



MESQUITE MASTER PLAN

8.

HOUSING PLAN ELEMENT

8.1 Major Housing Issues

A community's housing policy should provide for safe, sanitary and satisfactory housing for all aspects of the community's population, at affordable costs, without regard to income, race, religion, national origin, family structure or disability. It should also be used to support and assist home ownership, and to manage land-use and community development for the benefit of all residents.

Across the United States approximately 65% of all housing is owner occupied, the highest percentage in the world. An even greater percentage – 70% is established as an objective for Mesquite. Most smaller communities tend to have higher than average owner occupied units as well as a larger ratio of single family residences.

It can be readily understood that for individuals who own their homes, there is a stronger linkage and commitment by the family to the community in which they reside, and there are fewer demands on all requirements for public assistance services including law enforcement.

If the community is able to build a broad diversity of employment opportunities, the 70% objective can be realized. If not, it can be expected that the difference will be off-set by an increased percentage of apartments and publicly subsidized housing for lower income service workers.

The greatest single element of a family's budget is used to secure housing. On a national level 25% of a family's annual income is spent on housing, not including furnishings or utilities. As such, the cost of local housing, including associated monthly financial obligations, can be easily equated to the occupants requirements for wages and salary.

Over the last decade, the federal government has significantly reduced its contributions and support of public housing and has placed the major burden for financial assistance on the state and the local jurisdictions. Today, less than 2% of the national housing stock is subsidized to assist low income families and an additional 2% is subsidized to assist the elderly.

Currently, Mesquite is understocked in terms of housing units available. Recent growth in the community has outstripped private development's ability to adequately service the local market. With recently approved projects, however, the current critical shortage of housing should diminish.



The State of Nevada provides programs to assist low to moderate income families to enter the housing market as first-time buyers, and Clark County provides financial support to assist with housing the elderly and to provide housing for low-income families.

Low income and elderly housing are also responsibilities of the local government, and the City of Mesquite will be required to address this issue in the near future.

A variety of adequate housing types and an adequate market supply create opportunities in the community for mobility and filtering. On a national level, 17% of all Americans move each year, and generally these moves occur within the same community. Home owners also tend to buy-up, thus creating additional available housing for potential buyers from lower income groups.

Continuation of the filtering process ultimately vacates inadequate housing in the community allowing it be razed and replaced with new development

A variety of housing stock needs to be created in Mesquite to serve the residents' needs. Housing should be available for both traditional and non-traditional families, i.e. households headed by two single individuals, divorced mothers, shared living or extended families living together.

Housing stock should include detached and attached single-family residences, including expanded units for extended households, multi-family residences of low and medium density development and a variety of rental units, including low and medium density apartments.

A vacancy factor of not more than 5% should be established in the community to provide an adequate housing stock for the City of Mesquite.

Design Context

The City Council has determined to maintain reduced housing density for the community as a measure to help retain the City's existing quality of life, rural character and scale. One-half of the community's projected population for the master plan's phase 1 development is planned to be housed north of U.S. Interstate 15, and the remaining one-half of the population is planned to be housed south.

An overall density factor of 3.3 dwelling units per gross acre of development is projected for all housing. A resident factor of 2.3 persons per unit is established to calculate residential capacity.

The following development breakdown established allowable density for housing projects for population requirements throughout Mesquite:



- Future Community Population (Phase 1 Master Plan):
20,000 residents

- Area North / South of U. S. Interstate 15:
20,000 residents ÷ 2 = 10,000

- Total Dwelling Units Available in areas North or South of U.S. Interstate 15:
10,000 ÷ 2.3 = 4,348

- As of March 1, 1994:
 - Existing Dwelling Units North of U.S. Interstate 15 = 278

 - Number of Future Dwelling Units to be Constructed:
4,348
- 278
4,070

 - Existing Dwelling Units South of U.S. Interstate 15 = 847

 - Number of Future Dwelling Units to be Constructed:
4,348
- 847
3,501

To meet the City of Mesquite's objective of creating a community which is heavily based in owner-occupied residential dwellings, the following formula has been utilized to calculate housing projections:

- 70% of the dwelling units are to be owner occupied:
8,696 x .70 = 6,080 units

- 16% of the dwelling units are to be tenant occupied:
8,696 x .16 = 1,390 units

- 14% of the dwelling units are to be private/public subsidized:
8,696 x .14 = 1,226 units

For purposes of the master plan, owner occupied dwelling units include traditional single family residences, modular homes, mobile homes and more contemporary housing forms including efficiency residential developments, zero lot lines, patio homes, town homes or other similar residential configurations.



Tenant occupied units may include any or all of the above classifications and/or more traditional apartment units. Any dwelling unit which may be rented or leased is included as a tenant occupied designation.

It is anticipated that much of Mesquite's future population will be a blend of traditional and non-traditional family structures. Fifty-five percent of the housing is established as a goal for development for density that does not exceed 3.3 dwelling units per gross acre of development;

$$8,696 \times .55 = 4,783 \text{ units}$$

thirty percent of housing development is not to exceed 8 dwelling units per acre;

$$8,696 \times .30 = 2,609 \text{ units}$$

ten percent of the housing development is not to exceed 12 dwelling units per acre;

$$8,696 \times .10 = 896 \text{ units}$$

and the remaining five percent of the housing development is not to exceed 18 units per acre.

$$8,696 \times .05 = 435 \text{ units}$$

Eighteen units per gross area of development is the maximum allowable density.

A housing density program policy is to be established by the City of Mesquite to manage and administer future growth.

With the "Graying of America" and Mesquite's attraction to young retirees, a variety of housing options should be developed to accommodate this growing aspect of the local housing market. Attention should be directed to making these dwelling units functional for older individuals who, in later years, will be less agile and mobile. As many of the elderly do not drive, this particular segment of the housing market should be located in close proximity to shopping, services, recreation and other related senior interests.

Housing should be developed to respect citizens rights to privacy and sited so windows of one dwelling unit do not view directly into the windows of neighboring dwelling units. Housing should also be sited so that walls and windows along westerly elevations are protected and shielded from over radiation created by the afternoon and setting sun.



Attention should also be directed toward protection adjacent structures from being blocked from access to solar radiation for winter heating of the easterly and southerly exposures.

A variety of floor plan arrangements, site set-backs and designed exterior elevations should be made available to minimize "track-housing" environments. Landscape buffers should be utilized to establish subdivision boundaries and consistent continuous streetscapes. Each subdivision should incorporate designated points of entry as landscaped focal points with descriptive graphics and identification signage. Where possible dwelling units should be clustered around larger expanses of landscaped communal open space and development amenities, i.e., barbecue and picnic areas, central playfields and playgrounds, pathways and trail linkages, etc.

For all development projects with dwelling units sited on properties containing less than 7,000 net square feet per dwelling unit, a minimum of 400 square feet of usable recreational area or "common" should be constructed and maintained for each dwelling unit within the development of subdivision. These project improvements should be in addition to park improvement fees assessed by the City.

Improvements which are required above should be developed to serve the intended market of the development or sub-division, and no dwelling unit should be more distant than 250 feet from the nearest usable recreation area or "common".

Housing developments with densities greater than 8 units per gross acre should provide residents with formalized recreational and "common" activities, including recreational buildings and pools, areas for active recreation and games, areas for picnics and gatherings, and where appropriate for residents, tot-lots and special recreation for seniors. Any parking or recreation areas should be separated from lower density properties or non-residential properties by a 10 foot landscaped buffer yard. A six foot high masonry fence should also be required. All parking should be located convenient to the dwelling units served. A minimum of 2.25 parking units should be provided for residents and guests of each dwelling unit.

Access to common service facilities within the development, including mail boxes, storage, laundry, trash and guest parking, should be convenient to residents. Pedestrian pathways and parking should be well-lighted for safety and security of the residents.

Transitional density should be utilized in housing developments throughout Mesquite to isolate and shield 7,000 net square foot properties from high density dwellings or non-residential structures.



8.2 Environment and Resources

The Housing Plan Element is administered through the Building and Zoning Department of the City of Mesquite, utilizing existing staff. Infrastructure requirements to support the plan element are managed and administered through the Department of Public Works of the City. There are no special costs to the City associated with implementing requirements established herein.

As the population of the community increases, the City may designate a citizen group to serve as an advisory committee to make recommendations to the Building and Zoning Department regarding appeals or variances.

All final actions on variances and appeals relative to housing development will be decided by the Council.

8.3 THE PLAN

E. Housing Plan

Goal:

1. To provide housing for the citizens of Mesquite which enhances the standard of living and quality of life within the community.

Objectives:

E-1.1 Develop a housing plan which supports the following residential mix:

- 70% of the housing is owner occupied
- 16% of the housing is tenant occupied
- 14% of the housing is subsidized by private/public investments for seniors and low income families.

E-1.2 Require housing plans to provide a variety of high quality housing mix densities and costs to maximize choice for citizens.

E-1.3 Require neighborhood design for both single family and multi-family housing to utilize development standards and guidelines prepared by the City, including requirements for open space, infrastructure, landscaping and amenities.

E-1.4 Assist and promote rehabilitation and code compliance in older neighborhoods to enhance the quality of life in the residential areas.



E-1.5 Require the removal of sub-standard housing units when they are beyond rehabilitation and promote in-fill which is in keeping with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Strategies:

1. Prepare an architectural review process including a City staff design review committee, for all development, for compliance with City design standards, regulations and guidelines.
2. Develop, compile and distribute statistical data which may be of service to the public, developers and Realtors reflecting housing characteristics throughout the City.
3. Prepare programs for HUD and other federal agency support which the City and local developers can use to construct low-income and senior housing in appropriate areas in proximity to services.

8.4 Guidelines

Guidelines for the Housing Plan Element are established to assist development and address planning and design issues for residential construction in the City. Major issues which impact the quality of life and are a direct result of housing are:

- Development Mix and Density
- Solar and Site Orientation
- Construction Technology and Quality Control
- Amenities
- Transitional Blend

Development Mix and Density

1. Planning and design for housing for residents of the City of Mesquite shall reflect the market place interest of a wide variety of homeowners and tenants and their particular needs for efficient, affordable and safe shelter.

Development shall incorporate a broad mix of floor plan arrangements including variations of exterior elevations and siting configurations to eliminate "track housing" appearances.

2. No less than 70% of new housing shall be developed to accommodate owner-occupant residents.

3. All dwelling units constructed on sites containing less than 7,000 square feet per dwelling unit shall be provided with a minimum of 400 net square feet of additional usable land area within the property per dwelling unit, for common and collective use of the residents. This "common" area shall be constructed and maintained in addition to any requirements for landscaped set-backs or buffers established through zoning.
4. Any housing development with density greater than eight dwelling units per gross acre shall be provided with formal recreational and leisure activity as part of the requirements established in Guideline 3 above.

Solar and Site Orientation

1. Design for residential development in the City shall be conscious of the need for solar radiation to provide natural heating of easterly and southerly elevations during the winter months, properly designed roof overhangs and deciduous trees are to be used to protect each elevation from the path of the summer sun.

Westerly elevations of residential units are to be designed to be protected from over-radiation from solar paths year-round.

2. Residential units shall be designed so that windows from one dwelling unit do not view into the windows of neighboring dwelling units.
3. Occupant and guest parking, as well as site amenities, shall be located in close proximity to the dwelling units served.

Construction Technology and Quality Control

1. Design for residential development shall incorporate state-of-the-art building technologies and products to insure that all new housing is safe, secure and economical to operate and maintain for occupants.
2. Quality control procedures by developers shall be provided which insure that residential products comply with requirements established in Guideline 1, above.

Amenities

1. Site amenities, including common area and formalized recreational facilities, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, mail boxes, storage areas, laundry and trash rooms shall be convenient to residents and well-lighted for safety and security.



Traditional Blend

1. Design for residential development shall include consideration of neighboring properties and density transition to shield and isolate lower density or single-family residences from higher density or non-residential structures.