

12.8 Housing

Goal 1. Provide a range of housing choices, balanced in terms of building type, ownership and rental, size, location, and price, that will meet the housing needs of all segments of the Town's population.

Objective 1.1: Increase the Town's supply of smaller housing units suitable for occupancy by one or two persons, including the elderly.

Action	Resp	Time
1.1.a Review accessory apartment bylaw and change if needed to address current needs.	PB,AHT	
1.1.b. Identify suitable areas for two-family and multi-family dwellings and amend zoning bylaw to allow such uses by special permit.	PB	2
1.1.c. Identify areas where residential and commercial uses can co-exist and consider zoning changes to encourage this type of development.	PB	2
1.1.d. Formally zone selected areas where residential and commercial uses co-exist to mixed-use zoning to eliminate conflicts between these uses.	PB	2
1.1.e. Evaluate permitting smaller housing units at a greater density than currently permitted.	PB	2

Objective 1.2: Increase the Town's supply of affordable housing by supporting the mission of the Westport Affordable Housing Trust.

Action	Resp	Time
1.2.a. Establish incentives to encourage the production of local action units.	PB, AHT, ZBA, BOS	2
1.2.b. Adopt a Local Comprehensive Permit Policy that identifies preferred design, location density, building, typology (or mix of), level of affordability and other criteria to support appropriate developments.	ZBA,AHT BOS	
1.2.c. Continue to review tax title lands before auction for suitability for affordable housing.	AHT,BOS	2
1.1.d. Review and implement the strategies outlined in the Housing Production Plan.	AHT,ZBA	3
1.2.e. Investigate permit streamlining, install permit tracking software to make information sharing among inspectional service offices more efficient.	PB, BOH, BD, CC, AS, BOS	2

Objective 1.3: Provide assistance to homebuyers and homeowners.

Action	Resp	Time
1.3.a. Continue to work with local lenders, real estate agents and the State to set up seminars, and other housing educational programs for first-time homebuyers and seniors.	HP	2
1.3.b. Provide financial assistance programs such as HOPP.	AHT	1

Objective 1.4: Provide housing opportunities that will attract a wide range of buyers including families and young professionals.

Action	Resp	Time
1.4.a Survey local realtors to determine what other factors influence families when considering purchasing housing in Town, i.e. school system, taxes, quality of housing stock, jobs, amenities.	AHT, EDTF	2
1.4.b Evaluate housing needs and preferences for families with children in the region in coordination with the Westport Community Schools.	AHT, EDTF	2

1.4.c. Evaluate the effects of regional job opportunities on the housing market.

EDTF

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Goal 2. Incorporate into the housing development process mechanisms to plan for and protect open space, recreation areas and trails, and to minimize impact on the environment.

Objective 2.1: Allow subdivisions to deviate from standard design and dimensional requirements by using planning tools designed to allow and encourage conservation/open space subdivisions which preserve or buffer significant natural and cultural features from negative impacts, and create useful recreation areas, trails, greenways and wildlife corridors.

Action	Resp	Time
2.1.a. Amend the Subdivision Regulations to encourage residential neighborhoods by clustering housing.	PB	2
2.1.b. Review existing zoning by laws to determine their effectiveness in permitting flexible subdivision designs.	PB	3
2.1.c. Consider effects of climate change when drafting zoning by-laws and design regulations.	PB	1

Goal 3. Incorporate into the housing development process mechanisms to preserve for the public's benefit the visual and functional character of Westport as represented by its: village centers, waterfront, farms, and other historic and scenic resources that comprise Westport's heritage.

Objective 3.1: Encourage new development that is compatible with the traditional but varied ways in which housing historically interacts with the landscape in Westport.

Action	Resp	Time
3.1.a. Encourage denser residential zoning in village centers and shopping nodes with specific provisions for site design, septic, circulation such as compact neighborhoods.	PB	2
3.1.b. Encourage flexible development regulations to encourage buffers or otherwise minimize impact of new residential developments on farms, scenic arterial roads, waterfront, and other significant landscape features.	PB	2

Objective 3.2 Support infrastructure improvements that will improve the livability of residents and increase the value of housing.

Action	Resp	Time
3.2.a. Consider alternatives to individual septic systems and private wells to allow for flexibility in housing design and density.	BOH, BOS	2
3.1.b. Encourage pedestrian and vehicular improvements including sidewalks, bicycle networks and public transportation.	PB, HD	2