
MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 5, 2017
TO: Planning Commission (December 11 meeting)
FROM: Dan Olson, City Planner
SUBJECT: Review housing chapter of the proposed 2040 Comprehensive Plan

A. PROPOSED CHAPTER REVISIONS

Staff is presenting the proposed housing chapter of 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Planning Commission review.

B. REQUESTED ACTION

No action is requested at this time. This agenda item is being presented so the Commission may provide comments on the draft housing chapter.

Attachment:

- A. Chapter G: Housing

CHAPTER G HOUSING

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The Housing chapter describes the current housing types found in the city and forecasts changes in the number of housing units and population for the planning period (through ~~2030~~2040). It also contains the city's goals and policies related to housing preservation and new development.

~~The 1997 housing market study that was included in the 2000 Comprehensive Plan probably overstated the city's power to effect change in a market that is largely driven by regional and national economic and demographic trends far beyond the city's control. For this reason, this updated plan does not attempt to forecast market demand for specific types or styles of housing. Instead, One of the most important goals is this plan contains goals and policies designed to preserve the bulk of the city's existing, relatively affordable housing stock while encouraging development of additional housing to meet needs not addressed by the city's existing housing stock.~~

[Insert summary of housing study to be completed in early 2018. This study describes the potential housing needs in Crystal and how those gaps could be filled with redevelopment projects to a ½ mile radius of the proposed light rail station at Bass Lake Road and Highway 81].

The city has three classifications for residential development:

- Low Density Residential. Up to ~~5-6~~ units per acre. (For new development, this plan assumes an average density of 4-5 units per acre.)
- Medium Density Residential. Up to ~~12-16~~ units per acre. (For new development, this plan assumes an average density of 10-12 units per acre.)
- High Density Residential. Up to ~~22-40~~ units per acre. (For new development, this plan assumes an average density of 20-30 units per acre.)

GOALS

1. Preserve most of the city's existing single family detached houses. 75% of the city's housing units are detached single family houses, and these are relatively affordable when compared to houses in other suburbs in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. The vast majority of the city's existing houses will remain, so preservation is critically important.

Preservation activities may include not only repairs and maintenance but also major renovations and additions that significantly transform and update an existing house.

2. Preserve most of the city's other housing types, such as townhouses, duplexes and apartments, and also seek opportunities to eliminate blighted, structurally substandard, or functionally obsolete ~~or lawfully noneonforming~~ properties.
3. Increase the availability of new housing of the type currently underrepresented in Crystal's housing stock, such as move-up single family houses and senior independent living rental or co-op units. This goal recognizes that redevelopment will be controlled and limited by market demand, physical constraints, financial and political realities, and a limited legal environment for the use of eminent domain ~~authority~~.
4. Metropolitan Council has established the city's share of the region's needed additional affordable housing for ~~2011-2018-2020-2040~~ as 87-25 units. The city expects to meet this need with construction of additional high density housing, ~~whether rental or owner-occupied, for senior citizens of low or moderate incomes. This goal for 2011-2020 is consistent with actual development which occurred from 2000-2010.~~

POLICIES

1. Continue participation in the Metropolitan Livable Communities Act, including compliance with the 1995 housing goals agreement. Crystal is already meeting the goals contained within that agreement, ~~except for the goal for a 75% owner/ 25% renter mix which will likely be met in due course with the gradual, market-based transition of some of the city's existing single family houses from owner occupancy to renter occupancy.~~
2. Use regulatory tools to protect life and property, and to preserve the existing housing stock. Regulatory tools to be used include:
 - ~~Housing maintenance compliance inspections prior to sale, including requiring either the seller (prior to closing) or the buyer (after closing) to complete repair orders issued by the city. (Current ongoing program.)~~
 - Rental licensing and inspections ~~for all property in the city occupied by someone other than the owner. (Current current ongoing program.)~~
 - General code enforcement activities to promote community maintenance and upkeep including enforcement actions necessary to gain compliance with city code. ~~(Current current ongoing program.)~~
3. Provide incentives for preservation of the vast majority of the city's existing single family detached houses, and expand such programs and incentives to the extent funding allows. Specific city-funded programs to be used include:
 - ~~Housing Resource Center~~ Center for Energy and the Environment, ~~a clearing house for which provides~~ technical and financial assistance related to home improvements. ~~(Current ongoing program.)~~
 - ~~Home Improvement Incentive Rebates~~ The Crystal Grant Program and the Interest Subsidy Program ~~available to both low and middle income households~~ are designed

to supplement existing loan programs available from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, private lenders and other sources. (Current ongoing program.)

- ~~Deferred Home Improvement Loans for low income households. (Current ongoing program.)~~
 - ~~Use available increment from existing TIF districts to provide additional funding for affordable housing activities, mainly preservation of existing houses. (Possible new programs being developed at this time.)~~
4. Acquire blighted, structurally substandard and functionally obsolete residential property for demolition and replacement with new, ~~move-up~~ houses in accordance with EDA budget parameters, market conditions and other factors: ~~(Current current ongoing program.)~~.
 5. Work with developers to incorporate the construction of new housing consistent with the city's housing goals into redevelopment projects as appropriate for the physical setting of the redevelopment site. Through this policy, the city intends to achieve its goal for development of at least ~~87-25~~ new affordable units ~~which would likely consist of high density housing for senior citizens of low or moderate incomes~~. It is likely that such development would occur in one or more of the ~~23~~ potential redevelopment areas identified in Chapter H - Redevelopment. Based on the assumed average density of 20 units/acre described at the beginning of this chapter, the affordable housing need could be accommodated on just one or two of these ~~23~~ potential redevelopment sites. The city will continue to work with developers to find appropriate sites for such housing as market conditions dictate.
 6. As ~~motor fuel prices and~~ roadway congestion continues to increase, promote Crystal's locational advantage as a first ring suburban community, including its relative proximity to employment concentrations, activity centers and regional attractions.

~~PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED~~

~~(Comments presented as written, without correction.)~~

~~COMMENT CARD SUMMARY FROM OPEN HOUSE #1 (November 15, 2007):~~

- ~~No more High density Housing We can't even fill the ones we Have now and they drive other Housing prices down creates a bad naberhood. This applies to ALL areas of Crystal where you want high density housing.~~
- ~~I live on Jersey Ave between Kentucky +41. There are 3 vacant houses on the "odd" side. If the city buys them will they be building a "LARGE" house in place of the ramblers. [The whole street is mostly ramblers + relatively modest 2 stories]~~
- ~~Please No more huge multi level homes in neighborhoods with smaller ramblers. It devalues smaller ramblers & destroys any views from ramblers!!!~~

- ~~To preserve Wonderful Crystal, city leaders should promote owner occupied housing. This would promote safety, zero to low crime, pride in our community!~~

COMMENT CARD SUMMARY FROM OPEN HOUSE #2 (April 17, 2008):

- ~~Please re-think the idea that you need to put 2 houses on every open lot. These lot sizes are then too small. It is also good to have some open space. We have enough buildings already.~~
- ~~All areas where high & medium density housing is mentioned — NO MORE! Keep Crystal owner occupied single family houses. Enforce codes for landlords — make them keep up their properties.~~
- ~~[Redevelopment Area #6] — How about incentives to Thriftway to maintain & update the store? We need grocery stores in the area — seniors live nearby. We need to shop close to home! Gas prices & global warming and all that.~~