



CHAPTER 7

LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS



WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Carson City residents value the community's safe, attractive, and diverse neighborhoods. However, like many communities across the country, Carson City is experiencing cost of living increases as wages stagnate and the housing supply struggles to keep up with demand. Many of the community's younger residents aspire to buy a home and start a family in the City, but struggle to find options they can afford.

Today, Carson City's housing stock is made up of predominantly older, detached single-family homes, but is becoming more diverse, as townhomes and apartment buildings continue to pop up around the City. Based on the projected population growth, Carson City is anticipated to need around 2,100 additional housing units by 2042. These homes will need to accommodate a range of income levels and household types, including higher-end homes for affluent community members, options for older residents looking to retire in Carson City, and smaller homes for young families looking to start a life here.

Infill and redevelopment have occurred in multiple forms: on larger parcels that remain within the Urban Services Boundary (in the form of new planned neighborhoods); within older neighborhoods (in the form of individual homes or small multifamily developments); as well as along aging commercial corridors. While this activity has helped to expand the variety of housing options that are available for new and long-time residents, the scale and intensity of infill and redevelopment has at times generated concern from residents of established neighborhoods.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Livable neighborhoods contain not only homes, but also services and amenities for supporting the day-to-day activities of residents and visitors. Carson City will encourage the development of new neighborhoods within the Urban Services Boundary that contain a mix of land uses and housing options that meet the varying functional and financial needs of its residents, including single-family detached and attached homes (duplexes, townhomes), smaller homes, multi-family homes, accessory dwellings, and housing included as part of mixed-use developments. The City will also work to maintain the quality and character of established neighborhoods, encourage reinvestment in older neighborhoods, and ensure that infill and redevelopment is designed in a manner that is compatible with existing neighborhoods.



Learn more about Residential Development Trends and Projections

An analysis of residential development trends and projections was prepared to help inform the 2024 update to the Carson City Master Plan. A technical memorandum documenting the methodology used is provided in Appendix A: Background and Context. For a summary of key findings, visit: www.envisioncarsoncity.org/community-profile.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 7.1—Expand Housing Options to Meet the Needs of Existing and Future Residents and Workers of all Ages, Abilities, and Income Levels

7.1a—Lifestyle and Stage of Life Options

Maintain the ability for Carson City residents to choose from an array of housing options and lot sizes based on their lifestyle preferences, income level, and stage of life, as supported by the range of residential land use categories on the Land Use Map.

7.1b—Mix of Housing Types

Encourage a mix of housing types, price points, and unit sizes as part of new developments based upon their size, location, surrounding neighborhood context, and applicable land use policies, as contained in Chapter 10.

7.1c—Higher Density Housing Types

Support the incorporation of detached single-family homes on smaller lots, higher-density housing types (such as duplexes, townhomes, multi-family apartments, condominiums, and live-work options), and housing or neighborhoods for special populations (such as seniors or people with specialized needs) in locations that have access to, or are planned to include, a range of services and amenities, employment opportunities, and transit.



7.1d—Accessory Dwelling Units

Provide opportunities for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in existing and established neighborhoods as a means of expanding affordable and multi-generational housing options.

7.1e—Accessible Design

Encourage the construction of homes and the renovation of existing homes to meet universal design or visitability principles that facilitate aging-in-place, accommodating older residents and others with mobility limitations or disabilities.

7.1f—Neighborhood Design



Promote variety and visual interest in the design of new neighborhoods through the incorporation of varied lot sizes, building styles, and other features, as consistent with the land use policies contained in Chapter 10 of this Plan.

HOUSING TERMINOLOGY

Affordable Housing. Housing affordability comes down to the relationship between the price of housing in a community (either sale price or rent) and the incomes of households in that community. Generally, for housing to be affordable, housing costs (including utilities) for any given household should not exceed 30 percent of the household's gross annual income. When households must spend more of their incomes on housing, it means they have less income to spend on essential services (such as healthcare, childcare, and transportation) and discretionary items that benefit the local economy (such as meals at a local restaurant).

Workforce Housing. Workforce housing is a subset of affordable housing, and generally refers to housing that is affordable to households earning between 80 percent and 120 percent of the area median income (AMI). In other words, housing costs for households earning between 80 percent and 120 percent of AMI should not exceed 30 percent of those households' gross annual incomes. Typically, workforce housing is targeted toward workers who are vital for the everyday function of the community, such as teachers, public safety workers, first responders, and workers in retail, food/beverage, hotel/casino, and other core industries.

Goal 7.2—Support the Retention and Expansion of Affordable and Workforce Housing Options within the Community

7.2a—Existing Affordable Units

Collaborate with local non-profits and housing partners to access and employ available local, state, and federal programs that provide funds devoted to the retention and rehabilitation of existing, income-restricted affordable housing.

7.2b—New Lower-Cost Units

Work with non-profit housing partners, state and federal agencies, and others to expand the availability of certified affordable housing units, housing options for first-time homebuyers, and workforce housing units through the development and construction of new affordable and mixed-income housing projects.

7.2c—Manufactured Home Parks

Build the capacity of homeowner groups, affordable housing providers, and support organizations to enable the purchase, rehabilitation, and long-term management of manufactured home parks where practicable. Where retention of an existing manufactured home park or portions of an existing manufactured home park is not feasible due to age or condition, consider mitigation strategies to assist residents displaced through closure or redevelopment. Consider expanding opportunities for affordable, high-density site built or modular housing options as a tool to encourage reinvestment in existing manufactured home parks, where appropriate.



7.2d—Land Inventory

Establish and maintain an inventory of public lands, including state or federal disposal sites and City-owned properties that may be suitable for workforce and/or affordable housing development. Collaborate with the Nevada Rural Housing Authority, the private sector, and non-profits on the development of key sites as opportunities arise.

7.2e—Housing for Vulnerable Populations

Collaborate with local agencies, organizations, and neighboring communities to expand programs and resources designed to prevent Carson City residents from becoming homeless and facilitate the provision of supportive and assisted housing options to meet the needs of vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, those afflicted with drug or alcohol addiction, and those transitioning away from homelessness.

7.2f—Short-term Occupancy Units

Enforce appropriate standards for safe and decent affordable housing in Carson City, such as length of stay limits for recreational vehicle parks, motels, and hotels. Encourage the conversion of short-term occupancy units to permanent housing in accordance with adopted building codes.



See also, policy 5.7c

7.2g—Housing Resources

Connect residents to available local, state, and federal housing programs, grants, opportunities and agencies available to assist with housing weatherization and retrofitting to improve energy efficiency, down payment assistance, first-time homebuyer assistance, rental assistance, and other needs.

7.2h—Development Regulations and Approvals

Support the construction of affordable and workforce housing options by adopting clear, flexible regulations and development standards and facilitating the economical and efficient processing of development applications and building permits.

Goal 7.3—Maintain the Quality, Character, and Livability of Established Neighborhoods

7.3a—Existing Housing Stock

Work with partners to implement programs and incentives that increase home ownership opportunities for residents and promote regular maintenance and reinvestment within the City's established neighborhoods.

7.3b—Infill and Redevelopment Compatibility

Ensure that infill and redevelopment is of a scale, character, and intensity that is compatible with the surrounding development.

7.3c—Infrastructure and Amenities

Prioritize infrastructure improvements, such as traffic calming enhancements, sidewalks, pathways, street tree plantings, stormwater improvements, under-grounding of overhead utilities, or others that will improve safety and quality of life in established neighborhoods based on documented deficiencies. Identify schedules and funding for ongoing operations and maintenance of citywide infrastructure.

Goal 7.4—Promote Reinvestment in Declining Neighborhoods

7.4a—Retention of Existing Housing Stock

Support the retention and rehabilitation of existing housing stock in older neighborhoods as a core component of the workforce and affordable housing supply in Carson City. Allow for the adaptation of housing units to meet the needs of current and future residents (e.g., expanded footprints, garage construction, creation of accessory dwelling units).

7.4b—Infill and Redevelopment

Encourage the construction of new homes on vacant lots and the redevelopment of dilapidated properties. Where consistent with the Land Use Plan, support the introduction (or expansion) of attached single-family, duplex, townhome, or accessory dwelling units.

7.4c—Vacant and Dilapidated Properties

Consider legal and regulatory measures that put vacant and/or dilapidated properties back to productive use. Such measures include, but are not limited to, auction of tax defaulted properties and demolition by neglect.

7.4d—Code Enforcement

Pursue violations related to safety, public health, and quality of life, including removal of abandoned vehicles, abatement of blighted properties, and other nuisances in accordance with adopted codes and ordinances.