

Housing and Neighborhoods

Element 12



INTRODUCTION

The City encourages housing availability for all economic sectors and special needs populations.

Sierra Vista strives to enhance the livability by providing clean and safe neighborhoods, promoting walkable neighborhoods, and building people-oriented neighborhoods, for both new and existing areas.

The enabling legislation for this Element states that the element should contain “standards and programs for the elimination of substandard dwelling conditions,” and “an identification and analysis of existing and forecasted housing needs.”

BACKGROUND

The Arizona Department of Housing and the Drachman Institute (University of Arizona) completed a Housing Assessment and Strategic Plan in August 2008. While the Housing Assessment was the first study conducted since the early 1990s, the Assessment outcomes were consistent with previous studies. For example, the study indicated 53 percent of the housing units are in excess of 20 years old. Another example is that renter-occupied units are at 38.7 percent of the total housing units, which is above the national average (as reported by Bloomberg) of 35 percent; this difference in rental percentages is indicative of the City’s transient nature.

Table 4

**HOUSING STOCK
ACCORDING TO 2000 AND 2010 CENSUS**

	2000 Census		2010 Census	
	2000 Census Numbers	Percent of Housing Stock	2010 Census Numbers	Percent of Housing Stock
Total Units	15,685		19,666	
Owner-Occupied Units	7,417	47.3	9,675	49.2
Renter-Occupied Units	6,779	43.2	7,614	38.7
Total Unoccupied Units	1,489	9.5	2,377	12.1
Built prior to 1950			207	1.1
Built between 1950 and 1959			823	4.2
Built between 1960 and 1969			1,191	6.1
Built between 1970 and 1979			4,051	20.6
Built between 1980 and 1989			4,194	21.3
Built between 1990 and 1999			3,390	17.2
Built between 2000 and 2009			5,608	28.5

Affordable Housing

The Cochise College Center for Economic Research completed and published the *Affordable Rental Housing Study: Sierra Vista, AZ (June 2012)*, which concluded that there is a shortage of affordable rental housing for certain household sizes. The most extreme of the shortages are for studio and one-bedroom units where the demand exceeds supply by approximately 200 for the extremely low-income households (those with 30 percent of the city's median household income). Also, the low-income households (those of 80 percent of the City's median household income) of four or more persons need approximately 120 more units to satisfy the need.

In Sierra Vista, there are approximately 425 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) apartment units of various sizes and approximately 175 project-based (owned by HUD) Section 8 units (as of 2013). Sierra Vista residents also use approximately 75 percent of the entire Cochise County allotment of Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8 tenant-based assistance).

Growth

Infill opportunities for new development include State Trust Land and a limited amount of privately owned land. The City has identified that the growth patterns for most new

construction will be to the east, southeast, and northeast; this new construction includes the approved specific plans for The Tribute and Ventana de Flores. (See Land Use Element for additional information).

Homelessness

As of 2013, the City has only one privately run shelter, the Good Neighbor Alliance, for homeless men and families with children. The City has supported this shelter through numerous Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding allocations. There are also several organizations and churches that go to the homeless to administer aid.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-Funded Housing Programs

Prior to 2014, all HUD funding dispersal to Sierra Vista came through the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH). Sierra Vista has received biennial CDBG funding and one \$300,000 HOME Grant for renovation of owner-occupied homes. Post 2013, Sierra Vista should receive direct allotments of HUD funding. While there are a number of programs available through HUD, the City does not foresee owning public housing or entering the arena to offer project- and tenant-based Section 8 or Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) that are currently administered through the Cochise County Housing Authority.

However, the City supports private developers who wish to build LIHTC projects and HUD programs for developers to use including Section 202 Elderly Housing and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities. Support cannot be a direct financial contribution, but the City will support these programs by reducing Development Fees, Building Permit fees, and Development Review Processing fees.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

~~Goal 12-1 — Promote quality affordable rental housing~~

- ~~**Strategies**~~
- ~~1. Support, through incentives, rehabilitation and reinvestment in existing affordable housing units.~~
 - ~~2. Encourage private developers applying for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) by reducing fees.~~

- ~~3. Apply for grant funding for renovation, when appropriate.~~
- ~~4. Encourage new regulations and incentives to permit accessory dwellings.~~
- ~~5. Encourage alternative housing types, such as dense, small lot or multi-family housing.~~

Goal 12-2 — Promote quality affordable owner-occupied housing

- Strategies**
- ~~1. Research inclusionary housing options and promote viable options to local developers.~~
 - ~~2. Apply for grant funding to assist in rehabilitation.~~
 - ~~3. Support, through incentives, rehabilitation and reinvestment in existing affordable housing units.~~

Goal 12-3 — Improve understanding of property management and maintenance for homeowners and renters

- Strategies**
- ~~1. Continue to provide training on federal and state Fair Housing requirements.~~
 - ~~2. Continue to provide literature on the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, Mobile Home Land and Tenant Act, and various other publications to assist both the residents and landlords.~~
 - ~~3. Research and possibly provide training on issues such as basic financial literacy, the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, and foreclosure information.~~
 - ~~4. Research the possibility of providing basic home maintenance courses.~~

Goal 12-4 — Continue enforcing the Neighborhood Enhancement Property Maintenance Program to encourage the quality, safety, and livability of neighborhoods

- Strategies**
- ~~1. Amend the Property Nuisance Codes to reflect the desires of the residents.~~

- ~~2. Continue to support the City's proactive approach to code enforcement that preserves, enhances, and promotes safe neighborhoods.~~
- ~~3. Promote public-private partnerships to monitor the condition of abandoned or vacant buildings to mitigate negative effects on a neighborhood.~~
- ~~4. Enhance response efforts to eliminate graffiti impacts.~~
- ~~5. Educate property owners on the value of maintaining and improving their properties.~~
- ~~6. Offer more neighborhood clean-ups.~~

Goal 12-1 Conserve and improve existing neighborhoods and ensure the provision of adequate, affordable, and safe housing for existing and future residents of the city.

- Strategies**
- 1. Definition of Affordable Housing:** “Affordable” shall mean that monthly mortgage payments or rents do not exceed thirty percent of the median annual household income, provided, however, that the City shall continue to evaluate this definition based upon actions taken by the Federal and State government authorities.
 - 2. Definition of Qualifying Income:** “Qualifying Income” shall be the annual household income needed to qualify for a mortgage (under prevailing financing terms) assuming that thirty percent of the annual income is the housing expenditure, provided, however, that the City shall continue to evaluate this definition based upon actions taken by the Federal and State government authorities.
 - 3. Assessment of Affordable Housing Stock:** The City shall assess the affordability of its housing stock every five years as a component of the Five-Year CDBG Consolidated Planning Process using best available information.
 - 4. Maintain Active Code Enforcement:** The City shall maintain an active code enforcement program to identify housing accommodations and non-residential structures that fail to comply with minimum specifications governing building construction, electrical facilities, water and wastewater

systems, construction, fire protection, flood prevention, and housing. Where structures fail to meet minimum standard specifications, the City shall duly notice the violation and stipulate conditions for bringing the structure into compliance.

5. **Compatibility of New Residential Development.** The City shall continue to endure compatibility of proposed development with adjacent and surrounding residential uses through recognition of existing neighborhoods and minimizing impacts created by new development through the City's Development Code standards.
6. **Ensure Connectivity with Surrounding Uses.** Encourage new neighborhoods to establish pedestrian connections with nearby community uses to create connectivity.
7. **Supportive Facilities and Services for Quality Neighborhoods.** The City shall ensure that sufficient public facilities and services supportive to a quality residential environment have been planned, designed, and implemented where possible.
8. **Affordable Housing Incentives.** The City shall expedite permitting to private and not-for-profit builders for low and moderate-income housing developments and consider fee reductions.
9. **Coordination with Housing Providers and the Private Sector.** The City shall coordinate as appropriate with housing providers and the private sector in order to identify and mitigate regulatory barriers to the provision of affordable housing. The City shall also engage in intergovernmental coordination with the Federal and State agencies of pertinent jurisdiction.
10. **Coordination of Housing Type and Location with Transportation Programs and Plans.** Land use and transportation shall be coordinated to assure that affordable housing, higher density housing, and housing for special groups are accessible to transit.
11. **Ensure Land Use and Zoning Districts provide for sufficient densities for all present and future residents of the City to purchase or rent housing.** The City shall periodically review the Development Code to ensure provisions for the following:
 - a) Residential districts with small lot sizes
 - b) Residential districts with less restrictive setbacks

- c) Residential districts providing for a mix of residential uses
- d) Providing for second floor residential uses over ground floor commercial or office space
- e) Mixed use districts
- f) Residential districts with cluster development
- g) Residential districts with the use of manufactured housing
- h) Accessory dwellings
- i) Live/work and home-based businesses

Goal 12-2 Improve housing conditions particularly in neighborhoods designated for infill and redevelopment and low to moderate income census tracts targeted for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) investment.

- Strategies**
1. **Definition of Substandard Housing.** A substandard housing unit shall be a dwelling unit that is considered to be either deteriorated or dilapidated. (A deteriorated unit has one or more intermediate defects but is considered repairable. A dilapidated unit has one or more critical defects and is considered to be beyond repair).
 2. **Inventory of Substandard Units.** The City shall develop and maintain an inventory of substandard housing units which will be assessed annually and encourage property owners to bring substandard housing units into compliance with all codes.
 3. **Enforcement of Building and Property Maintenance Codes.** The City shall strictly enforce all building and property maintenance codes.
 4. **Monitoring of Dilapidated Housing.** The City shall monitor dilapidated housing structures to pursue rehabilitation, replacement, or condemnation prior to new occupancy.
 5. **Vacant Dilapidated Housing.** The City shall pursue condemnation and demolition of vacant dilapidated housing structures.
 6. **Public Facility and Infrastructure Improvements for Targeted Neighborhoods.** The City shall continue to prioritize Community Development Block Grant funds for use on addressing infrastructure deficiencies in targeted neighborhoods to include ADA ramps and sidewalk connections, pedestrian lighting and amenities, drainage and utilities, street and landscape improvements.

Goal 12-5 — Revitalize targeted areas

- Strategies**
- ~~1. Install public improvements in targeted areas, where needed, to encourage and strengthen rehabilitation and redevelopment activity.~~
 - ~~7. Develop program measurements and evaluation criteria as part of an area's revitalization planning process.~~
 - ~~8. Continue the City's commitment to revitalize and redevelop the West End.~~
 - ~~9. Support economic development efforts in targeted areas with public improvements to community facilities when needed.~~

Goal 12-6 — Build strong neighborhoods

- Strategies**
- ~~1. Apply community infrastructure, as needed, to build strong neighborhoods.~~
 - ~~2. Develop health impact assessments (HIA) as needed to build strong neighborhoods.~~
 - ~~3. Construct curbs, gutters, and sidewalks in neighborhoods where needed.~~
 - ~~4. Apply for grant funding to assist community groups and constructing infrastructure.~~
 - ~~5. Establish clear neighborhood zoning and design standards to encourage walkability.
 - ~~a. Amend the Development Code to encourage construction of walkable and pedestrian-scaled neighborhoods.~~
 - ~~b. Retrofit existing neighborhoods, as funding allows, with walkable and pedestrian-scaled infrastructure.~~
 - ~~c. Construct ADA ramps where needed.~~~~
 - ~~6. Continue retrofitting neighborhoods with multi-use paths and parks.~~
 - ~~7. Promote public-private partnerships to monitor the condition of abandoned or vacant residential homes or commercial buildings to mitigate negative effects on the neighborhoods.~~

Goal 12-7 — Safeguard the condition and quality of the housing stock in order to maintain attractive and livable neighborhoods

- Strategies**
1. Maintain and update, as necessary, the City’s development standards to encourage quality development.
 2. Promote physical design, building structure, lot layout relationships, and landscaping opportunities between existing and new housing construction to help new developments complement the surrounding neighborhoods.
 3. Integrate sustainable building practices like solar and water conservation into new housing design and housing renovations.

Goal 12-83 — Increase housing choices that serve all age groups and needs

- Strategies**
1. Support polices and techniques, including but not limited to, universal home design, *Visitability* design, or Aging-In-Place designs that provide housing opportunities to meet the unique needs of the elderly and disabled.
 2. Provide incentives to builders and homeowners that proactively build or retrofit residences to meet *Visitability* standards.
 3. Promote elderly and assisted care facilities in neighborhoods and create connections between residential developments that promote opportunities for aging in place and continuum of care for the elderly.
 4. Seek opportunities to locate housing for those citizens with special needs near transportation services to make mobility easier.
 5. Support agencies and organizations that provide shelter, housing, and services to the “hard to house” vulnerable populations, including ex- offenders and homeless.
 6. Actively participate in identifying regional partners and solutions for those special needs that may be most appropriately addressed at the regional level.

“Visitability” is a growing trend nationwide. The term refers to housing designed in such a way that it can be lived in or visited by people who have trouble with steps or who use wheelchairs or walkers.

A house is visitable when it meets three basic requirements:

- one zero-step entrance.
- doors with 32 inches of clear passage space.
- one bathroom on the main floor you can get into in a wheelchair.

Goal 12-9 — Develop High-Quality Housing Developments

- Strategies** —
- ~~1. Promote physical design, building structure, lot layout relationships, and landscaping opportunities between existing and new housing construction to help the new developments complement the surrounding neighborhoods.~~
 - ~~2. Require that options be offered for sustainable building practices like solar and water conservation with new housing design and housing renovations.~~
 - ~~3. Create links between housing and adjacent uses, including but not limited to, senior centers, childcare centers, preschools, youth centers, and other community facilities to provide opportunities for intergenerational connections.~~

STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS

Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 9-461.05-9 E 6

“A housing element consisting of standards and programs for the elimination of substandard dwelling conditions, for the improvement of housing quality, variety and affordability and for provision of adequate sites for housing. This element shall contain an identification and analysis of existing and forecasted housing needs. This element shall be designed to make equal provision for the housing needs of all segments of the community regardless of race, color, creed or economic level.”

ATTACHMENTS

None

REFERENCES

City of Sierra Vista Housing Assessment and Strategic Plan, 2008

Redevelopment and Infill Development

Element 13



INTRODUCTION

Redevelopment and infill opportunities exist within the City’s current urban boundaries; however, infill and redevelopment are primarily focused in the older areas of the City such as the City’s West End. The City recognizes the importance of redeveloping dilapidated or underused buildings and encourages infill development projects where existing infrastructure is already developed or will be improved by new development. Redevelopment often removes blighted, vacant, or underused buildings and infill development uses vacant parcels of land in developed areas using existing infrastructure, such as roads and sewer lines. Infill development avoids extending infrastructure that requires additional public resources for maintenance.



West End entryway monument walls

BACKGROUND

Since 1996, the West End of Sierra Vista has been the focus of revitalization and redevelopment efforts. Through aggressive policies, a supportive City Council, and the direction of resources revitalization efforts have been successful. City Council approved the *Fry Boulevard: West End, Conceptual Streetscape Master Plan* and the *West End Development Guidebook* was created in 2011 to help minimize development challenges by providing a clear framework for developing property on the West End. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are often used to assist with revitalization projects. The City provides funding for the West End revolving loan

fund, administered by the Economic Development Foundation, to improve appearance of business facades. See Attachment 13-1 for a west side boundary map.

As the community continues to age, other areas outside of the West End may require attention to encourage and support infill and redevelopment.

Infill Incentive District Policy

The City Council approved the Infill Incentive District Policy in 2005. State law authorizes the City to establish infill incentive districts where specific criteria are satisfied. The policy is applied to encourage redevelopment and infill development on the West End of Sierra Vista and Cloud Nine Mobile Home Park. Since 2005, incentives have encouraged the redevelopment of properties and include relief or flexibility from Development Code requirements and reduction in permit fees. The use of the Infill Incentive District involves a negotiation process in which the City ensures that the development positively contributes to the community.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 13-1 ~~Maintain, improve, and revitalize older~~ Facilitate and incentivize, where authorized, the revitalization of vacant and underutilized properties of the community within existing commercial and residential areas to provide alternatives to sprawl.

Strategies

- ~~1. Identify properties offering a redevelopment or infill opportunity.~~ Update the City's Business and Vacant Lands Inventory every six months.
2. Facilitate the development of abandoned, idled, or underutilized properties and buildings, bringing them into productive use, through community and economic development programs.
- ~~3. Improve necessary~~ Plan, program and implement needed infrastructure improvements in redevelopment areas the Infill Incentive Districts and CDBG Target Areas.
- ~~4. Pursue cooperative redevelopment partnerships with Cochise County~~ development incentives, funding, public-private partnerships, joint/shared facilities, environmental remediation and property consolidation of small and/or fragmented lots for redevelopment through a development agreement or other legal mechanisms.
- ~~5. Consider redevelopment needs in capital improvement planning.~~

6. Pursue financial commitments from private entities for redevelopment projects.
7. Offer incentives for private development within redevelopment areas through the West Sierra Vista Partnership Program, Entertainment District Overlay, and Urban Infill Incentive District Program.
8. ~~Support~~ Encourage community events ~~such as the West End Fair~~ and activities that will draw people to the West End.
9. Seek federal and state funding assistance or grants for renovation, revitalization, and redevelopment projects.

Goal 13-2 Promote the Infill Incentive District Policy

- Strategies*
1. Encourage redevelopment by supporting efforts and developing partnerships with various agencies including the City’s Economic Development Office, Economic Development Foundation, and Cochise College Small Business Development Center.
 2. Encourage and educate land development professionals, such as real-estate professionals, of the value of the Policy.
 3. Continue ongoing efforts to obtain grant and other funding for infill incentive areas.

Goal 13-3 Promote the adaptive reuse of buildings

- Strategies*
1. Identify buildings that qualify for adaptive reuse by determining if the existing structure and layout is suitable for renovation.
 2. Identify historically or architecturally significant buildings.
 3. Identify the challenges of updating older buildings to current code compliance.
 4. Incentivize the adaptive reuse of buildings.

STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS

Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 9-461.05-9 D 4

“A conservation, rehabilitation and redevelopment element consisting of plans and programs for:

(a) The elimination of slums and blighted areas.

(b) Community redevelopment, including housing sites, business and industrial sites and

public building sites.

(c) Neighborhood preservation and revitalization.

(d) Other purposes authorized by law.”

ATTACHMENTS

Map 20, Infill Incentive District Policy Areas

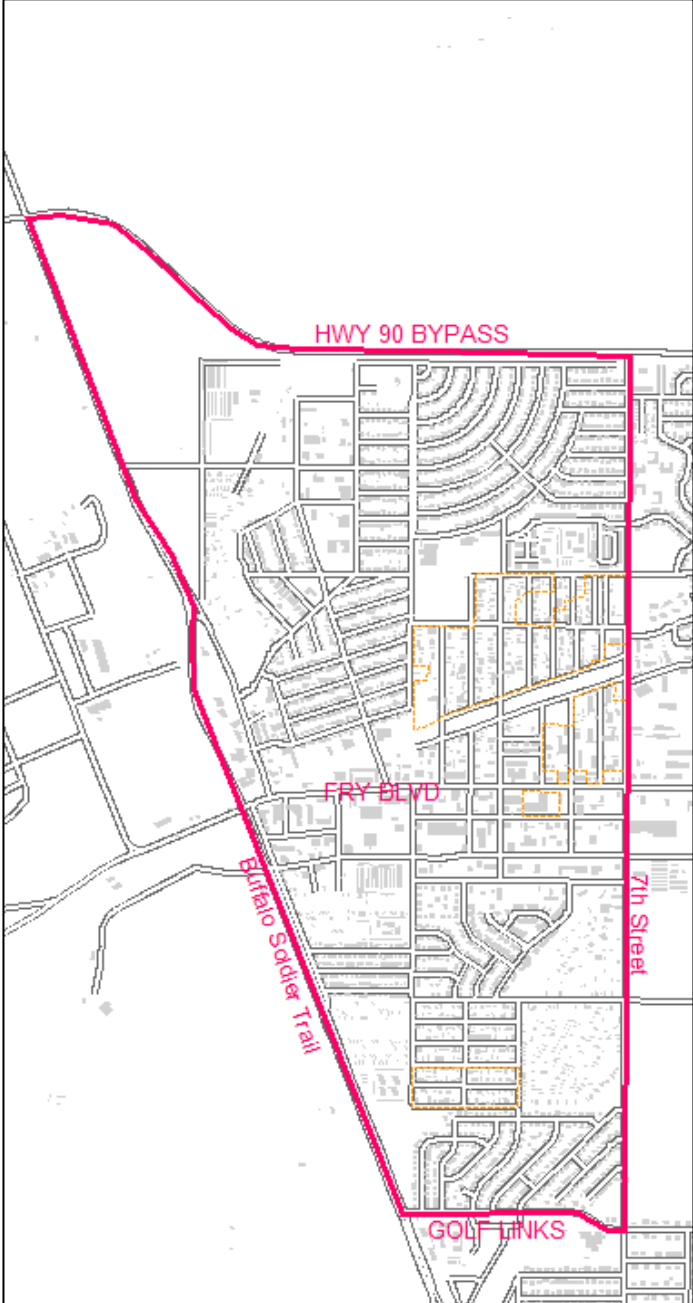
REFERENCES

The following references used in this element are City approved documents.

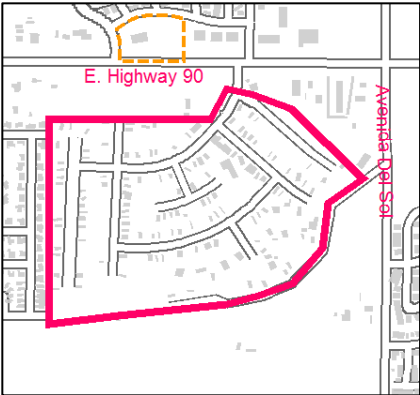
- ~~West End Development Guide book, March, 2011, Department of Community Development~~
- ~~Fry Boulevard: West End, Conceptual Streetscape Master Plan, June, 2008, Department of Community Development~~ Fry Boulevard West End Corridor Study, February 2017, commissioned by the Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- ~~Infill Incentive District Policy, June 2005, Department of Community Development~~ as amended by Resolution 2020-075.
- ~~The West Sierra Vista Master Plan, May 10, 2001, Department of Community Development~~
- The West Sierra Vista Redevelopment Area Plan, as amended by Resolution 2022-008.

Infill Incentive District Policy Areas

Map 20



West End Boundaries



Cloud Nine Mobile Home Park