

Barriers to Affordable Housing

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to remove barriers to affordable housing.

Program Year 3 Action Plan Barriers to Affordable Housing response:

Strategy to Remove Barriers to Affordable Housing

In order to address barriers to affordable housing, the City will pursue the strategies outlined in the Five Year Plan.

A. Complexity of the Development Process: The City is marketing an increasing number of parcels through its Homemakers Program. We will be reviewing these parcels for compatibility with the subdivision regulations and correcting many of the more difficult obstacles before transferring them to developers. Small parcels can be combined with others and re-platted into buildable lots of record, reducing the time and cost investment for the developer.

B. Acquiring and Assembling Inner City Parcels: The City is undertaking two new redevelopment areas this year, one large residential area in Lonsdale, and a small neighborhood commercial district in Vestal. Both areas contain numerous properties which have remained undeveloped or underutilized for several years due to title or environmental problems. The City will acquire abandoned property and clear such problems, offering lots for sale for redevelopment.

C. Increasing Cost of Development: New programs are being designed to encourage private investment in older neighborhoods. Previously, incentives targeted to assist and encourage residential development were developed independently from commercial incentives. New policy on redevelopment tries to coordinate residential redevelopment with adjacent neighborhood commercial development so that both come on line at the same time. This serves to support both efforts. The City is encouraging alterations to designs of infill housing that make the new housing fit in better with the older existing homes. Design guidelines have been developed for use in redevelopment areas and for all City subsidized infill houses. This effort includes descriptions and illustrations of low cost modifications builders can make. In the long run, this will help maintain high property values for buyers and should have a substantial impact on neighborhood image and marketability. A new I-H Zoning has been added, applying the infill guidelines area wide in selected neighborhoods. Last year, the City adopted an amendment to the zoning ordinance which makes development of substandard inner city parcels more feasible, reducing the time line and approval process in many cases.

D. Access to Available Government Programs and Subsidies - City marketing programs are being emphasized and new marketing efforts are in the works. A listing of available Homemakers properties is now posted on the City web site (<http://www.cityofknoxville.org>). The public process for the Lonsdale Redevelopment Plan began with a neighborhood meeting before the first resolution went before City Council. Notices were sent to 900 property owners and more than 60 people attended the meeting. This plan will include more neighborhood master planning and public input than any previous redevelopment plan.

E. Building Codes: The City has adopted the Alternative building code which gives designers additional alternatives to meet code requirements when renovating older buildings. This option can make redevelopment of older buildings more practical and less expensive.