

4. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS





CHAPTER FOUR

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Chapter 4 of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan assesses the City's current housing supply and anticipated needs. It reviews the type, mix, and condition of existing housing stock; household characteristics; affordability factors; and anticipated future housing demand. The assessment of these overlapping factors serves as the basis for subsequent goals and objectives contained in the chapter which reflect preferred future residential development patterns in and around the City.

Individual housing quality, condition, and availability influences (and is influenced by) the condition and character of surrounding property. For Bastrop to meet the housing goals and objectives that it establishes in this Plan, it must also define the preferred attributes of surrounding neighborhoods, and identify those attributes that are essential to

create or maintain quality residential areas. Chapter 4 therefore considers neighborhood interconnectivity, the City's historic preservation programs, and nuisance and property maintenance codes.

While the construction of new housing in Bastrop is largely dependent on population shifts that influence market demand, the City plays a role in directing where growth occurs, and in encouraging activities that stabilize or enhance existing neighborhoods. This chapter establishes the City's goals and objectives for incentivizing preferred residential growth and neighborhood conservation activities that provide greater housing choice for existing and future residents. **A summary list of all Housing and Neighborhoods goals and objectives can be found at the end of this chapter (page 4-30).**



The City of Bastrop's historic homes in center city include design characteristics that the community is interested in replicating.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT.

HOUSING TRENDS

Bastrop has experienced sustained population growth over the last two (2) decades. Figures presented within Chapters 1 and 2 of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan quantify City population growth and how it corresponds to the overall growth trend within the proximate Austin urbanized area. Additional figures and data within this Chapter illustrate comparable growth in Bastrop's housing market.

Between 2011 and 2015, a total of 251 building permits were issued for the construction of new single-family residential dwellings in Bastrop. Building permits were also issued for 36 new multi-family dwelling units for seniors. Assuming an average household size of 2.57 persons, full occupancy of these units will produce 722 new City residents¹. Still, current housing demand extends beyond recently permitted new construction. Recent housing analyses produced for the Bastrop Economic Development Corporation (EDC), suggest a strong latent demand for additional housing in the Bastrop area – while other resources provide circumstantial evidence that the local residential real estate market remains strong.

With no evidence that local residential demand will subside in the near future, Bastrop's housing challenges are to determine: **A)** The rate at which it would like to facilitate and absorb new residential growth; **B)** The degree to which it would like to diversify housing options in the City; and, **C)** The role the City should play in housing redevelopment.

NEIGHBORHOOD TRENDS

In basic terms, the character of Bastrop's neighborhoods – similar to those in most free-standing American cities – can be classified as urban, suburban, and rural in nature. Beyond these three (3) basic classifications of community character, each neighborhood in a community offers further variations in housing type, scale, density, design, and condition.

The character and diversity of housing stock in a neighborhood are only two characteristics of a broader built environment. The American Planning Association's Great Places in America program suggests that a great neighborhood exhibits the following characteristics:

- *It has a variety of functional attributes that contribute to a resident's day-to-day living (i.e., residential, commercial, or mixed-uses).*
- *Multi-modal transportation (i.e., pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers) is accommodated.*
- *Design and architectural features are visually interesting.*
- *Human contact and social activities are encouraged.*
- *Community involvement is promoted and a secure environment is maintained.*
- *It incorporates sustainable design and responds to climatic demands.*
- *It has a memorable character.*

Bastrop's recently adopted form-based code includes many of the tools that seek to preserve these characteristics. In contrast, some residential areas in Bastrop are developing with little variation in

¹. Occupancy of 1.0 was calculated for 10 single-bedroom senior multi-family dwellings units.

housing design and scale. Unfortunately, such patterns of “uniformity” in design can also decrease community acceptance of variations on housing density and type. Bastrop must determine which features it values in its existing neighborhoods that may be transferable to new residential developments throughout the City - regardless of proposed location, density, or type.

Bastrop is blessed with an abundance of healthy neighborhoods. Although pockets of poverty and physical blight exist in the City, these conditions are not as prevalent in Bastrop when compared to other historically rural communities. Bastrop’s principal neighborhood challenges will be to determine: **A)** How to build new residential areas that function as complimentary extensions of existing neighborhoods – rather than as isolated subdivisions; **B)** The degree to which the City should assist disadvantaged households with home and property maintenance; and, **C)** The degree to which the City should apply pro-active code enforcement measures to limit physical blight.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Chapter 1, Planning Context, describes the methods that were utilized to solicit community input during the comprehensive planning process. Community input received through public surveys, community open houses, and participation in the mySidewalk social media tool regarding housing and neighborhoods suggested the following themes:

- **Housing Diversity.** *A substantial number of planning participants believe that there should be greater diversity of housing types (including multi-family) and densities in Bastrop; but, placement of such residential uses should be strategic.*
- **Housing Affordability.** *There is a perceived lack of housing at varying price points in Bastrop which may cause some residents to leave the City. This does not equate to a community-wide desire to promote low-to-moderate income housing, but rather to support the development of new market-rate products.*
- **City Housing Assistance.** *There is little interest in direct City participation in low-to-moderate income housing programs or housing for special needs populations. City involvement in housing or neighborhood redevelopment should be focused on infrastructure improvements or other support roles.*
- **Neighborhood Conservation.** *Planning participants believe that there exist sufficient codes to abate property nuisances in the City. The City should focus on enhancing or refining existing processes.*



Having a variety of functional attributes that contribute to a resident’s day-to-day living is just one characteristic that a great neighborhood exhibits.

HOUSING TYPE AND MIX.

Bastrop’s housing mix includes most contemporary categories of dwelling type including: single family attached and detached homes, duplexes, and multi-family dwelling units. **Figure 4.1, Housing Type and Unit Breakdown**, illustrates that the City’s distribution of dwelling unit by type has remained consistent since at least 2000. As recently as 2014, single family detached dwelling units have been estimated to account for 73 percent of housing stock in the city. Multi-family dwellings account for less than a quarter of city-wide housing units. The proportionality of Bastrop’s housing stock has remained consistent even after the loss of many of the City’s residential structures during the 2011 Bastrop Complex Fire.

Even in spite of the devastating 2011 fire – which destroyed over 1,000 homes across Bastrop County – there was a 22 percent increase in the number of residential dwelling

units in Bastrop between 2000 and 2014. Housing growth roughly paralleled the City’s estimated population growth of 18 percent during the same period.

RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Bastrop uses a hybrid zoning approach to administer land uses in the City. Most City land is regulated through the use of traditional (“Euclidean”) zoning districts – zones that focus principally on the separation of land uses. In 2015, the City adopted a form-based zoning code for a 579 acre area of center city. Form-based districts allow a greater mix of land uses, but emphasize consistency in massing, scale, and arrangement of buildings and structures. Although all of the City’s form-based districts allow some form of residential use, as of 2015 almost all of the City’s vacant residential land remained in portions of the City subject to traditional zoning districts.

FIGURE 4.1. HOUSING TYPE AND UNIT BREAKDOWN

Housing Type ⁴	2000 ¹		2010 ²		Percent change 2000-2010	2014 ³		Percent change 2010-2014	Percent change 2000-2014
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent		Total	Percent		
Single-family, Detached	1,503	69%	2,068	69%	38%	1,952	73%	-6%	30%
Single-family, Attached	23	1%	63	2%	174%	28	1%	-56%	22%
Duplex	146	7%	164	5%	12%	120	5%	-27%	-18%
Multifamily (3+ units)	512	23%	710	24%	39%	562	21%	-21%	10%
TOTAL	2,184		3,005		38%	2,662		-11%	22%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. ¹Census 2000 Summary File 3, DP-4: Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics: 2000; ²2006-2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics; ³2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics.
 Note: This data excludes housing types described as “other” which includes: mobile homes, boats, RVs, vans, etc.
⁴Housing types as defined by U.S. Census Bureau

The City's eight (8) traditional zoning classifications which are intended to promote varying densities and types of residential development. These classifications include three (3) single-family residential zoning districts of varying density (SF-7, SF-9 and SF-20), one (1) manufactured housing district (MH), two (2) single-family attached/townhouse zoning districts (2F, SFA), and two (2) multi-family districts (MF-1 and MF-2). The distribution of these districts is illustrated on **Map 4-A, Bastrop Residential Zoning Districts**. **Figure 4.2, Bastrop Residential Zoning Districts**, illustrates that over 1,591 acres of land inside Bastrop's city limits (roughly 29 percent) is zoned for residential use (*excluding form-based districts*). Of that acreage, over ninety-two (92) percent is zoned for single family residential dwellings via the SF-7, SF-9, SF-20 and PD districts - leaving eight (8) percent of

residentially zoned land as suitable for multi-family development and less than one (1) percent for manufactured housing.

The Downtown Bastrop Form-Based Code (DB-FBC) includes ten (10) districts - all of which allow one (1) or more types of residential use (as well as multiple non-residential land uses). There are estimated to be only around 58 vacant/undeveloped acres within the area subject to the City's DB-FBC. There is also a lack of performance data - due to the recent adoption of the code - to indicate the degree to which the market will favor residential versus non-residential development in the area. These combined factors suggest that - at least in the short-term - the areas subject to the City's form-based districts will play a minor role in absorbing the City's anticipated residential growth.

FIGURE 4.2. BASTROP RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Zoning districts allowing residential uses ¹		Min. lot area (s.f.)	Acres zoned	Percent of residentially zoned land	Vacant/undeveloped land (ACRES) ²	Potential dwelling units ³
SF-7	Single family residential	7,000	368.7	23.4%	69.7	327
SF-9	Single family residential	9,000	325.8	20.7%	219.1	898
SF-20	Single family residential	20,000	326.2	20.7%	69.7	141
MH	Manufactured housing	7,000	6.9	0.4%	0.0	0
MF-1	Multi-family dwelling	10,000	32.8	2.1%	6.8	32-81
MF-2	Multi-family dwelling	15,000	77.6	4.9%	25.9	121-647
PD	Planned development ⁴	N/A	453.7 ⁵	27.8%	270 ⁵	1,060-1,460
TOTAL			1,591.7 ⁵	100%	661.2 ⁵	2,579-3,554

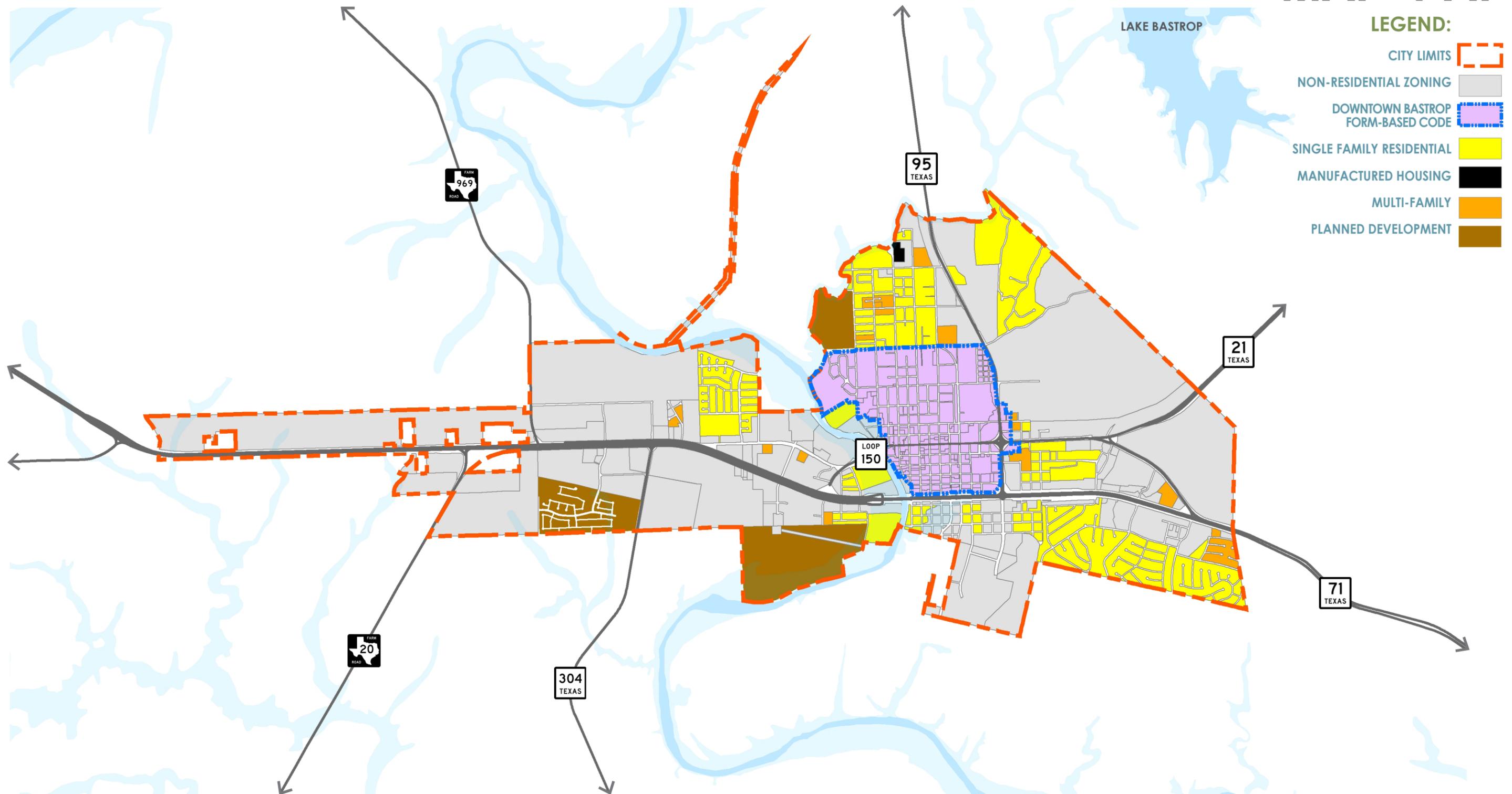
Source: Halff Associates, Inc.

Note: ¹Excludes form-based districts and zoning districts that permit residential uses but are intended for other uses (office, retail, etc.). No city land is currently zoned 2F or SFA. ²Excludes land that is located within the 100 year floodplain.

³Potential dwelling units calculates the total allowable dwelling units after omitting a certain percentage of land necessary for right of way, open space, etc. ⁴Planned Development includes both the Hunter's Crossing, Pecan Park, and Piney Creek Planned Developments. ⁵Pecan Park PD includes a commercial phase that may include up to 400 multi-family dwelling units (16 acres total).

BASTROP RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS¹

MAP 4-A:



Source: City of Bastrop

Notes: ¹DB-FBC area includes many districts that, although not intended exclusively for residential uses, permit varying levels of residential dwellings. Some euclidean zoning districts (such as Office or Retail) permit residential uses but were not included in this exercise as the intended use in those districts is not residential. No city land is currently zoned 2F or SFA.



PROJECTED HOUSING SUPPLY

Figure 4.3, Existing and Projected Housing Needs, suggests that 92 percent of Bastrop's estimated 2,939 housing units were occupied in 2014. When the City's current occupancy rate and ratio of housing unit by type is projected to 2036, the figure suggests that an additional 5,154 housing units will be required to accommodate Bastrop's projected population of 19,199. By housing type, this translates to an additional 986 multi-family units, 210 duplex units, 49 single family attached units, and 3,423 single family detached units.

Bastrop's *Comprehensive Housing Supply and Demand Analysis* was prepared for the Bastrop Economic Development Corporation (EDC) in September of 2015. Its findings suggest that, based on market trends, there is an existing shortage of approximately 200 apartment units in the City. It further suggests that the strong performance of multi-family buildings in Bastrop, distribution by age and income, and future job growth potential could create an annual demand for 150 - 225 multi-family dwelling units per year for the next five (5) years. This translates to 750 - 1,125 apartment units (requiring 30-94 acres) in the next five (5) years alone.

The wide discrepancy between **Figure 4.3** and the EDC's analysis reflects different growth outcomes based in part on the housing policies Bastrop chooses to adopt:

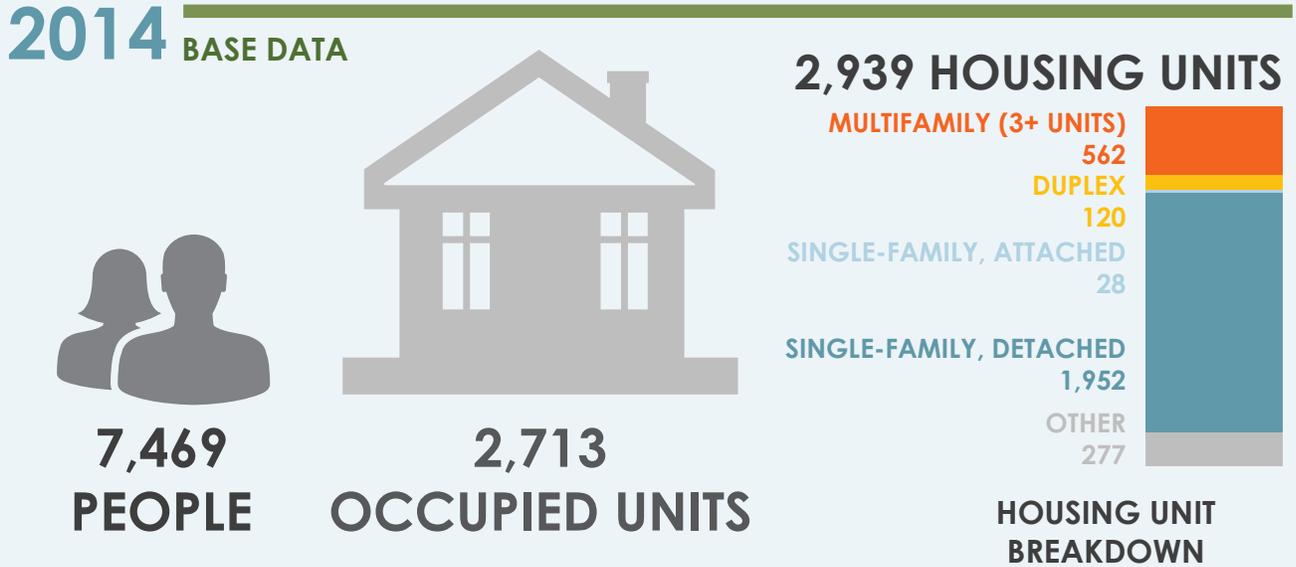
- **Conservative Policy.** *Housing decisions intended to meet a fixed population growth figure (and associated infrastructure capacity).*
- **Liberal Policy.** *Housing decisions intended to enable maximum housing growth potential regardless of rate or volume.*

Figure 4.2 (page 4-6) indicates that as of January 2016, over 661 acres of vacant/ undeveloped residential land was available inside the City which fell within one (1) of the City's eight (8) principal residential or PD districts. Almost ninety-three (93) percent of that land is zoned solely for single family residential use (including PDs). This leaves less than 48 acres of vacant or undeveloped land zoned for possible multi-family residential use in Bastrop. A comparison of **Figure 4.2** with **Figure 4.3** suggests that the undeveloped acreage of Bastrop's existing residential zoning districts is sufficient to absorb 71 to 75 percent of the City's projected single family dwelling units and all of the projected multi-family dwelling units over the next 20 year period (based on City population projections). This scenario assumes a City policy of maintaining the existing ratio of dwelling unit by type, and would only be possible if the City chose to meet the population growth figure proposed in this Plan (i.e. adopt a conservative housing policy).

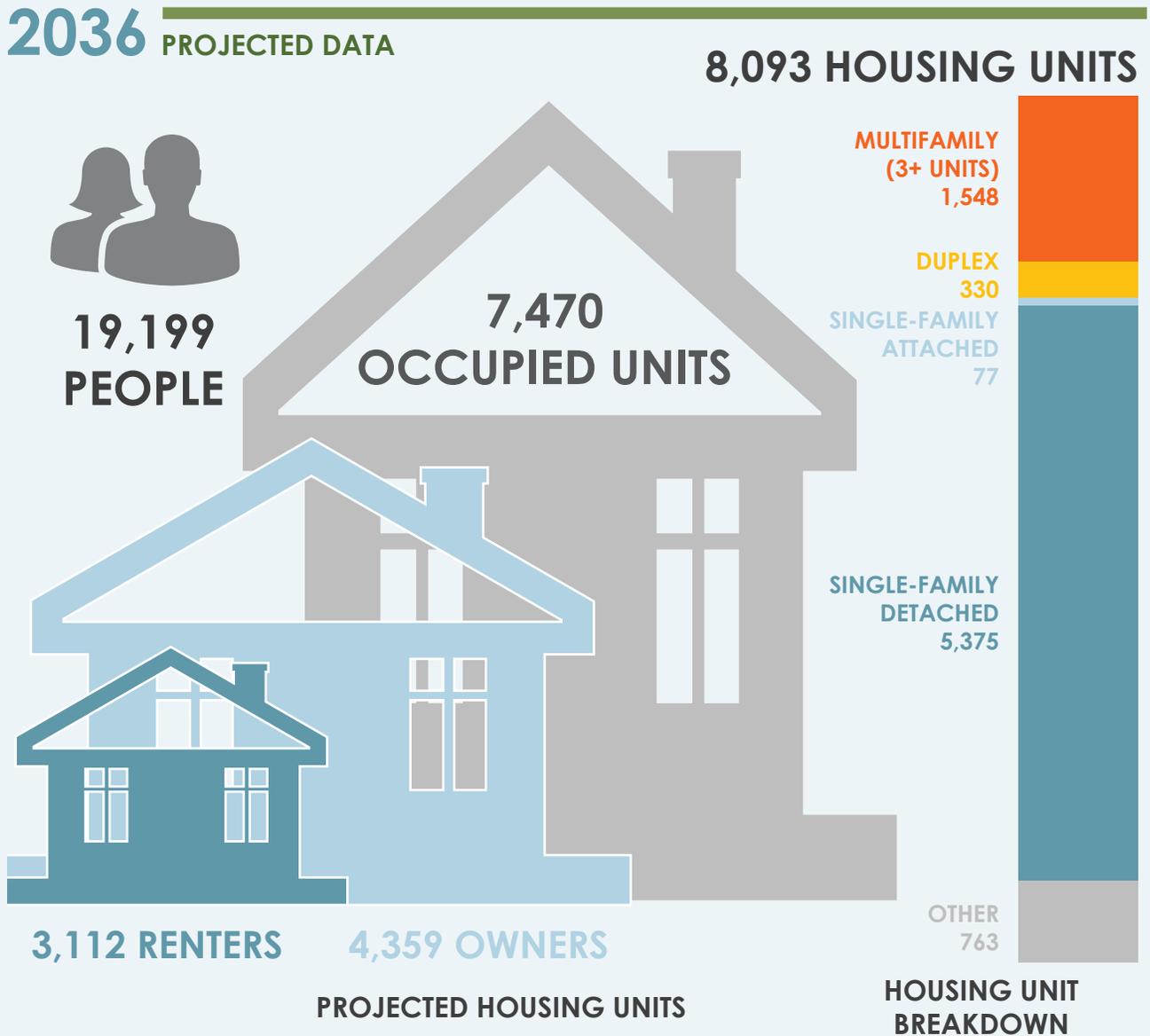
SUMMARY

The 661.2 acres currently available for residential development (excluding the DB-FBC districts) suggests that additional land in Bastrop may need to be rezoned for residential use to accommodate between 702 and 855 total housing units to meet 20 year population growth projections. The City's deficit in residential land is significantly greater if it seeks to meet the targets of the EDC's recent multi-family housing analysis. Although some new residential development will be accommodated within the City's DB-FBC districts, additional residential rezoning may be desirable because much of the City's vacant residential acreage is scattered, and not contained within consolidated development

FIGURE 4.3. EXISTING AND PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS



Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Housing Characteristics



tracts. Some undeveloped residential acreage may also be subject to a variety of development constraints not apparent through simple demographic and mapping exercises.

Any City residential annexation and rezoning policy must also take into account the City's current housing mix – considering both housing type and density. The 2015 *Comprehensive Housing Supply and Demand Analysis* suggests that there is a “market” for new multi-family development in Bastrop. The analysis findings suggest that if Bastrop expands its product offerings with a well-segmented product strategy, appealing to a wide range of buyer types and price points, a more diverse community will be feasible. Public feedback supports this notion.

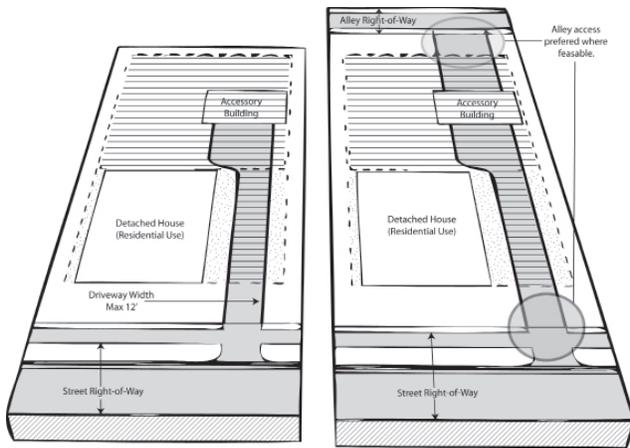
In contrast, there seems to be limited public desire to cater to the implied demand for additional multi-family housing in the City – and by extension, little desire to adjust current residential housing ratios. With proper design and placement, there may be greater local flexibility in diversifying the City's housing stock by permitting variable density options for new single-family detached and attached housing. Anticipated infill residential development in the City's DB-FBC districts may provide design precedents in all housing types to make greater housing diversity in other portions of Bastrop a long-term possibility.



Goal 4.1: Provide a greater diversity of housing options in Bastrop while protecting the character of the City's existing neighborhoods.

Objective 4.1.1: Establish processes to diversify housing options in Bastrop.

1. **Establish clear multi-family residential targets as a ratio of all City housing to alternatively meet 2036 City population projections; or, to generate additional supply to meet anticipated market potential. Targets should be based in part on a further analysis of local housing preferences (see Objective 4.2.1, page 4-20).**
2. **In additional to other factors established by this Plan (e.g. Bastrop Growth Program), ordinance, or other City policy documents, consider the consistency of annexation and residential rezoning requests with the City's targeted housing ratio by type.**
3. **Monitor the volume of residential versus non-residential development applications in the City's DB-FBC districts to determine the degree to which the districts absorb residential demand. Modify residential rezoning targets in the City's traditional zoning districts accordingly.**
4. **Utilize the City's Planned Development (PDD) zoning to apply desirable aspects of the DB-FBC districts to other portions of the City. Gradually insert these housing and neighborhood design “best practices” into the body of the City zoning ordinance so that they apply to all applicable residential zoning districts, and concurrently reduce the long-term use of the PDD zoning district as a tool.**
5. **Promote the use of the SFA (Single Family Attached) district to provide transitions between single-family detached and multi-family land uses. Increase the permissible ratio of single-family attached housing and townhomes as a percentage of all housing units where the uses can serve as an effective transition, or as an extension of comparable DB-FBC districts.**



Desirable elements of the City’s form-based districts can be incorporated into the City’s traditional zoning ordinance. A greater volume of ordinance exhibits (above left) can help balance greater flexibility in housing densities and size in new neighborhoods with preferred community design goals (above right).

HOUSING CONDITION AND OCCUPANCY.

AGE OF HOUSING

Thirty one (31) percent of all housing units in Bastrop have been constructed since 2000 and over two thirds of all housing stock is less than 35 years old. The ratio of newer dwelling units in Bastrop would be even higher but Census data suggests that between 2010 and 2014 the ratio of post 2000 housing stock in Bastrop remained flat – likely a result of the 2011 Bastrop Complex fire.

Figure 4.4, Age of Housing Stock, also illustrates that the presence of multi-family housing in the City is a relatively recent phenomenon and correlates with an increasing growth rate in the last decades of the 20th century (and of a gradual suburbanization of the City). As previously mentioned however, the ratio of multi-family housing in Bastrop compared to other housing types has remained relatively consistent since 2000.

FIGURE 4.4. AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

Housing Type	Housing Units (Total)	Period of Construction				
		1939 OR EARLIER	1940-1959	1960-1979	1980-1999	SINCE 2000
2014 ¹	2,713	148	223	494	1,007	841
		5%	8%	18%	37%	31%
Single-Family (attached & detached)		100%	94%	64%	61%	64%
Duplex/Triplex/Four-Plex		0%	6%	16%	7%	10%
Multifamily		0%	0%	5%	12%	25%
Other		0%	0%	15%	19%	1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. ¹2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, B25127: Tenure by Year Structure Built by Units in Structure.

OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

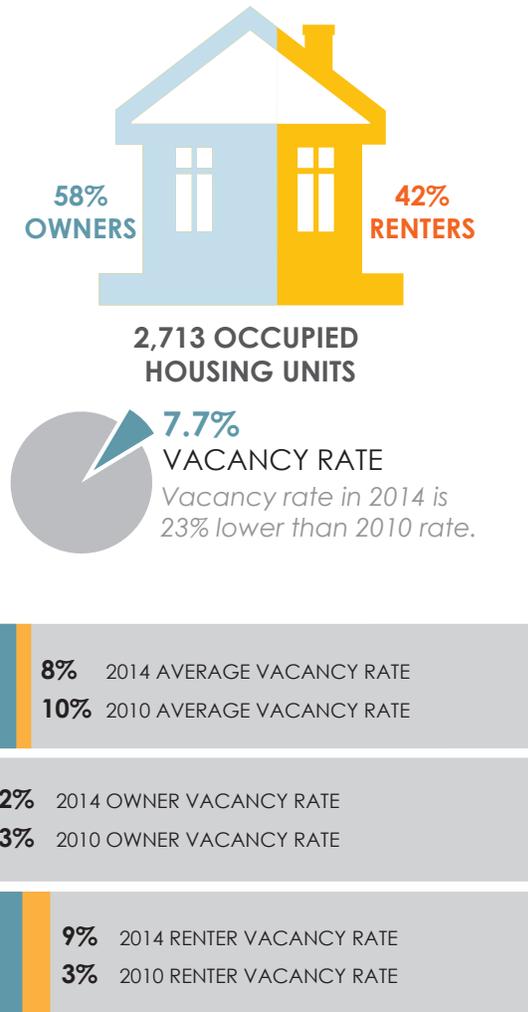
Occupancy trends in Bastrop show a recent decline in vacancy rates across the city. Between 2010 and 2014, city-wide vacancy rates are estimated to have declined from 10 percent to 7.7 percent. **Figure 4.5, Occupancy Characteristics**, suggests that owner-occupancy vacancy rates are extremely low (3 percent in 2010; 2 percent in 2014). In addition to providing evidence of residential demand in a community, low vacancy rates can also be an indicator of inflated sales prices.

HOUSING CONDITIONS INVENTORY

In conjunction with its 2000 comprehensive plan, Bastrop conducted a visual conditions inventory. A housing conditions inventory is a powerful tool which can be utilized by local governments seeking to quantify housing conditions throughout their community, and to subsequently initiate activities to improve their housing stock. Housing conditions inventories are essentially windshield surveys whereby the condition of individual housing units is divided into one (1) of four (4) categories: standard, minor deterioration, major deterioration, and dilapidated:

- **Standard.** Home shows no signs of structural instability.
- **Minor Deterioration.** Home shows evidence that the structure is unsound, but still livable.
- **Major Deterioration.** Home shows evidence that the structure is unsound and unlivable, but the home may still be occupied.
- **Dilapidated.** Home structure is completely deteriorated and unsafe.

FIGURE 4.5. OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS



Occupancy trends show a decline in vacancy rates across Bastrop, including in both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units.

SUMMARY

Residential vacancy rates, housing age statistics, and code enforcement records suggest that Bastrop is not burdened by a large inventory of vacant or dangerous buildings. Nonetheless, Bastrop's declining vacancy rate can place unseen stresses on residents in the community. A lack of housing supply can create conditions of overcrowding, unreasonably high rental rates, and situations where households are compelled to reside in substandard housing units.

The City of Bastrop's 2000 housing conditions inventory is now outdated and should be amended or replaced. Bastrop should consider commissioning an update of the City's 2000 housing conditions inventory to maintain an accurate record of housing needs. A well-maintained housing conditions inventory serves as a barometer of residential maintenance trends in the community. A gradual decline in housing condition ratings often correlates to an aging population whose ability to maintain home ownership or invest in home maintenance is becoming increasingly constrained. In addition, housing conditions inventories are useful when applying for housing or community development grants.

The low vacancy rate for dwelling units intended for owner occupancy correlates with other indicators that suggest near-term residential demand exceeds the City's estimated population growth rates. The City's residential growth targets must also consider the replacement of aging housing stock over the 20 year planning horizon as well.



Goal 4.2: Maintain and enhance the overall quality of existing housing stock in Bastrop.

Objective 4.2.1: Monitor housing conditions to limit the volume and rate of deterioration of the City's housing stock.

1. **Prepare a standard inventory form and conduct an updated housing conditions inventory. Conduct the survey in winter months to better evaluate residences that may be obstructed by vegetation.**
2. **Incorporate housing conditions inventory data into GIS parcel data to enhance the manner in which housing conditions can be mapped and analyzed.**
3. **Work with the Bastrop Public Housing Authority (PHA) or a non-profit entity to conduct income surveys of households residing in deteriorated or dilapidated housing stock.**
4. **Evaluate the need and feasibility of establishing a home rehabilitation assistance program for owner-occupied housing units with funding support from the TDHCA.**
5. **Utilize housing conditions inventory data to determine if adjustments to the City's minimum property maintenance codes should be initiated in order to pro-actively prevent housing deterioration.**

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY.

It is a common mis-perception that the topic of housing affordability relates solely to low-to-moderate individuals or households; and, that the resulting discussion must be limited to the virtues of providing public housing or other forms of housing assistance. While evaluating methods to support the housing needs of a community's impoverished residents or other vulnerable populations is certainly a relevant consideration, "housing affordability" is not synonymous with "affordable housing." The

affordability of a community's housing stock influences the decisions of all income groups, both in the short and long-term, regarding where to live, raise families, and retire. Public input received during the preparation of this Plan reveals the degree to which housing affordability can influence the overall character of a community – with a number of participants suggesting that they are unlikely to remain in Bastrop because "home options are not available" in a suitable price range.

"HOUSING IS RIDICULOUSLY OVER-PRICED."

"WE COULD NOT AFFORD TO BUY IN TOWN AGAIN AND WOULD HAVE TO MOVE OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS TO FIND AFFORDABLE HOUSING"



"WE SEEM TO BE MISSING A RANGE OF HOUSING."

"RENT IS JUST TOO HIGH FOR WHAT YOU GET."

"SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING THAT IS IN GOOD CONDITION AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE RANGE IS HARD TO FIND."

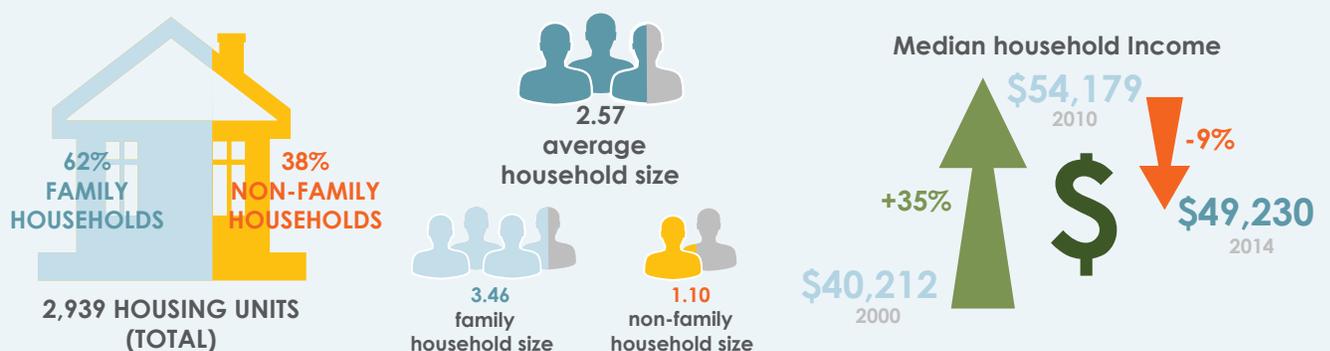
Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Survey Respondents [City Residents]

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Figure 4.6, Household Characteristics, indicates that roughly 38 percent of all households in Bastrop in 2014 were classified as “non-family.” The term non-family represents a household of unrelated individuals residing together, or households with a single resident. The rate of non-family households in Bastrop may reflect a greater number of apartment dwellings in the City than in 2000 (but not necessarily an increase in younger residents or residents with lower household incomes). Between 2000 and 2014 the number of non-family households that were represented by a single resident rose from 575 to 941. By 2014, over 91 percent of all non-family households in Bastrop were represented by a single householder. The numbers correlate to an aging population – a group whose income is generally constrained and has difficulty bearing fluctuations in the local housing market.

Figure 4.6 also indicates that the estimated median household income in Bastrop in 2014 was 49,230 dollars - 6 percent higher than that of the overall Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos MSA. Median household income levels are a significant measure in determining an area's eligibility for rural community development grants administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture. Such programs are designed to benefit low-to-moderate income populations [as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)]. Areas in which these grants would be utilized for infrastructure development, housing programs, and blight abatement must meet area minimum income criteria. HUD data suggests that Bastrop's future eligibility in state-administered community development grants may be limited.

FIGURE 4.6. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS. In 2014 there were 2,939 households in the City of Bastrop. Average household size is 2.57 persons per household; however, families have higher households with an average of 3.46 persons and non-family households are smaller at 1.1 persons. Median Household Income has generally increased 22 percent since 2000 to \$40,230 dollars, despite a decline since 2010.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimate HH Type by Tenure, 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimate Average HH Size of OCC Housing by Tenure, 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimate and 2000 Census HH Income by Gross Rent as a Percentage of HH Income

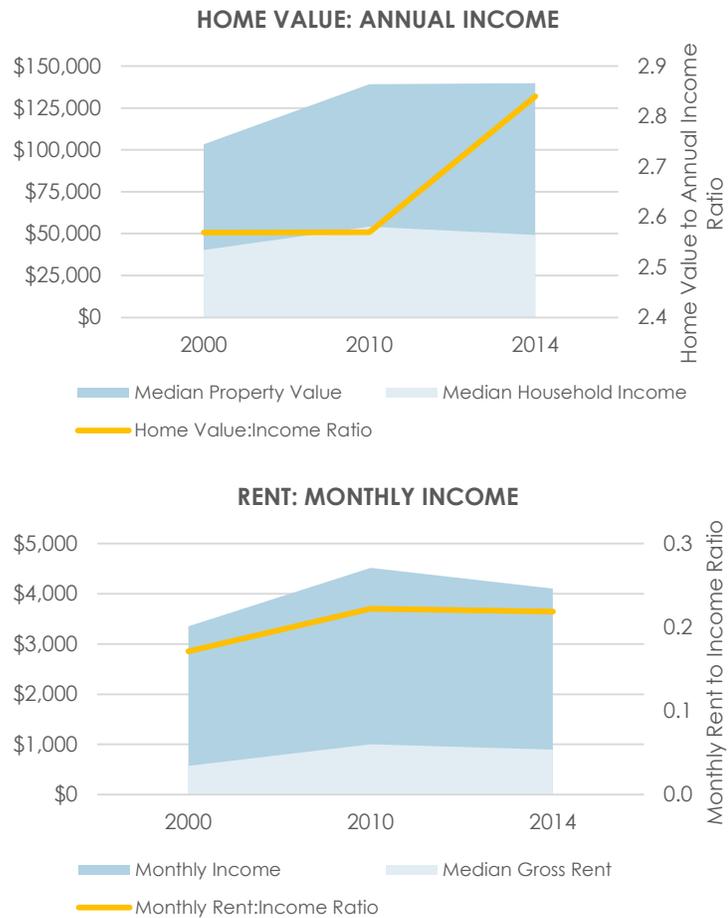


Providing affordable housing does not mean that a community must compromise preferred design goals, as demonstrated above.

FIGURE 4.7. COST OF HOUSING

COST OF HOUSING

Although household incomes in Bastrop exceed that of the MSA, housing affordability remains an issue for all income levels. **Figure 4.7, Cost of Housing**, indicates that property values and median household incomes in Bastrop grew at about the same rate between 2000 and 2010. Between 2010 and 2014 however, property values continued to grow slightly while median household income declined. This resulted in a higher property value to household income ratio. **Figure 4.7** also shows that median gross rents grew at a high rate between 2000 and 2010 (increasing by 75 percent). Although median monthly rents declined between 2010 and 2014, and the rent to income ratio has remained roughly equivalent since 2000, a 56 percent increase in median rents over the 14 year period mirrors stated community concerns about rapidly increasing housing costs.



AFFORDABILITY CALCULATORS.

The Zillow Affordability Calculator is one (1) tool that can assist communities in estimating the maximum home value affordable to households at each income category. Figure 4.9, Home Loan Thresholds (below), applies the Zillow Affordability Calculator to the median annual income of a four-person household in the MSA. This example suggests that a four-person household earning the median income of \$76,800 dollars could afford to purchase a house for as much as \$241,032 dollars.

FIGURE 4.8. HOME LOAN THRESHOLDS

PERCENT OF MEDIAN INCOME	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	AFFORDABLE MONTHLY HOUSE PAYMENT (30%)	FHA REGULAR LOAN (30-YEAR FIXED RATE AT 3.75% INTEREST)			
			MAXIMUM SALES PRICE	LOAN AMOUNT	DOWN PAYMENT 3.5% OF SALES PRICE OF HOME ¹	MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS ²
30%	\$24,250	\$606	\$72,520	\$69,974	\$2,546	\$604
50%	\$38,400	\$960	\$117,895	\$113,863	\$4,032	\$957
80%	\$61,450	\$1,536	\$191,809	\$185,357	\$6,452	\$1,531
100%	\$76,800	\$1,920	\$241,032	\$232,968	\$8,064	\$1,913
120%	\$92,150	\$2,304	\$290,255	\$280,579	\$9,676	\$2,296

Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development, FY2015 Income Limits. U.S. Census Bureau. 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, B19001: Household Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2014 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

Notes: Calculations assume \$0 monthly debt, 3% property tax rate, and \$500 for homeowners insurance. ¹Calculated by multiplying the loan required down payment rate times 3-times the "Median Household Income." ²Monthly Housing Costs is based on 30 percent of income, and includes monthly mortgage payment, hazard insurance, property tax, utility costs, maintenance, and mortgage insurance.

COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

A simple way to evaluate housing affordability across income levels is through the measure of "cost-burdened" households. Cost burdened households are those households that spend more than 30 percent of their monthly incomes on mortgage or rent, and related housing costs (i.e., utilities, maintenance). A cost burdened household is not necessarily a low-to-moderate income household, but may be found at any income level. The condition may reflect high rents associated with low housing supply, or simply a personal decision to live above one's means. Increases in an area's cost burdened ratios will eventually affect disposable income and local purchasing activity.

Figure 4.9, Cost Burdened Households (page 4-18), indicates that in 2014 approximately 34 percent of Bastrop households were considered cost burdened - including 11 percent that were considered severely cost burdened (monthly housing costs exceeding 50 of their household income). Today, more Bastrop householders are cost burdened compared to 2000. In 2000, only 20 percent of Bastrop households were not cost burdened. Likewise, the percentage of the community's severely cost burdened households has increased from 9 percent of the households to 11 percent between 2000 and 2014.

HOUSING + TRANSPORTATION COSTS

The great distances that most Americans travel between home, work, and recreation has resulted in an increasing share of annual household income being applied to annual transportation costs. The land use patterns created by our auto-dependent built environments require that most of us live at distances between home and destinations that are greater than many might prefer. Regardless, housing and transportation costs are inter-related, and measuring both cumulatively provides a more accurate picture of local costs of living.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology suggest that the combined costs of housing and transportation should not exceed 45 percent of annual household income - with housing costs making up 30 percent of the ratio and transportation accounting for 15 percent. As shown in **Figure 4.10, Housing and Transportation Affordability Index**, housing and transportation costs consume approximately 45 percent of the income of a typical household in Bastrop, consistent with annual household expenditures that would be considered affordable. However, in Bastrop housing accounts for a low share of the typical household's income while transportation accounts for a high share.

FIGURE 4.9. COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

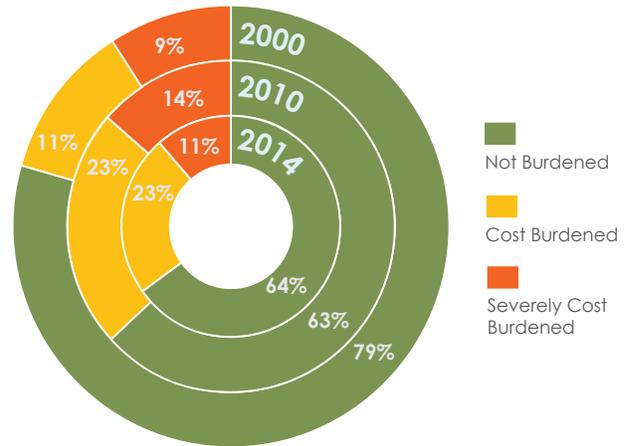
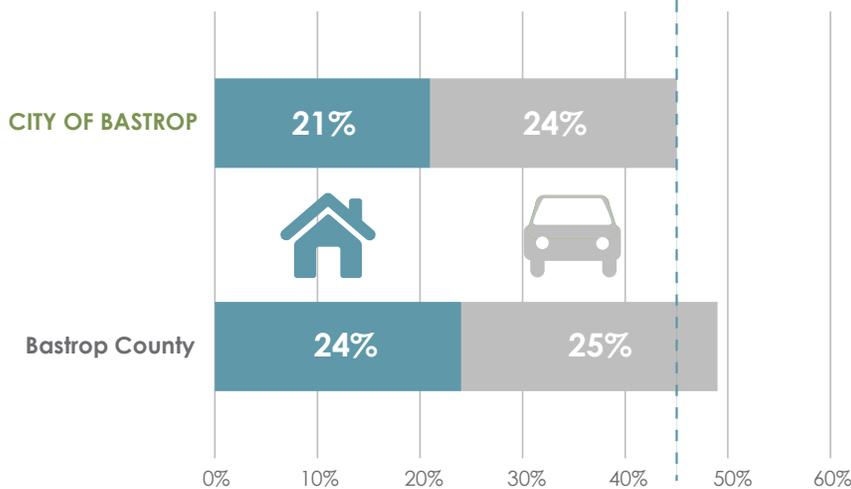


FIGURE 4.10. HOUSING & TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY INDEX



The combined costs of housing and transportation should not exceed 45% in order to be considered affordable.

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology. Housing and Transportation Affordability Index.

JOBS-HOUSING BALANCE

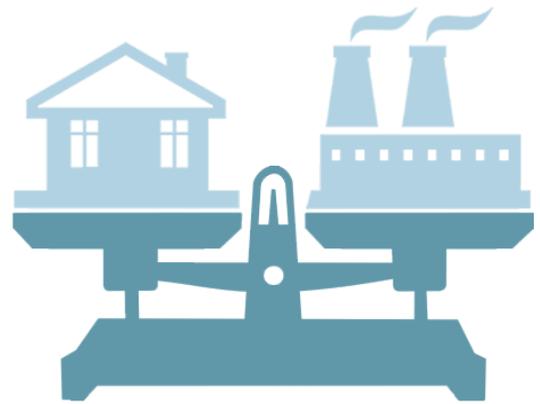
FIGURE 4.11. JOBS-HOUSING BALANCE

JOBS-HOUSING MEASUREMENT	RECOMMENDED TARGET RATIOS	RECOMMENDED TARGET RANGE	SOURCE
Jobs to Housing Units Ratio	1.5:1	1.3:1 to 1.7:1 or 1.4:1 to 1.6:1	Ewing 1996 Cevero 1991
Jobs to Employed Residents Ratio	1:1	0.8:1 to 1.25:1	Cevero 1991

Source: *Jobs-Housing Balance - APA Planning Advisory Service Report No. 516; Jerry Weitz, AICP.*

Eighty-nine percent of Bastrop's employed residents work outside of the city of Bastrop. A similar percentage commute into the city from other locations to work. These patterns of migration to and from work suggest a mismatch between the number and type of jobs offered within a community and available housing stock. Besides personal inconvenience and expense, the imbalance also contributes to greater traffic congestion within the affected community.

Figure 4.11, Jobs-Housing Balance, provides a recommended target ratio for the number of jobs which should be located within a community versus housing units. The standards may vary from community to community, but this figure provides the first step in determining how to provide a healthier jobs-housing balance. Bastrop's jobs to housing ratio in 2013 was estimated to be 1.9:1 – outside of the recommended target ranges listed in **Figure 4.11**. The estimated 2013 jobs to employment ratio was almost 1:1, suggesting that commuting patterns are influenced both by a lack of housing units in the City and mismatch between types of jobs that may be found in Bastrop and the resident population.



SUMMARY

There are segments of the population that benefit from increased residential property values in Bastrop. The appreciation of property values bring new wealth to the community. These positive economic indicators however, can place strain on existing residents. Single householders often skew to older age groups who find rising property values amid fixed incomes (and decline physical health) a significant impediment to “aging in place.” As opposed to large institutionalized housing such as assisted living, many of these residents who find themselves in danger of displacement prefer smaller housing options within their current neighborhoods of residence.

In addition to existing residents who may be forced to find new housing options outside of their current neighborhoods, or the City as a whole, data presented in this Plan (and in the *Comprehensive Housing Supply and Demand Analysis*) suggests a need for additional housing options catering to the price points of those workers who are commuting into the City on a daily basis for work. Further evaluating the City’s job-housing imbalance typology, and expanding upon the Bastrop EDC’s prior work – by directly polling Bastrop workers on housing preferences and household income earnings - would provide a more nuanced understanding of the housing types that Bastrop needs to promote and accommodate.



Goal 4.3: Develop housing targets that align with local demand.

Objective 4.3.1: Define the residential options that current Bastrop residents and workers feel are lacking in the City.

1. **Partner with the Bastrop EDC and large local employers to expand on previous housing analyses by conducting surveys to collect local data regarding the income and housing preferences of Bastrop workers.**
2. **Analyze the City’s jobs-housing imbalance typology to determine suitable price-points that should be marketed for housing in the City.**
3. **Based on local surveying efforts, establish policies that identify preferred City targets on single-family housing units (attached and detached) including consideration of size, and construction costs and associated sales prices.**
4. **Consider preferred single-family housing targets when reviewing applications for rezoning, PDDs, or development in the City’s ETJ. Establish incentives such as density bonuses and/or fee waivers to encourage developer efforts to include housing units meeting preferred City targets within their development plans.**

HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

FIGURE 4.12. WORKFORCE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

PROPERTY ¹	TOTAL UNITS	VACANCIES (JAN., 2016)	ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	POPULATION SERVED
Riverwood Commons	36	2	HOME, LIHTC	Seniors
Settlement Estates Senior Housing	70	0	LIHTC	Seniors
Supportive Housing Program	17	4	HOME	All low-to-moderate income
PROPERTY ²	TOTAL UNITS OR BEDS	POPULATION SERVED		
Family Crisis Center/Bastrop County Women's Shelter	Undisclosed	Domestic abuse victims (Transitional housing)		
Argent Court	68 beds	Senior (Assisted living)		
Bastrop Lost Pines Nursing and Rehabilitation Center	120 beds	Senior (Nursing home)		
Bastrop Nursing Center	96 beds	Senior (Nursing home)		
Silver Pines Nursing and Rehabilitation	120 beds	Senior (Nursing home)		
Jefferson Community Residence	6 beds	Intellectual Disabilities (Resident home)		

Source: Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Vacancy Clearinghouse; Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, Quality Reporting System.

Notes: ¹Funding assistance from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. ²Licensed with the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (except the Family Crisis Center). Figure does not include properties owned and operated by the Bastrop Public Housing Authority.

WORKFORCE HOUSING

Although Bastrop is fortunate to have a high community-wide median income, and only a small percentage of its overall households classified as low or extremely low income, it is not without residents in need. Efforts to provide public and other low-to-moderate income housing choice is led locally by the Bastrop Public Housing Authority (PHA). The Bastrop PHA owns and maintains 49 public housing units, and provides Section 8 vouchers to qualifying families and individuals to assist them in finding suitable housing accommodations in the area.

Figure 4.12, Workforce and Special Needs Housing, lists three (3) subsidized housing developments located within Bastrop. The construction of these facilities was supported by the HOME Multi-family Rental Housing Development Program and/or Low-income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) (both programs administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). The snap-shot provided in **Figure 4.12** suggests an extremely low vacancy rate in subsidized housing of 4.6 percent. This vacancy rate drops to 3.4 percent when combined with Bastrop PHA units. The Figure does not consider the condition of subsidized units.

HOUSING PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY TDHCA

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) is the state-level administrator of housing programs in Texas. The list below references a number of programs available to units of local government, public housing authorities, and other qualifying non-profit entities. Additional information can be found at: www.tdcha.state.tx.us/home-division.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE

- Section 8 Voucher
- Rental Assistance

HOME BUYER ASSISTANCE

- Home buyer Assistance
- Texas Bootstrap Loan
- My First Texas Home

HOME MAINTENANCE ASSISTANCE

- Homeowner Rehabilitation Assistance
- Amy Young Barrier Removal
- Comprehensive Energy Assistance

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond

In addition to the housing programs provided through the TDHCA, Bastrop may also participate in community development programs funded by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

Figure 4.12 also lists six (6) residential facilities that support groups requiring special housing needs including: the elderly, individuals with developmental disabilities, and victims of domestic abuse. Most of these institutional resident uses are located on Old Austin Highway, except for Jefferson House which is operated in a residential neighborhood. There are no transitional housing options within the city of Bastrop for the chronically homeless or substance abusers, but the Hope House provides drug treatment services at a location just south of the City.

CITY ASSISTANCE

The City of Bastrop does not actively administer low-to-moderate income housing or other community redevelopment programs. Past City housing or redevelopment activities include endorsements of private LIHTC applications, and use of Texas Department of Agriculture-administered Community Development (CD) funds for infrastructure rehabilitation in qualifying City neighborhoods. Repetitive use of CD funds in Bastrop in the future may be difficult due to likely constraints on qualifying geographic areas in the City.

SUMMARY

The housing initiatives of entities other than the City of Bastrop have focused on the provision of public housing – including publicly-owned dwelling units and rental assistance vouchers. Although not exclusive, many of these opportunities are tailored to meeting the needs of Bastrop's senior residents. These programs are a necessary component of a community's multi-tiered affordable housing strategies – in part because there are some members of the community who will never be in a position to provide for themselves or otherwise live independently.

The next tier in a community's evolving affordable housing strategy is to develop programs that either transition residents of subsidized housing units into their own homes, or prevent the need for an individual to enter public, subsidized, or institutionalized housing. The same TDA Community Development fund that has previously been used by Bastrop for

infrastructure improvement can be utilized to fund a local housing rehabilitation initiative. TDHCA-administered HOME funds that have been used to fund multi-family development can also be used to develop home-buyer assistance programs, or by Community Housing and Development Organizations (CHDO) to develop single-family homes. These types of initiatives can assist the elderly in “aging in place,” retain residential property values, and can also transition low-to-moderate income households out of a condition of dependency.

The City of Bastrop is an entity that would be eligible to lead local home maintenance assistance and home ownership programs. Alternatively, the City may partner with the Bastrop PHA or a regional CHDO to support their potential efforts to increase affordable and safe single-family housing options in Bastrop.



Goal 4.4: Provide home ownership opportunities to Bastrop’s low-to-moderate income and special needs populations.

Objective 4.4.1: Create incentives to support the provision of low-to-moderate income housing opportunities by partnering agencies in Bastrop.

1. **Encourage and support the creation of a program to provide home ownership opportunities to low-to-moderate income residents residing in rent subsidized or public housing. Work with the Bastrop PHA or other interested and qualifying entity to develop a home buyer assistance program with funding support from the TDHCA.**
2. **Support the efforts of non-profits, such as Habitat for Humanity, to construct homes for low-to-moderate income residents through fee abatements and the provision of building lots acquired through the dangerous building abatement process.**
3. **Establish an incentive program to encourage the incorporation of below market rate housing units into new development, or fees-in-lieu to fund other low-to-moderate income housing programs in Bastrop.**

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT.

DEVELOPING CITIES OF NEIGHBORHOODS

Vibrant and economically successful cities are comprised of strong, cohesive neighborhoods, woven together by thriving commercial corridors, and punctuated with schools and lively “town centers.” Well-designed neighborhoods that have stood the test of time exhibit key characteristics (see page 4-3) and include many of the following features:

- A focal point.
- Equal prominence of pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
- A variety of dwelling types.
- Convenient access to schools, recreation, and daily conveniences.
- An efficient street layout that provides various paths to other neighborhoods.
- Attractive streetscapes and use of local streets for parking to reduce parking lot area.
- Context sensitive landscapes, conservation areas, greenbelts, or other open space.
- A cohesive visual identity.
- Respect for historic sites and structures.

Similarly, the Charter of the New Urbanism describes a well-designed neighborhood as: The neighborhood has a center and an edge; The neighborhood has a balanced mix of activities, shopping, work, school, recreation, and all types of housing; The ideal size of a neighborhood is ¼ mile from center to edge;



A well designed neighborhood provides a variety of dwelling types with a cohesive visual identity.

Neighborhood streets are designed to provide equally for the pedestrian, the bicycle, and the automobile; The neighborhood gives priority to the creation of public space and to the appropriate location of civic buildings.

Many of these design features are absent in today's residential developments. Many contemporary subdivisions are designed in an insular manner – with physical orientations that do not relate to surrounding property, and minimal street interconnectivity. Streets are built wider and landscape features are kept to a minimum. Residential design is often repetitive and lacking in quality building materials or aesthetic enhancement. Today, we build subdivisions – not neighborhoods.



Landscapes areas can serve as community focal points to help define space and scale within neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER BY DESIGN

Bastrop's 2015 adoption of the DB-FBC was a significant milestone in preserving the City's built heritage and defining a preferred community image. The DB-FBC includes multiple provisions that align with characteristics of quality neighborhood design as described in this Plan, see characteristics as discussed in the Neighborhood Trends sub-section on **Page 4-3**. Many of these provisions are individually transferable to property subject to the City's other zoning districts.

The following suggestions for incorporating neighborhood design principles into areas of Bastrop outside of the DB-FBC area were generated after reviewing the provisions of the City's other land development regulations:

- **Pedestrian Circulation.** *Many pedestrian facility standards are optional. Sidewalks for non-single-family residential development, and pedestrian connectivity to parks and schools should be required. On-site pedestrian interconnectivity standards are lacking.*
- **Attractive Streetscapes.** *Urban (or neighborhood) street design standards could be developed for specific areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan and Major Thoroughfare Plan. Many of the streetscape provisions from the DB-FBC could be incorporated into the design requirements, as well as alternative travel lane width, parking, curb radii and extensions, and alley requirements. Such standards could be complimented by rear vehicular access requirements.*
- **Cohesive Visual Identity.** *Construction standards in the zoning ordinance may incorporate a greater degree of design provisions addressing elements such as: front door orientation, horizontal layer of building materials, front porches (and setback encroachments), facade articulation, etc.*
- **Focal Points.** *Subdivision requirements may require that a portion of park and open space be developed as a centrally-located green on which neighborhood streets converge. Landscaped islands at mid-block locations or intersections also provide visual enclosure. Small-scale neighborhood service or community uses can be conditionally permitted within large developments at key intersections.*
- **Planned Development Districts (PDD).** *Usually the place to try "something new" which is not otherwise allowed by standard regulations. Should Bastrop wish to "test" the application of preferred DB-FBC standards to a wider geographic area, cluster subdivision and traditional neighborhood development variations of the City's PDD could be developed that provide greater design guidance.*

While the DB-FBC is a valuable tool for developing a City of neighborhoods, it will also require refinement over time. If expanded to cover a larger area, more work will need to be done to ensure consistency with the City's subdivision regulations, and to ensure that the Regulating Map clearly identifies where street extensions must occur. Other considerations today may include:

- **Pedestrian Circulation.** *Sidewalks are not required by the Regulating Plan on the majority of streets subject to the DB-FBC. This contradicts the purpose and intent of the DB-FBC, and stated community preferences for more sidewalks.*
- **Streetscapes.** *The DB-FBC's streetscape provisions are limited to the pedestrian zone. Pedestrian-friendly street design that compliments surrounding urban form typically includes context-friendly street design standards that often narrow travel lanes and provide on-street parking and bicycle facility design standards. While the DB-FBC Regulating Plan does anticipate new streets, urban street design standards can be applied as streets are retrofitted.*



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Preferred neighborhood characteristics in older communities are often promoted through the use of historic preservation tools. In simple terms, governing bodies may identify and document historic, architectural, and cultural resources and protect them via designation as historic sites. This procedure enables federal, state and local governments to protect historic resources and consequently the identity and character that makes their communities unique.

There are two (2) districts in Bastrop listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Bastrop State Park National Register District, and the Bastrop Historic and Architectural MRA (the latter including the: Bastrop Commercial District and the Bastrop County Courthouse and Jail). At the time of designation, such a district was known as an Architectural Multiple Resource Area (MRA) (now known as a Multiple Property Submission (MPS)). Rather than being defined by a rigid geographic boundary, an MRA (or MPS) is a list of related properties and structures that meet a thematic criteria and are submitted as a group of historic resources rather than individual nominations.

This list also allows future addition of historic resources that meet the same criteria as the original submission. The Texas Historical Commission (THC) has also designated many Bastrop structures and properties as Texas Historic Landmarks for their architectural integrity and historical associations in the same areas as the MPS.

Incentives exist on federal, state and local levels for owners of historic properties that typically include tax incentives, but may also include markers indicating the resources designation, and programs to encourage economic development and educate the public about historic preservation. The Texas Historical Commission alone has 32 projects and programs for historic preservation, including but not limited to: Historic Texas Cemeteries, Certified Local Governments, Texas Main Streets, Texas Courthouse Stewardship, and Historic Texas Lands plaques.

The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program rewards local governments that adopt historic preservation ordinances, designate local properties for preservation, develop educational programs for the community, and assist the Texas Historical

Commission and National Park Service in implementing state and federal historic preservation programs with grants that are only available to cities recognized as Certified Local Governments. The City of Bastrop offers both a marker and tax exemption from a portion of the and valorem taxes owed to the City for structures designated as historic landmarks.

The City of Bastrop has adopted and Historic Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 14, Article 14.03, Bastrop City Code) in order to provide protections to local resources that are not designated as national or state historical landmarks, and provide additional protections to those that have already been designated by the NPS or THC. Through this ordinance, Bastrop created their own local historic landmark commission with the authority over any resource “designated by the commission.”

The commission’s purpose is to:

- *Adopt criteria for the designation of historic, architectural, and cultural landmarks;*
- *Conduct surveys and maintain an inventory of landmarks;*
- *Recommend the designation of resources as significant landmarks and/or historic landmarks;*
- *Make recommendations to the city government concerning the utilization of state, federal, or private funds to promote the preservation of landmarks and historic districts within the city;*
- *Approve or disapprove applications for certificates of appropriateness, demolition or removal, and economic hardship; and,*
- *Propose tax abatements and other incentive programs for landmarks.*

In the event that a resource is designated by the local commission and the Texas Historical Commission (THC), the resource would be required to follow both the local and THC regulations. The Historic Landmark Commission’s role in considering certificates of appropriateness and demolition requests illustrates that historic preservation is also a tool that can promote neighborhood conservation.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION

Throughout the public engagement process of this Plan, residents voiced a desire to improve neighborhood conditions throughout Bastrop. Fortunately, there are a variety of options the City can enact to protect neighborhoods including day-to-day code enforcement, and other programs including historic preservation incentives, neighborhood empowerment zones, neighborhood improvement districts, and infrastructure investments.

NUISANCE & PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODES

The City of Bastrop Code of Ordinances includes a number of property maintenance and personal nuisance provisions designed to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of its residents. Nuisance and maintenance codes, as they pertain to property, buildings, and personal conduct, are distributed among multiple chapters throughout the Code. Regarding neighborhood conservation, provisions within the following chapters apply:

- *Chapter 3, Building Regulations;*
- *Chapter 6, Health and Sanitation;*
- *Chapter 8, Offenses and Nuisances; and,*
- *Chapter 14, Zoning.*

These codes are enforced by a certified code enforcement officer operating under the Police Department who typically responds to complaints that they typically receive by phone or e-mail. The general bulk of complaints relate to weeds and grass, junk vehicles, and parking; however, there are also complaints concerning bulk garbage, languished properties, livestock, and building completion. Complaint calls are becoming more frequent as Bastrop's population and affluence increases – particularly in older areas of the City.

Public input in the comprehensive planning process does not indicate that there is a community-wide desire for new public nuisance or property maintenance codes. Still many existing codes are subjective or difficult to enforce – causing delays or perceived inconsistencies in the enforcement process.



NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

There are many programs authorized by the State of Texas targeted to promote community and/or economic investment in established areas of a community. These tools may alternatively promote investment through abatement incentive, or conversely through additional assessments on property. Three (3) of these tools, using these alternative investment approaches may aid in accelerating neighborhood infrastructure development or abating blighted properties:

- **Neighborhood Empowerment Zone.** The Texas Local Government Code allows local governments to waive or adopt fees related to construction in a defined area, and to enter into agreements for refunding sales taxes and/or abating property taxes within the zone for a defined period of time. Creation of neighborhood empowerment zones must promote certain redevelopment objectives, but can potentially be used to attract investment in the older parts of Bastrop that meets defined land use and design parameters. The efficacy of neighborhood empowerment zones can be increased through the employment of corresponding property maintenance codes that reduce blight by targeting repeat offenders.
- **Neighborhood Improvement District.** A neighborhood improvement district (NID) is a geographically defined zone in which necessary public improvements are funded via bonds issued by the City. Projects may include streets, street lighting, sidewalks, sewer, storm water, and flood control systems, bridges, overpasses and tunnels, and parks and recreation opportunities. The bonds are then repaid by the property owners in the NID who benefit from the improvements through special assessments on their properties. Use of the NID in Bastrop may be a method to accelerate street improvements in older neighborhoods.
- **Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone.** Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code allows Bastrop to partner with a private entity to create a tax increment reinvestment zone (TIRZ). Like a NID, a TIRZ allows the City to provide public infrastructure to an area of the City in need of reinvestment/redevelopment – but unlike a NID, the TIRZ supports complimentary private investment. Through this process, the City ties its TIRZ commitment to an investor's commitment to generate development that meets the City's land use and character goals. The public's investment is repaid by capturing the increased assessments on redeveloped property over a specific period of time.

SUMMARY

The City of Bastrop has made significant gains in its attempts to influence neighborhood character through the recent adoption of its form-based district. Although the geographic scope of the DB-FBC is fairly limited there are elements that may be applied to areas of new development throughout the remaining area of the City.

Many view the adoption of the form-based district as a suitable alternative to a previously failed attempt to adopt a local historic district in Bastrop’s center-city neighborhoods. Negative public reaction to local historic preservation initiatives is often fueled by a perception that the decisions of local historic landmarks commission are arbitrary. This perception often comes about because such commissions do not have sufficient design guidance (that is locally relevant) to support their decisions. In spite of the existence of the form-based district, the Bastrop Historic Landmarks Commission could still benefit from the development of local historic design guidelines, and greater opportunities to advertise their public role.

Although there is little apparent desire to update City nuisance codes, there is always a degree of public frustration with the efficiency of the code enforcement process. It can be slow for a variety of procedural and legal reasons. Further, it is difficult to judge where pro-active code enforcement activity should occur if there is a lack of formal documentation. The City should anticipate these common frustrations take steps to automate the code enforcement process and make a greater volume of information accessible to the public.



Goal 4.5: Maintain or enhance the health of Bastrop’s older and historic neighborhoods.

Objective 4.5.1: Incorporate preferred neighborhood design provisions into City land development regulations.

1. *Conduct an internal audit of the DB-FBC to identify design features that should be applied to future neighborhoods city-wide.*
2. *Modify land development regulations to require pedestrian interconnectivity along streets, between neighborhoods and community spaces, and within developments.*
3. *Draft conservation subdivision and traditional neighborhood development standards as alternatives to the standard PDD to allow for alternative lot arrangements and a greater mix of residential building within developments and individual blocks.*
4. *Develop urban or neighborhood street design standards for incorporation in the City subdivision regulations and associated City design manuals. Amend other associated ordinances to identify applicability in conjunction with the Future Land Use Plan and Major Thoroughfare Plan*

Objective 4.5.2: Expand local historic preservation initiatives with a focus on increasing public awareness and understanding.

1. *Commission a city-wide historic resources*

survey that provides an updated list of properties eligible for historic designation, or that no longer meet eligibility requirements as a contributing structure.

2. Update the City's lists and maps of federal, state, and local historic properties.
3. Create a historic preservation web page on the City website that details the activities of the historic preservation commission, provides a comprehensive inventory the City's historic resources, advertises incentives available to owners of historic properties, and explains the certificate of appropriateness review process.
4. Apply for Certified Local Government status with the Texas Historical Commission.
5. Develop a pattern book or similar set of historic preservation design guidelines that can be used by the Historic Landmarks Commission when considering certificates of appropriateness.
6. Conduct an annual public education open house, led by the Historic Land Mark Commission, that focuses on rules and incentives that apply to historic properties in Bastrop.

Objective 4.5.3: Initiate incentives and modifications to the City's code enforcement process that make it more transparent and user-friendly.

1. Develop on line and hard-copy materials that explain the code enforcement process and provides graphic examples of what does and does not constitute a violation of the City's nuisance codes.
2. Advertise, through the use of City code enforcement materials, and maintain the code enforcement officer's professional certifications.
3. Add an on line code violations system to the City's website that allows complainants to submit and track code enforcement requests.
4. Maintain a database of code publicly-

submitted and City-initiated code enforcement requests that is tied to the City's GIS system to quantify and map trends.

5. Review penalties associated with City nuisance codes. Evaluate possible adjustments to penalties – particularly as they relate to repeat offenders. Consider such tools as: a blight tax, or an escalating fee schedule for “maintaining a nuisance.”
6. Fund one (1) or more annual community clean-up events that may also serve as unofficial amnesty to violators of trash and refuse codes.
7. Work with landlords through a training and registration program to expediently abate nuisance violations generated by tenants.

Objective 4.5.4: Entice development in Bastrop's center city neighborhoods through the selective use of state-authorized investment tools.

1. Augment City support for public housing authority or CHDO investment in a targeted neighborhood of Bastrop with the creation of a neighborhood empowerment zone waiving select City fees.
2. Promote the establishment of one (1) or more neighborhood improvement districts where “high-demand” public facility or infrastructure investments are not competitive City capital improvements program (CIP) projects. Alternatively, the tool may be used to fund design enhancements not otherwise incorporated into a qualifying CIP project.
3. Continue to work with the Bastrop EDC to market and promote the redevelopment of vacant or underdeveloped parcels in the center city area. Entertain the use of a TIRZ within center city where necessary.

SUMMARY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS).



Chapter 4, Housing and Neighborhoods, of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan examines housing needs in Bastrop, and methods to develop and maintain quality neighborhoods in the City. The chapter seeks to balance the provision of greater housing diversity within Bastrop with recommendations that leverage preferred neighborhood characteristics for use in future residential developments, and improvements to neighborhood service delivery. The Housing and Neighborhoods chapter goals and objectives that have been incorporated into the City's overall comprehensive plan work program (**Chapter 9, Implementation**).

The number five (5) goals and eight (8) objectives that are recommended throughout this chapter have been compiled into **Figure 4.13** below. Detailed initiatives and actions that correspond to the listed goals and objectives may be found on the page numbers referenced within the figure.

FIGURE 4.13. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS, SUMMARY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL/OBJECTIVE:	PAGE:
GOAL 4.1: PROVIDE A GREATER DIVERSITY OF HOUSING OPTIONS IN BASTROP WHILE PROTECTING THE CHARACTER OF THE CITY'S EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS.	4-9
Objective 4.1.1: Establish processes to diversify housing options in Bastrop.	4-9
GOAL 4.2: MAINTAIN THE OVERALL QUALITY OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK IN BASTROP.	4-12
Objective 4.2.1: Monitor housing conditions to limit the Volume and rate of deterioration of the City's housing stock.	4-12
GOAL 4.3: DEVELOP HOUSING TARGETS THAT ALIGN WITH LOCAL DEMAND.	4-19
Objective 4.3.1: Define the residential options that current Bastrop residents and workers feel are lacking in the City.	4-19
GOAL 4.4: PROVIDE HOME OWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES TO BASTROP'S LOW-TO-MODERATE INCOME AND SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS.	4-22
Objective 4.4.1: Create incentives to support the provision of low-to-moderate income housing opportunities by partnering agencies in Bastrop.	4-22
GOAL 4.5: MAINTAIN OR ENHANCE THE HEALTH OF BASTROP'S OLDER AND HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS.	4-28
Objective 4.5.1: Incorporate preferred neighborhood design provisions into City land development regulations.	4-28
Objective 4.5.2: Expand local historic preservation initiatives with a focus on increasing public awareness and understanding.	4-28
Objective 4.5.3: Initiate incentives and modifications to the City's code enforcement process that make it more transparent and user-friendly.	4-29
Objective 4.5.4: Entice development in Bastrop's center city neighborhoods through the selective use of state-authorized investment tools.	4-29

IMPLEMENTATION OF HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Implementation of the community growth goals and objectives must occur in coordination with those recommended in other chapters. Goals and objectives - and corresponding actions and initiatives - contained in all seven (7) topic-specific chapters of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan are important; but, the order of their implementation must consider multiple variables including: **A)** The timing of expected growth and development impacts; **B)** Cost versus revenues; **C)** The availability of grants, loans and other financing methods; **D)** Staffing and other public resources; and, **E)** Dependence on, or completion of, another action or initiative.

In consideration of these inter-related implementation variables, many of the recommendations summarized in **Figure 4.13** have been incorporated into Bastrop's overall comprehensive plan work program contained in **Chapter 9, Implementation**. Please reference **Chapter 9** for a full overview on the methods and timing by which the city of Bastrop's housing and neighborhoods actions and initiatives will be implemented to the benefit of Bastrop's citizens, business owners and property owners.