

# Housing & Neighborhood Development

## *Land Use and Development*



## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT INTRODUCTION

### Element Purpose

The Housing & Neighborhood Development Element is designed to promote the development of housing options that meet the diverse needs of the West Melbourne community. The City is committed to providing an array of housing alternatives in order to ensure that those who work in the community also have the opportunity to live in it. The intent is to establish a “community for a lifetime” by providing housing alternatives for young adults, working families, empty nesters, recent retirees, and senior adults.

West Melbourne is a diverse, multi-generational community which consists of seniors, active adults, working families, youth, and children. Maintaining this multi-generational population will compel the City to actively seek ways to provide a variety of housing options to meet the needs of a diverse community population. Such options will include traditional single- and multi-family owner-occupied and rental properties. They may also include mixed use residential and commercial properties, live-work housing alternatives, and carriage homes or granny flats. By promoting a diverse housing base, the City will ensure that it continues to be a wonderful place to live for residents of all ages.

### Introduction

Housing is a significant issue to the City because it determines the make-up and personal character of our community. The type of housing stock, as well as the development style and character of the City’s neighborhoods, fosters the City’s sense of place and community identity. While the role of housing in helping foster a community’s sense of place is true of all places, it is particularly true in West Melbourne where residential housing makes up nearly 80 percent of the City’s land uses. Consequently, any discussion about land development practices and design standards must involve the Housing & Neighborhood Development Element.

Through the establishment of the goals, objectives, and policies, the City is able to set forth its priorities for:

- Ensuring housing policies and practices guide growth and housing development while supporting the City’s adopted community planning vision.
- Utilizing housing policies and practices to adequately address the community’s conditions and needs.

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- Promoting housing policies and practices that achieve the community's future planning vision.

### **Background**

The City of West Melbourne provides a variety of housing types appropriate for households of various income, age, and needs groups. Nonetheless, the continued provision of decent, safe, and affordable housing to all residents is one of the key challenges that the City faces in the planning period.

Indeed, the provision of safe and attainable housing has been one of the major goals for all levels of government in Florida. The State of Florida established the Florida Housing Act of 1972 which includes: "...decent, safe, and sanitary housing and suitable living environment for all citizens of Florida at a price they can afford..." Whether or not housing is affordable is dependent, of course, on household income. It is important that the City promote and facilitate the development of a diverse housing mix that will meet the housing demand of residents from all income levels. The promotion of a diverse housing mix and provision of housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households are key objectives of this Element.

In addition to addressing the issue of housing cost, the Housing & Neighborhood Development Element addresses the supply and demand for residential units, housing construction, diverse neighborhoods, and the provision of housing appropriate for residents and households of various age and special needs groups. Ensuring housing appropriate for households and persons at all stages of life, including starter homes and apartments, inexpensive to expensive single family homes, housing for empty nesters, assisted living facilities, and low income and subsidized senior housing is an important consideration of the Element. As noted, the City of West Melbourne boasts a diverse housing stock. It is the City's intent to maintain and enhance this stock through the planning period.

The goals, objectives, and policies of the Housing & Neighborhood Development Element represents the community planning vision for a provision of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing to existing and future residents in both the short and long term.

### **Evaluation and Appraisal Report: Identified Concerns**

Concerns related to Housing and Neighborhood Development Element were discussed in all chapters of the 2009 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).

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- **Chapter 1—Community Identity and Image:** Concerns are related to how to ensure that the City's residences and neighborhoods foster a distinct community image, unified identity, and distinct sense of place.
- **Chapter 2—Community Core, Neighborhood Centers, and Gathering Spaces:** Concerns are related to how to ensure all neighborhoods and residential areas provide parks and public spaces within walkable distance in order to provide for the social and recreational needs of the community members.
- **Chapter 3—Integrated Development Patterns:** Concerns are related to how to facilitate the development of traditional neighborhoods that enable residents the opportunities to work-play in close proximity of their homes.
- **Chapter 4—Community Connectivity and Multimodal Transportation Systems:** Concerns are related to how to promote interconnected neighborhoods that provide for multiple transportation alternatives including pedestrian trails and walkway, bikeways, transit, and motorists.
- **Chapter 5—Standards for Public Facilities and Infrastructure Systems:** Concerns are related to how to ensure the City's public facilities and infrastructure systems provide for current and future populations.
- **Chapter 6—Land Development Practices and Design Standards:** Concerns are related to how to promote land development practices that foster traditional neighborhoods and interconnected residential areas.

While each EAR chapter addresses a different community issue, the issues together have a strong influence on housing and neighborhood development practices. The EAR found that the community has concerns that the current suburban development pattern and its separated neighborhoods have undesirable influences on the City's community character and quality of life. Additionally, the report determined that the current lack of walkable, interconnected neighborhoods does not fully support the community's lifestyle and small city quality of life.

To address these undesirable influences, the EAR concluded that the future planning framework should promote traditional neighborhoods. According to the EAR findings, traditional neighborhoods, with their mix of land uses, interconnected transportation system, integrated public spaces, and compact development patterns, support West Melbourne's desired quality of life and sense of place.

The EAR recommendations set forth a community planning and neighborhood development strategy through which the City can establish practices and tools to integrate all components of the community.

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The following practices were identified to help meet the City's housing and neighborhood development needs:

- Establish housing redevelopment strategies consistent with City's intent to foster architectural and design standards.
- Promote neighborhood priorities for both new and redeveloped areas that address how such efforts may contribute to the City's vision of creating a unified community identity and distinct community image.
- Promote a unifying design and architectural theme that unifies the City's neighborhoods.
- Foster a parks and public spaces development strategy which provides easy access to all City park and recreational resources.
- Promote integrated, mixed-use traditional neighborhood patterns in new development areas.
- Support development patterns that provide multi-modal and varied transportation.
- Coordinate the development of housing and neighborhoods with the provision of public services and infrastructure systems.

### **Land Use – Transportation – Energy Planning Coordination**

In 2008, the State of Florida adopted FS 697 which established new local planning requirements relating to energy efficient land use patterns, transportation strategies to address greenhouse gas reductions, energy conservation, and energy efficient housing. These new requirements became effective on July 1, 2008. As a result of this legislation, the state requires local governments to address the connection among land use, transportation, energy, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. While this issue has been addressed throughout the plan, it is particularly addressed through the land use and transportation planning strategies established in the Housing & Neighborhood Development Element.

The goals, objectives, and policies, and analysis presented in this Element have been designed to address the following planning concerns identified by the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA):

- Green building and design.
- Energy efficient neighborhood development and building design.
- Use of renewable energy resources in residential development.

The City has already begun to encourage energy efficient building practices that go beyond the minimal code requirements determined by the Florida Building Codes. Specifically, the City has already prepared an incentive based code for its multiple family zoning that allows taller building heights if energy efficient devices and building materials are used. The City intends to expand this scope to allow

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commercial and other non-residential uses either development review fee waivers or changes to parking lot requirements or building height if the developers use energy efficient devices and building materials that go beyond the minimal insulation and efficiency required by the State building codes as adopted by each city.

The City will provide incentives in the way of site development fee reductions and height, lot size or other lot dimension criteria, if these waivers are consistent with the individual future land use designation and zoning district. Once the types of incentives and the timeframe for implementation have been studied and reviewed, the City will enact a “Green Building” ordinance to require new residential development to comply with the new Florida Statute requirements. As of 2010, the State of Florida has not created a set of rules in its Florida Administrative Codes to provide the guidance as to the items that must be addressed to promote energy conservation in new housing.

### **Data Assessment**

The data addressed through this element contains information pertaining to how well existing land uses and resulting transportation systems address the community’s need to establish housing and development practices that utilize sustainable development methods, preserve natural assets, and promote green building approaches. Specifically, as required by Florida Statute, the analysis includes an examination of data pertaining to:

- Analysis of housing and population needs, conditions, and demographics.
- Identification of energy efficient building practices.
- Use of renewable energy efficient practices.

### **Policy Framework**

To address the challenges identified through the EAR and data assessment related to establishment of a traditional development pattern, the following objective and policy series have been developed. The primary goal of this policy framework is to promote integrated, compact, mixed use neighborhoods and community centers which provide the community opportunities for people to live, work, and play in close proximity. By working toward this goal, these objectives will achieve the directive of HB 697.

**Objective 1** – Local Residential Development Practices: “Facilitate effective local development practices and support successful private development efforts to meet West Melbourne’s diverse housing needs.”

- Through this objective the City seeks establish the foundation for sustainable neighborhoods and green construction practices.

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**Objective 2** – Safe and Quality Housing: “Assure the quality, safety, and livability of existing housing and maintain the high quality of the City’s residential resources.”

- Through this objective the City establishes the foundation for utilizing energy efficient construction practices to construct safe and quality housing resources.

## IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT

### Housing Summary

West Melbourne currently provides a variety of housing types appropriate for households of various income, age, and needs groups. Nonetheless, the continued provision of decent, safe, and affordable housing to all residents is one of the key challenges that the City faces in the planning period. Whether or not housing is affordable is dependent, of course, on household income. It is important that the City promote and facilitate the development of a diverse housing mix that will meet the housing demand of residents of all income levels. The promotion of a diverse housing mix and provision of housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households are key objectives of this Element.

In addition to addressing the issue of housing cost, the Housing & Neighborhood Development Element addresses the supply and demand for residential units, housing construction, and the provision of housing appropriate for residents and households of various age and special needs groups. Ensuring housing appropriate for households and persons at all stages of life, including starter homes and apartments, inexpensive to expensive single family homes, housing for empty nesters, assisted living facilities, and low income and subsidized senior housing is an important consideration of the Element. As noted, the City of West Melbourne boasts a diverse housing stock. It is the City’s intent to maintain and enhance this stock through the planning period.

The goals, objectives and policies of the Housing & Neighborhood Development Element represents the City of West Melbourne’s vision for its provision of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing to existing and future residents through the 5-, 10- and 15-year planning periods.

### Population Projections

Population projections are an important component of the Comprehensive Plan. They provide the statistical framework for the future development of the City and for determining its ability to ensure the provision of key infrastructure and services at adopted levels. Population growth is projected to

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continue in West Melbourne, and as a result there will continue to be an increased demand for the urban services and facilities that are needed to maintain and improve the quality of life.

It is important to note that the projections are not predictions of the future. Projections are simply an extrapolation of past trends coupled with knowledge of the residential capacity of the area. They assume that past trends provide some indication of the likely range of futures for the community. They assume that there will be no major disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, or prolonged droughts. They assume that government and other agencies will continue to maintain and expand urban infrastructure and services as needed. The planning process calls for ongoing monitoring of urban change and the projections may be amended as future conditions warrant.

The City of West Melbourne's population grew from 9,824 in 2000 (U.S. Census) to approximately 16,704 in 2009, according to the annual BEBR estimate. This represents a growth rate of 70 percent, or 7.8 percent per year.

According to the US Census 2000, Brevard County has a population of 476,230. The City of West Melbourne accounts for about 2.11 percent of Brevard County's population and ranks seventh in population size among the 15 cities in Brevard County. The City's population comprised 2.06 percent of the County's population in 1990, and 2.11 percent of its population in 2000.

The 1999 Comprehensive Plan projected that the City's population would be 10,179 in 2000, 11,171 in 2005, and 12,120 in 2010. As shown on Table FLU-2, those population projections were higher than the actual census count for 2000 and lower than the BEBR estimates for 2005 and 2010. West Melbourne's notable population growth since 2000 has primarily resulted from the development of vacant land.

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**Table H-1**  
**1999 Comprehensive Plan Population Projections v. Other Projections**

Year	1999 Comp Plan		US Census (year 2000 only) / BEBR		Difference	Percent Difference	2007 Water Supply Work Plan
	Population	Yearly Growth Rate	Population Projection	Yearly Growth Rate			
2000	10,179	n/a – base year	9,824	n/a – base year	355	3.61%	Not reported
2005	11,171	1.88%	15,058	8.92%	-3,887	-25.81%	Not reported
2010	12,120	1.64%	16,867	4.15%	-4,747	-28.14%	19,137
2015	13,225	1.76%	21,860	3.44%	-8,635	-39.50%	23,337
2020	14,431	1.76%	25,302	2.97%	-10,871	-42.96%	Not reported

The City of West Melbourne’s population is expected to continue growing, as shown in Table H-2. This table shows the population projections as developed in the adopted 2007 Water Supply Work Plan (WSWP) prepared by CH2MHill (adopted January 2008), compared with projections prepared by the University of Florida and reported in the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies. The WSWP population projections for the period up to 2017 were developed based on 2.4 persons per residential unit and a yearly population growth of 840 persons, reflecting historic conditions reported in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that the 2010 population is less than was projected in the WSWP, a factor that is reflected in the Shimberg Center projections. This is likely due to the economic retraction that has occurred over the past several years, and that has affected communities, and lowered growth rates, throughout the State. As a result, Table H-2, in the right hand column, has been modified to reflect the Shimberg Center projections.

**Table H-2**  
**Population Projections**

Year	Population (2007 WSWP)	Population/University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, 2010
2006	15,777	Not reported
2007	16,617	Not reported
2008	17,457	16,704
2009	18,297	Not reported
2010	19,137	17,122



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2011	19,977	Not reported
2012	20,817	Not reported
2013	21,657	Not reported
2014	22,497	Not reported
2015	23,337	19,603
2016	24,177	Not reported
2017	25,017	Not reported
2020	Not reported	22,553
2025	Not reported	25,510
2030	Not reported	28,188

### Residential Supply and Demand

It is projected that the City's population will increase to 19,603 by 2015, 22,553 by 2020, 25,510 by 2025, and 28,188 by 2030. Based on the average household size of 2.1 persons per unit: 9,335 units would be required to accommodate the 2015 population; 10,740 units would be required to accommodate the 2020 population; 12,148 units would be required to accommodate the 2025 population, and; 13,423 units would be required to accommodate the 2030 population. In 2008, there are currently approximately 7,885 housing units in the City. Table H-3 below indicates the need for additional housing units by year for the planning period.

**Table H-3**  
**Housing Units to Accommodate Demand through 2030**

Year	Population	Number of Units Needed	Additional Units Needed (since 2008)
2010	17,122	8,153	268
2015	19,603	9,335	1,450
2020	22,553	10,740	2,855
2025	25,510	12,148	4,263
2030	28,188	13,423	5,538

Source: 2010 Shimberg Center

The remaining vacant land in the City has the potential to accommodate 2,240 additional residential units under the City's Future Land Use map. If all residential categories on the Map are built out to their maximum potential, including vacant lands, the Future Land Use map currently allows the development of 27,273 units, a more than adequate supply to meet the needs of the existing and future population through the planning period.

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### Housing Conditions

The Shimberg Center for Housing Studies (Shimberg Center) defines substandard housing as housing that is overcrowded (more than one person per room) or lacks home heating fuel, complete kitchen facilities, or complete plumbing facilities. In the year 2000, according to the Shimberg Center, approximately 104 housing units (2.4 percent) were overcrowded, 54 units (1.2 percent) lacked home heating fuel, 34 units (0.7 percent) lacked complete kitchen facilities, and no units lacked complete plumbing facilities.

The age of the housing stock is another important indicator of housing conditions. Table H-4 indicates the age of the City's existing single-family housing stock. West Melbourne's housing stock is fairly new, with over 50 percent having been constructed post-1980. While the Shimberg Center data does not include the 2000s, the current number of housing units (single- and multi-family) is estimated to be 8,153 based on the number of households. These factors reflect the significant population growth that the City has experienced in the last 30 years.

**Table H-4**  
**Age of Housing**

<b>Decade</b>	<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1990s	1,089	22.0
1980s	1,649	34.0
1970s	1,103	23.0
1960s	632	13.0
1950s	290	6.0
1940s	50	1.0
Pre-1939	40	0.8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,853</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, 2000

The protection and preservation of historically significant housing will be an important objective of the City's planning program. As indicated on Table H-4, the City's housing stock is relatively new and there is currently not a concentration of historically significant housing within its boundaries. This might change, however, as the existing housing stock matures and definitions of what constitutes historic and architectural significance evolve. In order to obtain an accurate inventory of historically significant structures, the City will work with the appropriate agencies to conduct a survey of historically significant structures.

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Code enforcement is an important component in maintaining the aesthetics of residential neighborhoods and housing stock. The City will continue to utilize code enforcement as a strategy to maintain and improve the visual appeal of its residential neighborhoods during the planning period. The City will seek to ensure that all residential units within its boundaries meet all local, state and federal housing codes. Moreover, the City shall seek, through its land development regulations, that residential development and redevelopment does not diminish the quality or character of existing residential neighborhoods.

### Housing Affordability

The Shimberg Center, under contract with the DCA, prepares an Affordable Housing Needs Assessment (AHNA) for each municipality in the state to gauge affordable housing demand. The AHNA provides information about household size, income (as measured against the median), ownership status, and cost burden. Housing cost burden, defined as the percent of a household's income that is used to pay for housing costs, is frequently used as a measure for determining housing affordability. According to federal housing program guidelines and the Shimberg Center, housing costs should not exceed 30 percent of a household's income in order to be considered affordable. A household that pays over 30 percent of income for housing is cost burdened and a household that pays over 50 percent of income for housing is severely cost burdened.

Table H-5 summarizes households by cost burden for 2008. In 2008, 1,035 of 7,885 households (13 percent) were cost burdened, while 881 (11 percent) were severely cost burdened.

**Table H-5**  
**Households by Cost Burden, 2008**

<b>Percent of Income paid for housing costs</b>	<b>0-30%</b>	<b>30-50%</b>	<b>&gt;50%</b>
<b>Number of Households</b>	5,969	1,035	881

To further determine housing needs, housing tenure (ownership or rental status) should be considered. Table H-6 indicates cost burdened households by tenure in 2008. There were 5,643 owner occupied households, of which 640 households (11 percent) were cost burdened and 458 (8 percent) were severely cost burdened. Of the 2,242 renter occupied households 395 households (17 percent) were cost burdened and 423 (19 percent) were severely cost burdened.

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**Table H-6**  
**Cost Burdened Households by Tenure, 2008**

Tenure	0-30%	30-50%	>50%
Owner	4,545	640	458
Renter	1,424	395	423

Federal guidelines define the following households in reference in income levels:

- Extremely Low Income: Income less than 30 percent of the median household income for the area.
- Very Low Income: Income at or below 50 percent of the median household income for the area.
- Low Income: Income between 50 and 80 percent of the median household income for the area.
- Moderate Income: Income between 80 and 120 percent of the median household income for the area.

Table H-7 details households by income and cost burden for 2008. Of the 835 extremely low income households, 13 percent were cost burdened and 55 percent were severely cost burdened. Of the 876 very low income households, 33 percent were cost burdened and 28 percent were severely cost burdened. Of the 1,404 low income households, 23 percent were cost burdened and eight (8) percent were severely cost burdened. Finally, of the 4,770 households with incomes over 80 percent of the median (moderate, middle and high income households), seven (7) percent were cost burdened and one (1) percent were severely cost burdened. Not surprisingly, this indicates that the greatest need for affordable housing is with extremely low, very low and low income households.

**Table H-7**  
**Households by Income and Cost Burden, 2008**

Income	0-30%	30 – 50%	>50%
Extremely Low	267	110	458
Very Low	340	287	249
Low	969	326	109
Moderate, Middle and High	4,393	312	65

Elderly households, many of whom live on fixed incomes, face unique housing challenges. Table H-8 indicates the number of elderly (65+) households who were cost burdened in the City in 2008. Of the 3,193 elderly households, 399 (12 percent) are cost burdened and 392 (12 percent) are severely cost burdened.

**Table H-8**  
**Elderly Households by Cost Burden, 2008**

Age of Householder	0-30%	30 – 50%	>50%
65+	2,392	399	392

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Table H-9 indicates cost burdened households by size. Of the 5,348 one- to two-person households, 699 (13 percent) were cost burdened and 670 (13 percent) were severely cost burdened. Of the 2,015 three- to four-person households, 264 (13 percent) were cost burdened and 171 (8 percent) were severely cost burdened. Of the 524 households with five or more members, 74 (14 percent) were cost burdened and 41 (8 percent) were severely cost burdened.

**Table H-9**  
**Cost Burdened Households by Size, 2008**

Number of Persons in Household	0-30%	30 – 50%	>50%
1-2	3,979	699	670
3-4	1,580	264	171
5+	409	74	41

Table H-10 provides information on monthly rental costs in the West Melbourne for the year 2000. Fifty (50) percent of the renter households paid between \$599 and \$700 in monthly rental costs in.

**Table H-10**  
**West Melbourne Monthly Rent Affordability, 2000**

Gross Monthly Rent Range	Units	Percentage (%)
No Cash Rent	42	3
Less than \$200	20	2
\$200 to \$299	8	0.6
\$300 to \$499	156	12
\$500 to \$749	622	50
\$750 to \$999	309	24
\$1,000 to \$1,499	75	6
\$1,500 or more	23	2

Table H-11 provides information on home sales prices in West Melbourne between the years 2000 and 2008. The housing bubble of the mid 00s can be clearly seen, with average single family home sales prices increasing by \$81,000 between 2004 and 2005, reaching an eight year high of \$268,000. Although the average sales price decreased to \$206,700 in 2008, it still represented a 42 percent increase from 2000.

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**Table H-11**

**Home Sales Prices for Single Family Homes and Condominiums, 1999 – 2008**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Single-Family	\$120,700	\$124,800	\$132,950	\$149,500	\$187,000	\$268,000	\$251,000	\$240,000	\$206,700
Condo	\$71,500	\$77,250	\$62,500	\$82,000	\$104,500	\$144,500	\$140,000	\$161,500	\$82,450

### Assisted Living Units and Group Homes

Rule Chapter 9J-5 requires that the Comprehensive Plan include an inventory of assisted rental units and group homes. The Shimberg Center reports that there is one assisted housing development in the City, Crane Creek Senior Housing. Crane Creek is a 127 unit multi-family development, with a total of 115 assisted living units. Of the assisted living units, 20 must be occupied by households with incomes at or below 35 percent of the median income of the area, while 95 are restricted to households with incomes at between 55 to 60 percent of the median income per Florida Housing Finance Corporation restrictions. As noted in this Element, an affordable housing needs assessment has yet to be conducted for the City of West Melbourne. Table H-9 presents information on assisted living units in the City based on best available data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Florida Department of Health maintains a list of licensed group homes in the State, known as the Community Residential Homes Inventory (CRHI). According to the CRHI, there are three adult congregate living facilities with a capacity of 100 residents, as well as two skilled nursing facilities with a combined capacity of 359 residents.