



DRAFT HOUSING ACTION STRATEGIC PLAN

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
Affordable rentals	Multi-generational housing	Urban, walkable living	Innovative design	New ownership models

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Attainable home ownership
- Housing choice
- Housing stability
- Community where everyone belongs
- Economic prosperity
- Engage the whole community to find 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, 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, 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. Maintain Housing Affordability 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
- **Convening and Collaboration** – bring together partners and stakeholders for problem-solving and action; engage the community in solutions; facilitate and negotiate multi-stakeholder agreements; advocate to other levels of government

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 construction housing units. > Detached (single family) housing > Attached (multi family) housing	Increase	Permit Center, Building permits; track by # units
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	Number of accessory dwelling units.	Increase	Registration Building permits
6	Average age of homeowner.	Decrease	[? Not sure if measurable]
7	Median sale price of housing units by type. > Detached (single family) properties > Condominiums > Attached (multi family) properties	Decrease	AK MLS MLS tracks the 3 types. Multi = commercial
8	Number of housing units for sale under median sale price.	Increase	AK MLS
9	Rate of average annual rent increase.	Decrease	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	Increase	Code Enforcement (V&A database)
12	Median days between submitting a permit application and receiving a certificate of occupancy.	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

NOTE: This list of actions is still being developed, feedback is welcome on the actions listed below and prioritization of actions.

1. STRATEGY: Remove Barriers to Infill and New Construction

- Reduce costs and barriers to development of 3- and 4-plexes (AO 2023-103)
- Encourage rezones to bring properties in line with 2040 Land Use Plan
- Encourage denser development (housing units per acre) by revising dimensional standards, minimum lot size and coverage, height limits, and other components (HOME Initiative, AO 2023-87(S))
- Address other barriers to building more small, compact housing units.
- Create and expand use of pre-approved building plans for housing units.
- Phase infrastructure expansion into large land holdings in Eagle River/Chugiak, the area in the Municipality with the greatest opportunity for new housing (e.g., Eklutna 770 and Powder Reserve).
- Identify publicly owned lands (HLB, MOA, Anchorage School District) that are suitable and make those lands available for residential development.
- Remove zoning barriers to manufactured housing and other similar housing.

2. STRATEGY: Encourage Reuse and Redevelopment

- Create a code safe harbor program to reduce the amount of effort and cost needed to rehabilitate and reuse buildings.
- Adaptive reuse: Simplify change of use process for properties to become residential uses and to subdivide properties to add multiple units
- Focus investment on re-use of vacant and abandoned nuisance properties identified by the Municipality.
- Encourage workforce development in skilled trades, with a focus on skills needed for renovating aging buildings

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

- Increase shared public-private responsibility for the cost of offsite improvements: water and sewer utility extensions, road and drainage upgrades, and other public infrastructure required of new development.
- Create an infrastructure bank, a revolving loan fund program established and administered by the municipality to provide low-cost loan financing for infrastructure for housing development.
- Increase utilization of Infrastructure Coordination Agreements (ICAs) by developers in partnership with AWWU.

4. STRATEGY: Focus Incentives & Public Investment to Increase Housing Stock

- Evaluate existing incentive programs and potential new programs and identify areas for improvement to increase program results and maximize public benefit.
- Explore code changes needed to support creation of housing, and rent stability, through a community land trust model.
- Investment in vacant and abandoned properties (\$1.3M funding to Anchorage Affordable Housing & Land Trust).
- Increase local control of federal housing dollars, such as creation of an Anchorage Housing Authority.
- Create an Anchorage weatherization assistance home upgrade program
- 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.
- Require prevailing wage and apprenticeship utilization for projects that receive municipal tax incentives or direct capital investment.

5. STRATEGY: Maintain Housing Affordability and Stability

- Support expansion of programs for emergency rental assistance and preventing eviction.
- Remove barriers for people exiting the corrections system to secure permanent housing.
- Increase number of supportive housing units to help people live independently.
- Engage with landlords to identify ways to increase acceptance of housing assistance programs and prevent tenant evictions.
- Support local enforcement of the Fair Housing Act to reduce housing discrimination.
- Identify impact of short-term rentals on housing availability and affordability and potentially regulate (e.g. AO 2023-110)
- Increase language access resources available to rental housing organizations and other entities who work with the housing market.
- Explore policies to protect and preserve current affordable housing stock, such as owner- and renter-occupied units in mobile home parks.
- Encourage residents to pursue low-cost ways to save energy and money, such as installing programmable thermostats.
- Explore opportunities for new manufactured housing.
- Work on recommendations to address Girdwood's unique housing challenges in the updated Girdwood Comprehensive Plan and future housing plans.

6. STRATEGY: Streamline Municipal Processes

- Commission a targeted housing market study, to include an analysis of infrastructure costs and impact on development feasibility and affordability.
- Develop a strategic plan and implementation strategy for the Municipality to work and implement housing policies, with annual review of progress.
- Simplify and reduce prescriptive policies: determine where requirements can become guidelines.
- Implement findings and recommendations of prior studies, such as the Bendon Adams report (2015) to improve performance and customer satisfaction with permitting.
- Support an intentional, customer-focused redesign of the permitting and development review process to reduce time and confusion between submittal and approval of a permit application.
- Create a project advocate (staff) function in the permitting process.
- Implement an online permit system.
- Create housing dashboard, track Muni investment in housing & how units performing.

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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.