Housing Finance Corporation |
| 6 Rental market vacancy rate | 5% | Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Dev. |
| 7 Median sale price of housing units by type. > Detached (single family) properties > Condominiums > Attached (multi-family) properties | Increase no more than CPI inflation | AK MLS <i>MLS tracks the 3 types. Multi = commercial</i> |
| 8 Number of housing units for sale under median sale price. | Increase | AK MLS |
| 9 Rate of average annual rent increase. | Increase no more than CPI inflation | AK Dept. of Labor, HUD |
| 10 Proportion of resident-occupied housing units compared with all housing units. | Increase | Census, American Community Survey |
| 11 Number of vacant and abandoned properties identified by MOA | Decrease | Code Enforcement (V&A database) |
| 12 Median days between submitting a permit application and receiving a permit. | Decrease | Permit Center, Performance Measures |
| 13 Number of renters who are rent burdened | Decrease | AK Dept. of Labor, HUD |
| 14 Number of evictions | Decrease | AK Court System |
| 15 New investments in housing > Public funding / > Philanthropic funding | Increase | Muni, HUD, State, Philanthropy |

ACTIONS

A. STRATEGY: Remove Barriers to Infill and New Construction

| | Strategy | Lead | Actions | Status |
|---|--|-------------|--|---------------|
| 1 | Reduce costs and barriers to development of 3- and 4-plexes (AO 2023-103 and AO 2023-130). | DV, RS | AO 2023-103 and AO 2023-130 passed; needs clean-up & state legislative action | In progress |
| 2 | Simplify residential zoning code to align with 2040 Land Use Plan (HOME Initiative, AO 2023-87(S)). | MZ, DV, AB | | In progress |
| 3 | Encourage denser development (housing units per acre) by revising dimensional standards, minimum lot size and coverage, height limits, and other policies where appropriate. | | Is this being addressed in HOME? | |
| 4 | Simplify and reduce prescriptive regulations in zoning code (Title 21) and building code (Title 23) for attached housing. | | AO 2024-16 reduces amt of open space reqd for certain residential development; Fall 24: form working group on Site Access issues | In Progress |
| 5 | Encourage rezones to bring properties in line with 2040 Land Use Plan. | | | |
| 6 | Create and expand use of pre-approved building plans for housing units. | MZ | Starting with ADU designs – expected by fall 2024 | In progress |
| 7 | Remove zoning and building code (Titles 21 and 23) barriers to manufactured and prefabricated housing. | | | |
| 8 | Encourage workforce development in skilled building trades. | | | |
| 9 | Identify publicly owned lands (HLB, MOA, Anchorage School District) that are suitable and make those lands available for residential development. | | | |

B. STRATEGY: Encourage Reuse and Redevelopment

| | Strategy | Lead | Actions | Status |
|---|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Create a “code safe harbor” program and options to waive code compliance requirements for existing buildings, to reduce the effort and cost needed to rehabilitate and reuse aging buildings. | | | |
| 2 | Encourage adaptive reuse by simplifying the change of use process for properties to become residential uses and subdivide properties into multiple units. | | | |
| 3 | Focus investment on re-use of vacant and abandoned nuisance properties identified by the Municipality. | | | |
| 4 | Explore code and policy changes needed to encourage more residential development in commercial zones. | | | |

C. STRATEGY: Develop Funding Streams for Infrastructure and Public Utilities

| | Strategy | Lead | Actions | Status |
|---|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Increase utilization of Infrastructure Coordination Agreements (ICAs) by developers in partnership with AWWU. | | | |
| 2 | Increase shared public-private responsibility for the cost of offsite improvements: water and sewer utility extensions, road and drainage upgrades, and public infrastructure required of new development. | | | |
| 3 | Prioritize infrastructure expansion as part of developing new neighborhoods (e.g., Eklutna 770 and Powder Reserve). | | | |
| 4 | Create an infrastructure bank, a revolving loan fund program established and administered by the municipality to provide low-cost loan financing for | | | |

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| | infrastructure for housing development. | | |
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D. STRATEGY: Focus Incentives & Public Investment to Increase Housing Stock

| | Strategy | Lead | Actions | Status |
|---|--|-------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Continue investments in vacant and abandoned properties for housing (2023: \$1.3M matching funding to Anchorage Affordable Housing & Land Trust). | | ACDA and AWWU pursuing federal funds for a project; need to check in on AAHLT pilot project | In Progress |
| 2 | Evaluate existing incentive programs to identify areas for improvement, or alternatives for new programs, to increase program results, leverage existing infrastructure, and maximize public benefit. | CC, ZJ | Working on Fairview abatement renewal; beginning research on existing programs | In Progress |
| 3 | Identify realistic qualification criteria and performance metrics to evaluate projects eligible for incentives (tax abatement, etc.), to ensure public resources are invested with reasonable expectation of public benefit. | CC, ZJ | Beginning research on existing programs | In Progress |
| 4 | Work with Planning staff to review recommendations from a planned targeted housing market study, including analysis of infrastructure costs and impact on development feasibility, accessibility and affordability. | | | |
| 5 | Explore incentives for prevailing wage and apprenticeship utilization for projects that receive municipal tax incentives or direct capital investment. | | | |
| 6 | Enact any code changes needed to support innovative housing models, such as community land trusts. | | | |
| 7 | Increase local control of federal housing dollars; explore creation of an Anchorage Housing Authority. | | | |
| 8 | Create an Anchorage weatherization assistance home upgrade program. | | | |

E. STRATEGY: Expand Housing Affordability, Accessibility and Stability

| | Strategy | Lead | Actions | Status |
|----|---|-------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Identify impact of short-term rentals on housing availability and affordability, and potentially regulate (AO 2023-110). | RS, MV | AO 2023-110 vetoed – need to determine how to obtain and analyze data | In progress |
| 2 | Support local enforcement of the Fair Housing Act and develop reporting system to reduce housing discrimination. | | | |
| 3 | Explore policies to protect and preserve current affordable housing stock, such as owner- and renter-occupied units in mobile home parks. | | | |
| 4 | Collaborate with landlords, housing and service providers, legal aid programs, and other stakeholders for education about fair housing, tenants’ rights, emergency assistance and eviction prevention, and language access resources. | | | |
| 5 | Explore policies to mitigate rapid increases in housing costs. | | | |
| 6 | Support expansion of low-barrier, rapid response programs for emergency rental assistance and preventing eviction. | | | |
| 7 | Remove barriers for people exiting the corrections system to secure permanent housing. | | | |
| 8 | Increase number of supportive housing units operating in the Municipality, to help people live independently. | | | |
| 9 | Encourage investments in residential energy efficiency and weatherization for rental properties and homeowners. | | | |
| 10 | Work on recommendations to address Girdwood’s | | | |

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| | unique housing challenges in the updated Girdwood Comprehensive Plan and future housing plans. | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

F. STRATEGY: Streamline Municipal Processes

| | Strategy | Lead | Actions | Status |
|---|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Develop an implementation strategy for the Housing Strategic plan, with annual review of progress. | | | |
| 2 | Create housing dashboard, track Muni investment in housing & how units performing. | | | |
| 3 | Increase predictability throughout the entitlement and development process. | | | |
| 4 | Implement findings and recommendations of the Bendon Adams report (2015) to improve performance, expedited timelines, and customer satisfaction with permitting. | | | |
| 5 | Support a customer-focused redesign of the permitting and development review process to reduce time and confusion between submittal and approval of a permit application. | | | |
| 6 | Support implementation of a streamlined online permit system, with robust data reporting. | | | |
| 7 | Create a project advocate (staff) function to assist development customers in navigating the process, and interface across departments and with all entities in the permitting process. | | | |
| 8 | Broaden community engagement and involvement in housing policy. | | | |

APPENDIX

Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan: Housing-Related Goals [plan link](#)

- **General Land Use:** A forward-looking approach to community growth and redevelopment.
- **Residential Uses:** A variety of housing types and densities in safe, attractive neighborhoods that offer a choice of urban, suburban, and rural lifestyles that are appropriate for northern conditions and in harmony with our natural setting.
- **Neighborhood Identity and Vitality:** A variety of safe, pleasant, and distinctive neighborhoods responsive to the diverse needs of residents, with good access to schools, recreation, natural areas, and community facilities.
- **Housing:** A balanced, diverse supply of affordable, quality housing, located in safe and livable neighborhoods with amenities and infrastructure, that reflects Anchorage’s varied social, cultural, and physical environment.

Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan (2017): Housing-Related Goals [plan link](#)

- **Goal 1: Plan for Growth and Livability:** Anchorage achieves residential and commercial growth, which improves community resiliency and citizens’ quality of life as it supports their vision for the future expressed in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Goal 2: Infill and Redevelopment:** Infill and redevelopment meet the housing and employment needs of residents and businesses in Anchorage.
- **Goal 3: Centers and Corridors:** Mixed-use, walkable commercial centers, and corridors thrive within their neighborhood context, offer housing affordable to a range of incomes, and enable business growth.
- **Goal 4: Neighborhood Housing:** Anchorage’s neighborhoods provide a range of places to live, meeting the housing needs of residents at all income levels, household sizes, interests, ages, abilities, and all races and ethnicities.
- **Goal 5 Infrastructure-Land Use:** Coordinated and targeted infrastructure investments catalyze new growth, provide an acceptable return on investment, and equitably improve safety and quality of life.
- **Goal 6 Accessible Land Use:** Anchorage coordinates transportation and land use to provide safe, efficient, and affordable travel choices.
- **Goal 7 Compatible Land Use:** Infill development is compatible with the valued characteristics of surrounding properties and neighborhoods.

Foundational Plans, Reports, and Prior Work

- Anchorage Housing Assessment (2012) [link](#)
- Anchorage Climate Action Plan (2019) [link](#)
- Assembly Summary Actions from Planning Session (Sep 2022) [link](#)

- Assembly Housing Action Resolution, AR 2022-416 (Dec 2022) [link](#)
- Planning Dept. Housing White Paper (May 2023) [link](#)
- Housing Retreat Summary Strategies (May 2023) [link](#)
- Assembly Guiding Principles for Housing, AR 2023-260(S) (Aug 2023) [link](#)
- Policy recommendations from subject matter experts, industry and trade groups.
- Sightline report on Accessory Dwelling Units [link](#)