

Housing Forum Meeting Summary

March 7, 2013, 4:00-6:00 PM | Woodland City Council Chambers, 300 1st Street

I.I Trends and Housing Needs

SENIOR HOUSING

- Housing is needed to allow Woodland residents to “age in place,” which would allow seniors to stay in the community and would also provide fiscal benefits to City by retaining the tax base.
- Stand-alone, age-restricted housing is needed, stand-alone senior housing is needed, and “active adult” housing is needed (City only has one facility currently).
- Smaller dwelling units with reduced yards are needed for seniors, easier to maintain.
- Senior housing could include townhomes and condominiums, particularly single-story units.
- Active adult housing is also needed (not assisted living). Similar to Heritage Park in Natomas but smaller.

SINGLE FARMWORKER HOUSING

- There are family options, but not option for singles (smaller, affordable units, studio apartments, for example).
- Based on the growing season, the need is for year-round, as opposed to seasonal.
- Need locations close to place of work.

EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME HOUSING

- This type of housing is a need.
- Accommodate those living on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) income, especially individuals.
- The City should also consider ownership opportunities for low income households/individuals.

ENTRY LEVEL HOUSING

- Smaller units can help households build equity.

TYPES OF HOUSING NEEDED – COMPACT HOUSING, SECOND UNITS

- Townhomes and condos are needed.
- Compact housing helps to accommodate needs of seniors and lower income households/individuals.
- Need to index housing to income.
- Second units (“in-law” units) could fulfill some of the housing needs (affordable, senior), in particular on properties with larger backyards.
- Mixing: different housing types should be mixed with a fine grain.

AMENITIES AND HOUSING

- Bike paths, trails, walking paths are needed in areas with housing so people can travel without a car.
- Should have green space near housing – in both existing communities and new developments.
- Higher-density housing is better and more accepted if it has green spaces – could be nearby (not necessarily on-site).
- Parks: linear, especially allows people to walk near home.
- Senior apartments and other apartments should have nearby community gardens.
- City should buffer large roads from homes with open space.
- Recreation: 91% prefer walking near home. Should promote multi-use open space.
- Be smarter about drainage (use naturalized drainage) and also provide in same area walking and habitat. Includes these concepts in both streetside and residential drainage.
- City should have a greenbelt around Woodland for walking.
- Dog parks, swimming, wheelchair and disability accessible; open space should have water. Areas for children to explore and play are important, as well.
- Creating a good place to raise a family results in economic development value because businesses and employees desire those amenities.

SPECIAL NEEDS

- Need supportive housing for people with disabilities
- Need programs paired with housing to serve people with disabilities.
- Transitional Housing is a need and will be in the future. HUD is moving away from transitional to permanent supportive housing.

LARGER FAMILY HOUSING

- There is a limited availability of large family housing. Need some with six bedrooms.

EXAMPLES

- Margaret Manor in West Sacramento as an example; income/deed restricted housing project.
- Rossmoor
- Lafayette
- Natomas – Heritage Park
- Metro Square – 25 units per acre – good design; same project in West Sacramento.

1.2 Opportunities, Locations for Compact Housing

DOWNTOWN

- Downtown housing is a good opportunity. Second-story units above retail.
- Second story units could share parking with retail. Peak periods for residential and nonresidential downtown would not overlap, so this would be an opportunity to make more efficient use of parking. Parking should be considered to avoid major capacity problems.
- Live/work units are another opportunity downtown.
- Living downtown near services has many benefits.

WEST MAIN STREET

- There are opportunities to repurpose low-performing commercial properties into residential uses. Main Street west of downtown, for example.

REPURPOSING OTHER COMMERCIAL AREAS FOR COMPACT HOUSING

- Warehouses could also provide residential re-use opportunities.

SPRING LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN AREA AND OTHER NEW GROWTH AREAS

- Look for areas throughout the City to include in higher-density housing.

1.3 Fees/Funding

- Impact fees: have increased the last 5 years. City should consider fee deferrals until later phases, not just waiving. This could help incentivize development in Woodland vis-à-vis elsewhere.
- Bank financing is an issue.
- Loss of redevelopment eliminates a key method for developing affordable housing. City could consider non-profit entity to do similar actions to RDA; perhaps look at Roseville model. This was funded through multiple millions of dollars, however.

- Local non-profits can help. Local banks may be willing to donate foreclosed properties to non-profits to rehabilitate for low income housing.

I.4 Constraints

- City should ensure that zoning code requirements do not inhibit the development of live/work units downtown.
- City should remove regulatory barriers to downtown housing and live/work units.
- Difficult to provide affordable housing when income is \$800 per month.
- City should ensure that process to entitle mixed-use development (housing and commercial) is simple and quick.
- City should ensure process for easements is simple and quick.

I.5 Density

- Higher densities need open space and park areas. Include community gardens.
- Mixed densities work well.
- Allow/encourage second units. Especially on the back of long lots with alley access.
- Explore old bungalow courts.
- Consider third stories – need architectural control.
- Allow higher density on blighted or vacant parcels
- Don't concentrate density in one area – spread around city.
- Include linear greenway connections.
- Possible locations for new 30 du/ac default density:
 - Old Willow Springs school site
 - East Street corridor
 - Vacant commercial
 - Lincoln, Grand, Main Streets area
 - County Fair Mall
 - County Fairgrounds
 - City surplus properties

- Near community center
- Country Oaks site (old tennis court site)
- Woodhaven Lanes (between West Main and Court Streets)
- Ashley near CR 98
- Current County courthouse site

I.6 Miscellaneous

- City should look to decrease VMT throughout the City.
- General Plan Update: should look at a Blueprint Alternative.
- City should also be looking at range of housing in areas outside City limits. Consider a separate housing element for the land between the City limits and the Urban Limit Line (ULL).
- Need to avoid segregating housing of various types/incomes. Interspersed housing is the best model.

Comments Received after Housing Forum

- **Compact Housing.** Support for smaller-scale housing (including detached, ownership) with a reduced amount of square footage. Smaller-scale housing should start at approximately 400 square feet, with a good design approach. The City should consider whether there are any zoning code constraints, such as those related to lot coverage or allowable land uses, which would adversely affect smaller-scale housing construction.
- **Land Trusts.** Support for the use of land trusts to promote housing development. One approach could be to place land into rotating, long-term, capped-cost leases, which revert to a land trust, under certain conditions. It is possible that there could be tax benefits for this approach and it is possible that some of the low-income housing providers already use such techniques.
- **Senior Housing.** Support for the development of senior housing, including affordable “Del Webb” style senior developments.
- **Second Units.** The City should allow existing property owners to build second units (otherwise known as “in-law” units, “granny” units).
- **Locate Compact Housing near Services.** The City should promote the development of compact housing in areas close to services.
- **Downtown Development.** Mixed-use development should be promoted in the Downtown core, along with bed & breakfast uses (in order to promote tourism).
- **Affordability.** Affordable housing and market-rate housing should be provided with the appropriate balance. Housing should be available both to households and individuals with low incomes, as well as those with high incomes and everything in between. The City should accommodate housing that is affordable to young people.
- **Agricultural Land.** Prime agricultural land should be preserved as the City develops.
- **Sustainable Development.** Both new developments and reuse projects should incorporate principles of conservation and “sustainability.”
- **Zoning.** The City’s zoning ordinance should clearly outline what uses are, and what uses are not allowed in each zoning district. The appeals process should be uniform and streamlined. The City should facilitate review and approval of development applications.