



Section 7: Future Affordable Housing

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Basalt, as in all communities in the Roaring Fork Valley, the shortage of affordable housing remains a critical issue, even more so than in 1999, since the affordability gap has widened in the intervening years (see affordability gap discussion in Section 2.3 - Housing). Information on housing affordability is also provided in the housing portion of the Baseline Inventory.

An issue that heightens concern for the future of affordable housing in the Basalt Area is the fact that a significant number of mobile home units, which comprise the bulk of Basalt's existing affordable housing stock, are located on properties for which redevelopment proposals are being considered. This trend will likely continue as land values increase and the owners of mobile home parks seek to cash out through redevelopment projects. The Town has adopted a replacement housing provision for projects involving redevelopment of housing that was affordable in 1999. However, it is unclear as to whether this provision will result in housing, the cost of which corresponds to the income levels of the people being displaced by the loss of their mobile homes and whether the replacement housing locations will be found to be acceptable to the Town. In addition, many of the mobile home units in the Three Mile Planning Area are located outside of the Basalt town limits.

Based on the Town Staff estimates and the change in the real estate market, the percentage of the existing housing stock which qualifies as affordable has dropped well below the approximate 30%, it was at in 1999. This number is low when compared to state and national averages and the affordable housing stock in the Basalt area is comprised largely of mobile homes.



While the *1999 Basalt Master Plan* was being prepared, the Town of Basalt adopted a housing mitigation provision in its Land Use Code. While this provision has helped slow the growing discrepancy between income and housing cost, other measures will be needed to combat this issue.

The Town has developed the following housing policy framework (previously called housing Ethos) which will be used to guide decisions related to the development of affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Strategy described below reflects the intent of the housing portion of the Goals and Objectives section of this master plan update.

7.2 AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

The purpose of the Affordable Housing Strategy is to provide a policy framework to help guide the Town's decisions relative to its goal of providing a supply of housing that is attainable by households earning the salaries equivalent to those paid by employers within the Town. The Affordable Housing Strategy will be used to evaluate specific development proposals to ensure that they move the Town toward this goal. The language of the Affordable Housing Strategy is as follows:

The Town of Basalt recognizes that having a supply of housing affordable by households earning the salaries paid in the Town of Basalt is critical to creating a sustainable Town having the benefits of the sense of community that grows where people can live and work in the same area. The Town of Basalt further recognizes that there is a growing gap between housing costs and wages in Basalt. Therefore, the Basalt Town Council has determined that it needs to develop and maintain an affordable housing program.

This will be Basalt's program. It will reflect the Town's small-town character and enhance, not detract from, the livability of the Town. It will reflect a low subsidy by the Town, including time, Town funds, and Town staffing. The Town will be a facilitator, not a developer, of affordable housing.

The Town will not compromise the other non-housing goals of this master plan (such as wetland protection, transportation efficiency, and urban growth boundaries).

HOUSING STRATEGY POLICIES

1. The Town of Basalt will not lose ground on the existing level of affordable housing available in and around Basalt. This means: All *new* residential developments will include and integrate affordable housing into their projects, or if integration is impractical, provide affordable housing in, or near, Basalt; methods will be developed to maintain the existing affordability of housing in Basalt; non-residential projects will mitigate for impacts they create for housing; and existing affordable housing will not be lost through displacement or demolitions.



2. Affordable housing will be disbursed throughout the community and integrated into the existing community fabric.
3. The Town will pursue affordable housing through the annexation agreement process and will utilize the housing policies in the Goals and Objectives section of this master plan update, particularly Objective 4.5.5, to guide affordable housing aspects of the annexation process.
4. The Town encourages community participation in solving and benefiting from solutions to the affordable housing concern. The Town will develop a program that looks more at the total benefits to a neighborhood and to the community and relies not only on numerical standards and limitations.
5. The Town will emphasize programs that will result in the creation of affordable housing units through the construction of new attainable units or by existing units being permanently restricted for affordable housing (either through deed restrictions or other methods).
6. Affordable housing will be transit-friendly, integrate with intermodal transportation, and perpetuate the Town's history of pedestrian walkability and transit use.
7. The Town will consider the total costs for all housing, including life cycle costs such as painting, building materials and energy costs (e.g. including heating the housing unit). The Town will work toward a zero energy footprint for all housing.
8. The Town's housing program should acknowledge regional issues and encourage coordination among jurisdictions including affordable housing standards and requirements. The Town will seek out partnerships with other entities supporting affordable housing and develop reciprocal agreements. The Town will discourage jurisdictional shopping for development approvals.
9. The Town will support creative housing solutions including projects that honor sweat equity by those benefiting from the housing subsidy.
10. The Town considers affordable housing an important aspect of the community, as important as trails, parks, open space, libraries, etc. Therefore, developers should not expect housing rents or prices to reflect the developer's costs. Affordable housing must be considered a cost of doing business in Basalt and rents and prices must reflect wages and salaries in Basalt.

7.3 ADDITIONAL STEPS TO ENCOURAGE DIVERSITY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Section 8 includes typologies depicting how the Town envisions a mixture of housing types and densities to be interwoven into the fabric of the community.



“Planning helps ask the question, what do you want your community to look like and how should it function? Ultimately, planning helps people to take responsibility for their community and mold it into the kind of place they want it to be.”



The Small Town Planning Handbook (Second Addition); Thomas L. Daniels, John W. Keller and Mark B. Lapping, (1995).



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