



Chapter 4. Housing Element

4.1. PURPOSE

This Housing Element provides guidance and direction regarding future efforts to plan for housing needs in Orange County. The goals and objectives identified within this Element serve as the foundation for establishing future housing policies and action strategies undertaken by Orange County, its advisory boards, and staff. The specific process for developing a housing implementation strategy is outlined in *Section 1.4: Administration and Implementation Guidelines*.

4.2. OVERVIEW

The unique quality of life found in Orange County continues to draw more and more families and households to the area. The majority of homes are located in the urban areas (Hillsborough, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Mebane), but rural housing that offers life in a pastoral setting is also prominent in the County. Housing values have continued to rise over time, and the housing market continues to be healthy overall. Ensuring that all households are provided safe, adequate, and affordable housing that is proximate to needed services is an important issue that will need consideration and action over the planning horizon.

Background

Property values, particularly properties in Chapel Hill and Carrboro, continue to rise and are higher on average than all other counties in the Research Triangle region. The sales price gap continues to widen in this region, with housing prices increasing nearly twice as fast in Orange County as Durham and Wake Counties since 1995. These trends are expected to continue into the future.

While the trend of increasing property values is advantageous to existing homeowners, it limits housing options for first time buyers and prohibits others from buying completely. The downturn in the housing markets that began in 2007 nationwide has not had a significant effect on the County's market in terms of property values. However, the resulting changes in home lending practices have made it more difficult for prospective homeowners to enter the local market.

The County's rental housing supply is not adequate to meet rental housing needs, especially for those households earning 30% or less of the area median income. The majority of rental units are old and in need of rehabilitation and maintenance. The lack of housing for households earning very low incomes contributes to the County's problem of homelessness. This is further exacerbated by the fact that there are no affordable housing providers focusing on development of units for households earning less than 30% of the area median income.

As new households move to the County, it will be important to have a variety of housing options available to them. Future housing efforts within the County will need to balance the need to maintain and increase property values with the need to provide adequate housing opportunities for all residents of the County. New housing should be located proximate to needed services, shopping, and employment centers to ensure long-term sustainability of the housing stock. This will necessitate collaborative efforts between the County and towns to plan for and provide for future housing needs.



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RECENT HOUSING STUDIES

Orange County and its municipalities have collaborated over the years to support initiatives to provide housing that meets the needs of all income groups and household needs. A summary of recent housing plans developed for Orange County is provided here.

2005-2010 HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONSOLIDATED PLAN

To be eligible for federal housing and community assistance funding for community projects, local governments are required to develop a "Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan" every five years. These plans summarize local demographic and housing market conditions; provide a needs assessment on housing, the homeless population, and community development needs; and articulate a five-year action and funding plan to address the needs. A consortium of Orange County and the Towns of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Hillsborough worked collaboratively to develop the 2005-2010 Consolidated Plan for Orange County. This plan was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2005.

The plan outlines an "anti-poverty" strategy to address the impoverished persons in the County (14.1% of the County was below poverty in 2000) that includes using federal funding to increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing, and help low-income families acquire needed information, knowledge, and skills to improve their employment opportunities. This strategy links housing, homelessness, public housing and community development strategies to reduce the number of families falling below the poverty level. The 2005-2006 budget includes more than \$1.6 million in federal funds to achieve these goals

Specific Strategic Plan Goals Include:

- Provide decent and affordable housing for low-income households. Strategies include assisting low-income homeowner and low-income renter properties through rehabilitation, weatherization, and lead-based paint improvements; continuation of the County's Urgent Repair Program; constructing new rental housing; providing financial and educational assistance to qualified homebuyers¹; providing education and advocacy regarding tenants rights; and providing financial assistance to homeowners wanting to install indoor plumbing and/or connect their properties to public water and sewer facilities.
- Provide housing and services for populations with special needs. Such special needs groups include the homeless, elderly, disabled, mentally ill, and persons with AIDS. Strategies to assist these groups include financial assistance to shelters and other services to special needs groups; strengthening partnerships with the local

¹ The Affordable Housing Bond Program uses bondfunds to create deferred and direct loans, which encourage homeownership. In 2001, Orange County voters approved a \$4.0 million dollar Affordable Housing Bond referendum. A wide range of projects are eligible for bond funding including homeownership and rental housing projects as well as land acquisition projects. Mixed-tenant housing and production of non-traditional housing types -- such as duplexes and single room occupancy (SRO) units are also encouraged. Project proformas are reviewed to insure the financial feasibility of proposals and to recommend specific rates and terms to the Board of County Commissioners.



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Continuum of Care; and assisting with the acquisition of funding to develop permanent housing for persons with special needs.

- Facilitate non-housing community development activities. Examples of community development activities include beautification programs and recreational opportunities for youth. The plan outlines several strategies for community development including strengthening partnerships with neighborhood associations; organizing neighborhood cleanups; improving dissemination of community information; and promoting local economic development.

ORANGE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING STRATEGY

In 2006, Orange County conducted a thorough assessment of the County's housing market and demand for housing, and identified key strategies for alleviating unmet housing gaps. The study found that households earning less than 30% of the area median income have the most difficulty finding adequate and affordable housing. In addition, the study notes that there are no active developers (except for non-profits with limited capacity to meet market demand) building homes or condominiums that are affordable to families at or below 80 percent of median income. The draft report outlines three key strategies for future action:

- Non-profit strategies that include ending the duplication of services, coordinating the provision of affordable housing by focusing provider efforts to targeted market areas, and improving the professional capacity of non-profit staff;
- Rental unit strategy that accepts that older rental properties should be targeted for reinvestment and rehabilitation to provide needed housing for households earning 30% or below the area median income; and
- Single-family housing strategy that suggests expanding Chapel Hill's successful efforts to encourage developers to build affordable units as part of new developments to include the entire County.

ORANGE COUNTY MASTER AGING PLAN

In 2007, Orange County adopted the Orange County Master Aging Plan: Building-Aging Friendly Communities in Orange that sets goals and strategies for coordinating delivery of community services to older adults who have different levels of functional capacity throughout their life spans. The plan identifies several never seen before demographic conditions affecting communities across the nation:

1. An explosion in the numbers of older persons;
2. A dramatic increase in longer lives for older persons;
3. More residents living more of their advanced years in declining health and limited function; and
4. A large and growing number of older persons (retirees and non-retirees) who are a major human resource.



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Four overarching goals provide the County with guidance in planning for our elderly population. Goal B is relevant to the provision of elderly housing in the County:

- **Goal B: Housing and Shelter** – Promote an adequate supply of safe, affordable, and suitable housing options for older residents to age in place.

Several of the housing objectives listed in this chapter were derived from the objectives of the Master Aging Plan. Key strategies are outlined in the Master Aging Plan that can inform future efforts for implementation of this element.

[ORANGE COUNTY TEN YEAR PLAN TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS: A BROAD PROPOSAL TO END HOMELESSNESS \(2007\)](#)

In 2005, the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness formed to meet the challenge of ending chronic homelessness in Orange County within the next 10 years. The partnership includes Orange County, the Towns of Hillsborough, Chapel Hill, and Carrboro; the Triangle United Way, Orange Congregations in Mission; Inter-Faith Council for Social Services; OPC Area Program; the Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce; and the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. The plan identifies four key reasons for chronic homelessness in the County:

1. Lack of affordable housing in the County;
2. Insufficient incomes to afford housing in the County;
3. Inadequate social services to meet local needs; and
4. Inadequate discharge planning from public systems of care.

The plan outlines a set of coordinated strategies to be undertaken by the partnership to end chronic homelessness by 2017. The strategies are designed to meet the following goals:

- Reduce chronic homelessness;
- Increase employment;
- Prevent homelessness;
- Increase access to needed social services; and
- Increase public participation in ending homelessness.

It includes a detailed strategy for implementation of these goals, including a timeframe for implementation, costs associated with the effort, additional partners to help implement the plan, leadership to oversee the process, and the staff needed to manage it. An Executive Team, comprised of members of the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness will serve as the base community support for implementing the plan and is expected to meet quarterly to ensure the goals, objectives, and strategies laid out in the plan are met.



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KEY ISSUES

Key housing planning issues to be addressed in this Element include:

- Provision of a **diversity of housing types and housing densities throughout the County** to provide for a range of housing needs of current and future populations;
- Location of **housing developments, including affordable housing units, in areas that are proximate to needed services, shopping, schools, transportation options, and employment centers;**
- Coordination of **the provision of public services, such as the extension of water and sanitary sewer lines**, with planned locations for higher density and mixed-use housing developments;
- Provision of **adequate housing for households earning low incomes;**
- Improvement of **opportunities for the County's elderly population** to age-in-place;
- Provision of **housing opportunities for citizens with physical disabilities;**
- Assessment of **workforce housing needs** in the County; and
- Coordination of **historic preservation and affordable housing initiatives to ensure that these efforts are not in conflict and are achieving mutual goals.**

4.3. HISTORIC DATA, CURRENT DATA, EVALUATION OF TRENDS

The following data provide background information on the historical and current housing supply and demand conditions in Orange County. These statistics come from either *Appendix A: County Profile (Data) Element* or from the *2006 Orange County, North Carolina Comprehensive Housing Strategy Report*.

KEY FACTS

The following snapshot of Orange County's household income and housing statistics provides a foundation for considering housing issues.

- In 2000, there were 47,706 households Orange County, with an average of 2.6 persons per household.
- The elderly population will nearly triple during the next three decades (2000-2030), increasing from 9,931 in 2000 to 26,499 by the year 2030.
- According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in FY 2008, the median income for families in Orange County was \$62,100.
- In 2000, married families (which includes married couples without children) had a median income of \$59,874. Male single-parent



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households had a median family income of \$32,634, and female single-parent households had a median family income of \$24,705.

- The average price of homes sold (re-sale and new) in 2005 was \$320,489.
- Only 18% of homes on the market in 2005 were considered affordable for families of four making median income or less.
- Since 2000, the availability of homes with sales prices in the \$120,000 and less range has dropped more than 40% while the number of homes available in the \$250,000+ range has increased 32%.
- The majority of rental apartments are in Chapel Hill (56.7%). Housing demand for university students has a considerable impact on the Orange County rental housing market, constituting somewhere between 50%-65% of the overall rental market in the County.
- A survey of persons experiencing homelessness across the state identified that on January 26, 2005, there were 237 individuals in Orange County experiencing homelessness. A second survey conducted in 2007 identified 224 persons experiencing homelessness in the County.

SNAPSHOT OF HOUSING MARKET

In comparison with Durham and Wake Counties and the State of North Carolina, Orange County has historically had the highest median home values. In 2000, a higher percentage of households owned homes in Orange County than in Durham, but less than in Wake County and the State of North Carolina. Median rents for apartments were lower than rents paid in Wake County, but significantly higher than median rents in North Carolina overall. The County also had a much higher number of manufactured housing units than Durham County, but far fewer than Wake County. See Figure 4-1.



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FIGURE 4-1: REGIONAL HOUSING PROFILE, 2000

Housing Attribute	Orange County ³	Durham County	Wake County	North Carolina
# Housing Units	47,706	95,452	258,953	3,523,944
Vacant Units	7%	7%	7%	11%
Renter Occ ¹ Units	39%	43%	32%	27%
Owner Occ ¹ Units	54%	51%	62%	62%
Mobile Homes	5,124	1,547	14,210	577,323
Med ² Contract Rent	\$591	\$561	\$631	\$431
Med ² Value Owner Unit	\$179,000	\$129,000	\$162,900	\$108,300
Occ Units >10yr old	72.6%	70.9%	58.8%	65.0%
Occ Units >20yr old	50.8%	51.5%	35.2%	47.7%
Occ Units >30yr old	30.3%	34.3%	20.4%	31.5%

Notes and Sources:

¹ Occ=Occupied. Indicates whether the owner lives in the unit or if it is rental property.

² Med=Median. See Appendix for further explanation.

³ Corrected totals for Orange County. Figures include municipalities + unincorporated areas.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

In 2000, the majority of homes in Orange County were located in municipalities: most in Chapel Hill (18,976 units), with other concentrations in Carrboro (8,207 units) and Hillsborough (2,329 units). Carrboro had a higher percentage of rental units and Hillsborough had the highest percentage of owner-occupied units. This is largely due to the fact that students of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill comprise a significant amount of the County rental housing market, renting primarily in Carrboro and Chapel Hill. See Figure 4-2.



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FIGURE 4-2: COUNTY HOUSING PROFILE, 2000

Housing Attribute	Carrboro	Chapel Hill	Hillsborough	Total Orange Co.
People Per Hshld	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.6
# Housing Units	8,207	18,976	2,329	47,706
Vacant House Units	8%	6%	10%	7%
Renter Occ ¹ Units	63%	54%	36%	39%
Owner Occ ¹ Units	29%	40%	55%	54%
Mobile Homes	107	234	170	5,124
Med ² Contract Rent	\$607	\$607	\$485	\$591
Med ² Value Owner Unit	\$172,800	\$229,100	\$117,100	\$179,000
Occ Units >10yr old	68.8%	77.9%	74.1%	70.3%
Occ Units >20yr old	42.9%	58.0%	57.0%	49.2%
Occ Units >30yr old	22.4%	37.2%	41.7%	29.3%

Notes and Sources:

¹ Occ=Occupied. Indicates whether the owner lives in the unit or if it is rental property.

² Med=Median. See Appendix for further explanation.

Source: US Census Bureau (2000, corrected)

HOUSING PRICES

Housing prices in Orange County were consistently higher than Wake and Durham Counties, and the state average. From 1995 to 2005, housing prices increased by 87% in Orange County. This is almost double the rate of increase for housing prices in Wake and Durham Counties. See Figure 4-3.



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FIGURE 4-3: AVERAGE REGIONAL HOUSING SALES PRICES (1995-2005)

Year	Orange	Durham	Wake	Total Avg. Price
1995	\$171,038	\$123,266	\$158,431	\$150,912
1996	\$192,144	\$130,749	\$162,474	\$161,789
1997	\$197,071	\$138,876	\$170,170	\$168,706
1998	\$209,208	\$143,529	\$175,039	\$175,925
1999	\$218,875	\$146,795	\$187,217	\$184,296
2000	\$235,633	\$156,568	\$199,362	\$197,188
2001	\$249,226	\$162,913	\$204,374	\$205,504
2002	\$261,895	\$163,462	\$212,567	\$212,641
2003	\$280,592	\$173,844	\$212,382	\$222,273
2004	\$298,883	\$171,071	\$221,903	\$230,619
2005	\$320,489	\$181,162	\$235,615	\$245,756
%Change 1995-2005	87.4%	47.0%	48.7%	62.8%

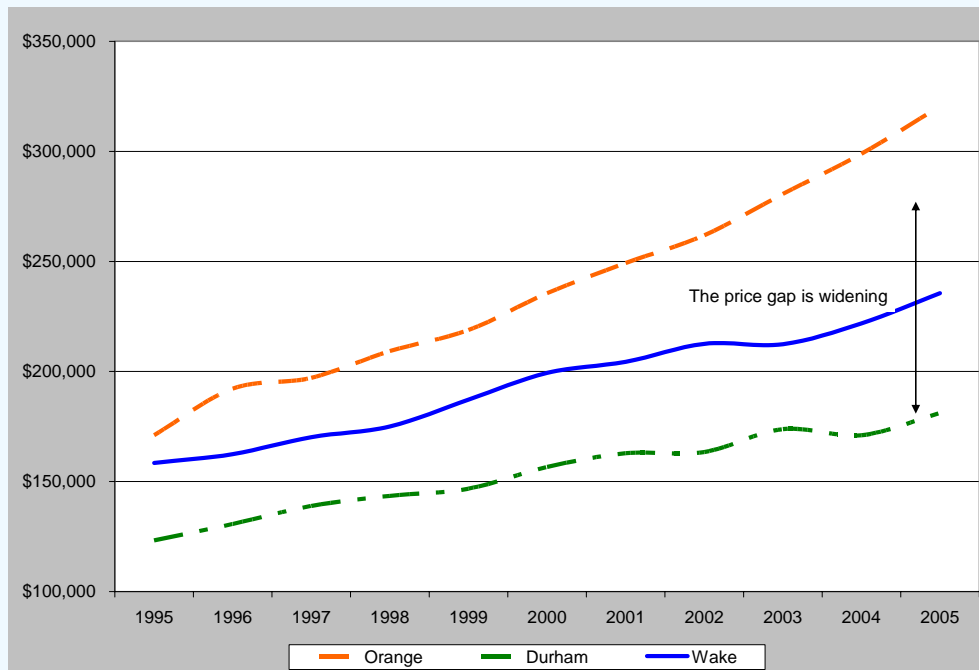
Notes and Sources:

Source: Triangle MLS

Data compiled by Chapel Hill Planning Department

The price gap between housing in Orange County and neighboring counties has widened over time. See Figure 4-4.

FIGURE 4-4: AVERAGE REGIONAL HOUSING SALES PRICE TRENDS (1995-2005)

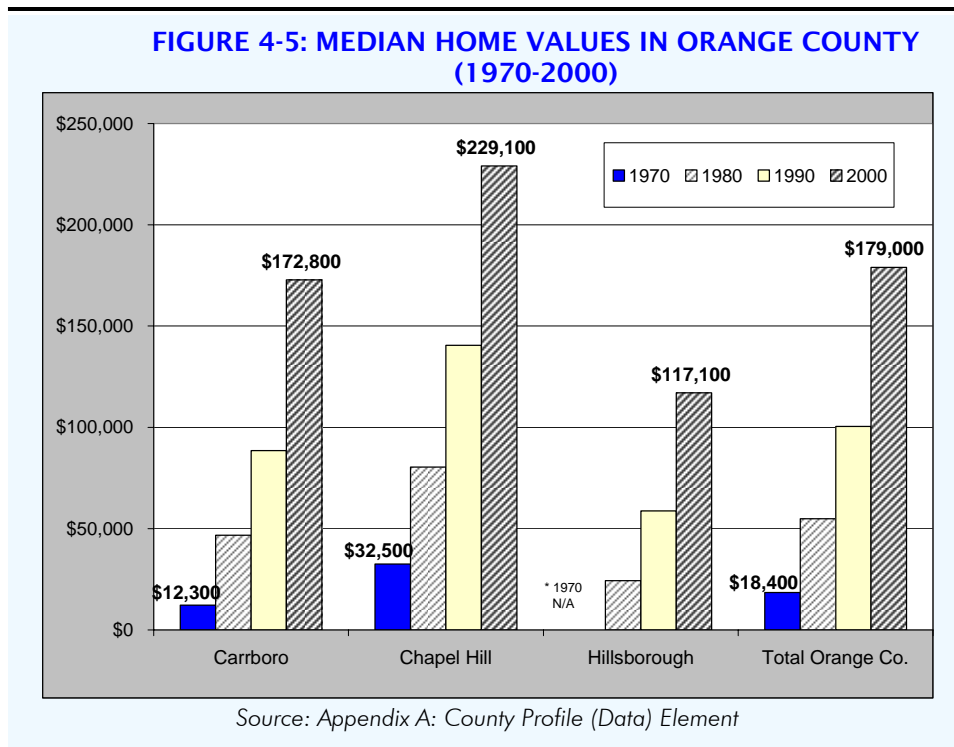


Source: Triangle Multiple Listing Service



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Median home prices in Orange County varied significantly by market area. Over the past 30 years, Chapel Hill has consistently had the highest median home prices in Orange County (\$229,100 in 2000). Carrboro's median sales price was approximately \$50,000 less than Chapel Hill's (\$172,800 in 2000) and Hillsborough's median housing prices was \$100,000 less than Chapel Hill's. In all markets, median sales prices have continued to rise over time, with a significant increase in value over the last decade. See Figure 4-5.



Between 2000 and 2005 housing prices for new and re-sale homes rose significantly. The percent of homes available for sale at \$200,000 and below dropped during this period, and the percent of homes available for sale at \$250,000 and greater increased by 32%. The average price for all homes in Orange County increased by 36% over this five-year period. See Figure 4-6.



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FIGURE 4-6: DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING SALES PRICES IN ORANGE COUNTY (2000-2005)

Price Distribution ¹	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Change 2000-2005
< \$79,000	5.2%	4.0%	3.3%	2.3%	4.6%	2.9%	-44%
\$80,000 - \$119,999	13.1%	12.4%	11.6%	10.9%	8.9%	7.5%	-43%
\$120,000 - \$159,000	15.1%	16.0%	15.3%	14.3%	12.6%	14.0%	-7%
\$160,000 - \$199,000	14.2%	13.9%	14.7%	13.1%	11.4%	11.5%	-19%
\$200,000 - \$249,999	13.7%	12.1%	12.1%	14.4%	14.8%	14.0%	2%
\$250,000+	38.6%	41.6%	43.7%	45.2%	47.8%	51.0%	32%
Avg Price	\$235,633	\$249,226	\$261,895	\$280,592	\$298,883	\$320,489	36%

Notes and Sources:

¹ For new and re-sale residences.

Data compiled by Chapel Hill Planning Department

Source: Triangle MLS

HOUSING SUPPLY AND DEMAND BY TYPE

- **Single-Family Units.** Between 1996 and 2004, a total of 4,473 new single family units were permitted in unincorporated Orange County, 3,414 in Chapel Hill, and 1,076 in Carrboro. The 2006 Comprehensive Housing Strategy estimates that three person families at or below 95% of the area median income and four person families at or below 85% of the area median income could not afford the typical home in Orange County.
- **Multi-Family Rental Units.** Between 1996 and 2004, total rental production for Orange County was 2,160 units, or an average of 216 units annually. Multi-family permits constituted 17.1 percent of all permits in the County during the period. The vast majority of new multi-family units produced in the County (89.4%) were in multi-family structures with more than five units. The majority of these units are in Chapel Hill. In 2006, except for two-person families at or below 30 percent of median income, there were a significant number of rental units available at all income levels.
- **Manufactured Homes.** The total number of manufactured housing in 2000 was 5,114 units, or 6.9% of the housing market. The majority of these units (3,558) were owner-occupied. Manufactured housing represents a small but growing segment of the overall housing market. Due to rising land values, it is expected that Chapel Hill and Carrboro will have fewer Manufactured Housing Districts and units in future years. These displaced homeowners may have difficulty finding other sources of affordable housing. There is also a recent trend of placing recreational vehicles in manufactured housing parks illegally. These vehicles do not meet basic building codes addressing healthy, safety, and welfare.



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- **Public Housing.** The Chapel Hill Department of Housing is the only local public housing authority in Orange County. The department currently operates 337 units of public housing in three locations, and had a waiting list of 220 families in 2006, 98% of which were at or below 30% of the local area median income.

4.4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

It is evident that Orange County faces an affordable housing challenge. The combination of rising land values, the lack of housing providers producing units in the moderate to lower end housing range, and the selling off of Manufactured Housing Districts in the towns are contributing to this challenge.

A network of non-profit housing providers and housing assistance organizations in Orange County are working to fill in the housing “gaps” by providing a broad array of educational, financial, and technical services to households in need. These organizations include:

- The Orange County Community Housing and Land Trust provides a wide range of affordable homeownership opportunities for first-time homebuyers who earn less than 80% of the Area Median Income. The Community Land Trust develops affordable homes and keeps them affordable by retaining ownership of the land while conveying all the rights and responsibilities of homeownership to qualified buyers.
- Orange County Habitat for Humanity offers homeownership to working families who may otherwise be unable to purchase a home of their own. Habitat homeowners purchase their home directly from Habitat through a zero-interest, 20-year loan, and provide sweat-equity by participating in the construction of homes.
- EmPOWERment, Incorporated works to increase affordable housing and preserve working-class neighborhoods for families in the Chapel Hill area. The non-profit purchases and renovates existing homes and builds new homes for sale and rent to low-income families.
- Chrysalis Foundation for Mental Health supports the development of affordable housing for people with disabilities and mental illness through property acquisition, rehabilitation and development in Orange, Person and Chatham Counties.
- InterFaith Council for Social Service provides shelter, food, direct services, advocacy and information to the County’s homeless and other people in need.

4.5. ORANGE COUNTY HOUSING NEEDS

Orange County’s housing market has benefited from the exceptional quality of life found in its communities. The housing market has been very strong, even during economic downturns, and property values have continued to be higher in the County than in neighboring jurisdictions. The result of the healthy housing market is an increased need for lower and moderate income housing options.



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As the County's population increases in future years, more housing units will be needed. The location, density, and pattern of these new housing developments will have a large impact on the County's community character, as well as its economic, social, and environmental sustainability over the long-term.

The Comprehensive Plan provides the County with direction through guiding principles, goals, and objectives aimed at the future housing needs identified. A summary of the key community needs for housing includes:

- By 2010, estimates show that an additional **1,064 new housing units will be needed in the County**. It is expected that the County's population will continue to grow through 2030, and will demand additional housing. Appropriate areas for future development to provide new housing that are proximate to schools, employment centers, and needed commercial and social services, will need to be identified;
- The **current supply of rental housing stock is aging** and in need of rehabilitation and upgrading. Upgrading these units is needed to ensure the efficient use of existing rental housing and maintenance of the existing supply of affordable units in to the future;
- Housing analyses have shown that there is a **significant unmet demand for affordable housing for households earning 30% or less of the area median income**. New affordable housing options are needed for these households;
- Because private manufactured housing parks in the County's municipal jurisdictions are being converted to other uses, **households are being displaced** and the supply of affordable housing units is being reduced. Other affordable housing alternatives are needed for displaced manufactured housing owners;
- **Homeownership opportunities for households earning 80% of the area median income and below are limited** and not meeting existing demands. Homeownership opportunities need to be expanded to maintain an appropriate rate of homeownership in the County;
- Local **non-profit housing providers are in need of financial assistance** to develop needed affordable housing and to provide homebuyer assistance. New dedicated funding sources need to be identified to fill this gap;
- An **assessment of workforce housing** (households of employed persons that earn low to moderate incomes and have difficulty affording local housing) supply and demand in the County is needed to determine the extent to which a gap between supply and demand exists; and
- **Land use planning efforts need to provide opportunities for the joint location of housing and employment centers** and provide additional mixed use opportunities that can reduce commuting



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times, reduce traffic congestion on roadways, reduce air emissions, and generally improve quality of life.

4.6. GOALS

The following housing goals will guide future policy and implementation strategies for the County.

Housing Overarching Goal: Opportunity for all citizens of Orange County to rent or purchase safe, decent, accessible, and affordable housing.

Housing Goal 1:

A wide range of types and densities of quality housing affordable to all in all parts of the County.

Housing Goal 2:

Housing that is useable by as many people as possible regardless of age, ability or circumstance.

Housing Goal 3:

The preservation, repair, and replacement of existing housing supply.

Housing Goal 4:

Development ordinances and incentives that promote inclusionary practices and housing options for all income levels.

4.7. OBJECTIVES

The intent of this Plan is that the following list of objectives will help guide regular and ongoing decision-making by the County related to housing initiatives. Each objective has a recommended timeline for completion. (Definitions of timelines provided in *Section 1.4: Administration and Implementation Guidelines*.)

Housing Goal 1: A wide range of types and densities of quality housing affordable to all in all parts of the County.

Objective H-1.1:

Assist in the rehabilitation and development of affordable housing and promotion of community development programs in the County using multiple strategies including implementation of the Countywide Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan.

Objective H-1.2:

Concentrate the Orange County Community Development Block Grant Program efforts and resources in those areas of the County occupied by low and moderate-income households and having the most severe housing and community development needs.



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Objective H-1.3:

Increase the provision of housing assistance for households in need and coordinate with public and non-profit organizations responsible for providing community services and housing in the County.

Objective H-1.4:

Coordinate with the municipalities to maintain an adequate supply of residentially designated land to accommodate sustainable levels of population growth and a diversity of housing types countywide.

Objective H-1.5:

Ensure that a variety of housing types can be developed throughout the County in a sustainable manner that locates housing near employment centers and commercial centers and that efficiently uses existing and planned public services. (See also Land Use Objectives LU-1.1 and LU-6.2, Economic Development Objective ED-3.5, and Water and Wastewater Objective WW-2.)

Objective H-1.6:

Promote innovative approaches to housing that are responsive to the needs of Orange County, maintain quality and human scale, increase energy efficiency, and reduce construction and maintenance costs.

Housing Goal 2: Housing that is useable by as many people as possible regardless of age, ability or circumstance.

Objective H-2.1:

Accommodate the development of group homes, foster care facilities, transitional housing facilities and other housing types in appropriate locations to provide increased opportunities for social interaction, a de-institutionalized lifestyle, and gainful employment.

Objective H-2.2:

Continue to address issues of chronic homelessness in Orange County.

Objective H-2.3:

Increase the number of affordable multi-family housing units which are designed to support the needs of the elderly, especially those with limited incomes.

Housing Goal 3: The preservation, repair, and replacement of existing housing supply.

Objective H-3.1:

Achieve residential neighborhoods that are attractive and well-maintained. (See also Land Use Objective LU-2.10.)

Objective H-3.2:

Require that all new housing built or located in Orange County meet the minimum standards specified in the State of North Carolina Building Code, as well as standards of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Farmer's Home Administration, when appropriate.



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Objective H-3.3:

Expand assistance in the retrofitting, repair, and maintenance of existing homes owned by financially challenged households, particularly those that are senior citizens.

Objective H-3.4:

Provide additional housing and rehabilitation assistance that targets and prevents the physical decline of stable neighborhoods.

Objective H-3.5:

Review and consider the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Energy Star and Water Sense standards for use as an integral part of the County's housing rehabilitation program.

Objective H-3.6:

Work within the Orange County government system to identify and resolve existing policies which may be at odds with historic preservation goals, green building approaches, and workforce and affordable housing efforts. (See also Cultural Resources Objective CR-3 and Economic Development Objective ED-4.1.)

Housing Goal 4: Development ordinances and incentives that promote inclusionary practices and housing options for all income levels.

Objective H-4.1:

Continue to permit HUD code-compliant manufactured housing as a form of affordable housing in the County. (See also Land Use Objective LU-4.1.)

Objective H-4.2:

Expand assistance for elderly households that have difficulty affording their home property tax.

Objective H-4.3:

Evaluate the feasibility of development incentives to stimulate the production of needed affordable low income housing. (See also Land Use Objective LU-4.4.)

Objective H-4.4:

Working collaboratively with the towns, identify regulatory barriers to be removed and opportunities for development incentives to encourage the construction of a diverse range of housing types countywide. (See also Land Use Objective LU-4.2.)



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TABLE 4-1: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES LINKS TO PLANNING PRINCIPLES

GOAL/ OBJECTIVE	BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PLANNING PRINCIPLES									
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Efficient and Fiscally Responsible Provision of Public Facilities and Services 2. Sustainable Growth and Development 3. A. Encouragement of Energy Efficiency, Lower Energy Consumption, and the Use of Non-Polluting Renewable Energy Resources B. Promotion of Both Air Quality Protection and the Development of an Effective Transportation System 4. Natural Area Resource Preservation 5. Preservation of Rural Land Use Pattern 6. Water Resources Preservation 7. Promotion of Economic Prosperity and Diversity 8. Preservation of Community Character 									
	1	2	3A	3B	4	5	6	7	8	
Goal 1 and Objectives H-1.1 – H-1.6		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Goal 2 and Objectives H-2.1 – H-2.3									✓	
Goal 3 and Objectives H-3.1 – H-3.6		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	
Goal 4 and Objectives H-4.1 – H-4.4		✓	✓					✓	✓	

4.8. LINKS TO OTHER ELEMENTS

Planning for Orange County’s housing needs is linked to other community needs, such as economic development, transportation, and community services. Linkages between specific housing goals and objectives have been identified in this element. The following summarizes the objectives from other Elements that are linked with Housing objectives.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objective ED-3.5:

Ensure that County workers and those preparing for the workforce have access to transportation, child care, elder care, and affordable housing.

Objective ED-4.1:

Enhance historic character by supporting organizations’ efforts to preserve, promote, and maintain historic structures, and identify Orange County policies that may be in conflict with these efforts. (See also Cultural Resources Objective CR-2, CR-3, and CR-5.)



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LAND USE

Objective LU-1.1:

Coordinate the location of higher intensity / high density residential and non-residential development with existing or planned locations of public transportation, commercial and community services, and adequate supporting infrastructure (i.e., water and sewer, high-speed internet access, streets, and sidewalks), while avoiding areas with protected natural and cultural resources. This could be achieved by increasing allowable densities and creating new mixed-use zoning districts where adequate public services are available.

Objective LU-2.10:

Develop design standards or guidelines that address scale, density, and aesthetic considerations for residential, mixed-use, industrial, and commercial land uses to promote community aesthetics and the protection of the visual and cultural environment of the County.

Objective LU-4.1:

Support the use of individual manufactured housing units as a useful housing resource in the County by increasing the opportunities where these units can locate by-right.

Objective LU-4.2:

Review and amend the Orange County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to identify and eliminate existing regulatory impediments to objectives identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Such objectives include the development of energy efficient buildings within the County, and development of affordable housing.

Objective LU-4.4:

Encourage the provision of a range of affordable and suitable low and moderate income housing by means of development incentives in order to provide a balanced housing stock for the residents of Orange County.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL SYSTEMS

Objective CR-3:

Work within the Orange County government system to identify and resolve existing policies, which may be in conflict with the preservation mission.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Objective WW-2:

Coordinate the provision of potable water and sanitary sewer services with the County's Land Use Plan and Orange County-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Joint Planning Agreement and Land Use Plan, targeting these services to urban, transitional, and economic development districts in a manner that does not endanger environmental resources.



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4.9. OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS

Key documents used to develop this element include the following:

- *2005-2010 Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan.*
- *2006 Draft of the Orange County, North Carolina Comprehensive Housing Strategy.*
- *2007 Orange County Master Aging Plan: Building Aging Friendly Communities in Orange.*
- *Orange County Ten Year Plan To End Chronic Homelessness: A Broad Proposal to End Homelessness (2007).*

4.10. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The provision of housing in Orange County will be a multi-jurisdictional effort over the coming years. Many of the municipalities are already working to expand affordable housing and homeownership opportunities, including Chapel Hill and Carrboro. The County and Towns currently do joint assessment and planning to obtain federal funding sources for assistance to those households earning lower incomes. This collaboration has increased information exchange and opportunities for joint efforts between the jurisdictions. Building on these relationships, the County and Towns will need to continue this coordination to ensure that future housing meets the needs of our communities, that these needs are met in the most efficient, effective, and equitable manner, and that new developments enhance the County's unique quality of life and community character.



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