

CHAPTER 7 CONSTRAINTS ON THE PRODUCTION OF HOUSING

Section 65583(a)(5) of the California Government Code requires analysis of potential and actual governmental and non-governmental "constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels." This section describes those constraints, and Section 6 includes policies relevant to the reduction or elimination of the constraints identified.

7.1 GOVERNMENTAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE PRODUCTION OF HOUSING

Land Use Controls and Growth Management

The City implements the General Plan's land use policies through its Land Use & Development Code and zoning map as well as policy plans, and redevelopment plans. Vacaville's General Plan contains policies that emphasize maintaining Vacaville's single-family environment while encouraging a mix of housing types in new projects and coordinating the approval of such projects with the availability of needed infrastructure.

Two City land use actions could potentially be considered restraints in that they seek to control, beyond the extent of usual land use and zoning measures, the type and amount of residential growth.

Housing Mix Policy (Land Use Element Policy 2.5 - G 2)

The first potential restraint measure is the General Plan housing mix policy, which specifies that there should be the following "approximate" housing mix:

1. 60 percent standard single-family-detached units;
2. 20 percent moderate density units (zero-lot-line single-family units, mobile homes, duplexes, triplexes and townhouses); and
3. 20 percent apartment-type units (garden apartments, condominiums).

As part of the General Plan Update, to be completed in 2015, the City of Vacaville is considering replacing the housing mix targets above with the following approximate housing mix:

1. 75 percent single-family housing.
2. 25 percent multi-family attached housing.

The current and proposed policy provides a broad goal for residential development but is not itself a constraint to the development of affordable housing. A test to determine whether this policy is a constraint is whether it is determined that there is an inadequate inventory of lands to meet the City's share of the regional housing need, especially for low and very-low income units. Another factor in determining whether it has been a constraint is whether there has actually been construction of affordable units.

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

Multifamily development is very cyclical. During much of 1990s, there was little multifamily construction because of private market constraints such as tax laws, availability of financing, stagnant rents and stable vacancy rates. These constraints, in concert with perceived local governmental constraints, have been the primary factors that have limited multifamily construction during the past decade. In the early 2000s, the private market experienced a renewed interest in developing new multifamily units. This renewed interest was limited to a few short years due to the historically low interest rates, which drove the need for more single-family developments. As shown in Chapter 6, "Ability to Meet Housing Needs," there is more than an adequate inventory of lands, including for apartments, to satisfy Vacaville's housing need.

Planned Growth Ordinance

The second potential restraint measure is the City's Planned Growth Ordinance (PGO), adopted in 1991 and revised in 2000. The PGO was originally adopted following rapid residential growth that occurred in the 1990s. As a result of the rapid growth, water, sewer, streets, and schools were operating at or beyond capacity. The PGO is structured to ensure that new residential development has adequate infrastructure and public services in place to serve the new housing units and future residents.

The PGO, as amended in 2000, is based upon maintaining an inventory of 1,000 units within approved and unbuilt projects which have building permit allocations and are eligible to be issued building permits at any time. This actually allows a growth rate much higher than required by the housing need assigned for Vacaville. Vacaville's housing need for the 2015-2023 planning period is 1,084 units, which is 136 units per year over the 8-year timeframe of the Housing Element.

There is a process set forth in the PGO regarding the allocation process. As the inventory falls below 1,000 units, new projects are added to the inventory when a Final Map is recorded or, for multifamily projects, when the City Council approves an allocation following the approval of a Planned Development. When the inventory exceeds 1,000 units, the City Council has the flexibility to grant additional allocations on a case-by-case basis, provided that municipal infrastructure and services can accommodate the additional residential growth. In addition, projects consisting entirely of affordable units for low and/or very low-income units are exempt from the building permit allocation process and can proceed with building permit issuance at any time after project approval. The ordinance also contains provisions that allow a project to be granted allocations outside of the normal process if there is adequate public infrastructure and a public benefit. The City Council has considered several requests for special allocations since 2000 and has never denied a request. Implementation of the PGO has been suspended since 2010 due to the low levels of residential development resulting from the economic recession, and due to limited staff resources.

Nearly every year since the establishment of the PGO, the number of approved allocations or the number of units eligible to build in a given year has exceeded the actual number of permits, sometimes by as much as 100 percent. The PGO has had no impact on the timing of new affordable residential development units because the ordinance permits these units to be approved and constructed without any restrictions from the PGO.

Prior to amendment in 2000, the PGO required a builder to submit an annual request for building permit allocations. The allocations request was accompanied by a fee that cost approximately \$150 per unit. A request had to be submitted by September in the prior year. It is possible that this old process posed a constraint because a builder might have to wait a year in

order to request an allocation and there was an additional cost involved. There is no longer an annual reservation process, thus this potential constraint has been removed.

Building Codes and Enforcement

The City of Vacaville implements the California Building Code. While building code requirements have, over the years, greatly improved the safety and energy efficiency of homes, it is undeniable that modern codes require the construction of more costly dwelling units than codes used twenty, thirty, or forty years ago. The City considers the Building Code a “minimum” standard for building construction. While it may lead to increased costs of construction, reducing building code requirements may lead to long-term health and safety risks, particularly in a seismically active area like Vacaville.

The Fire Department Code Enforcement Division works closely with all City departments in order to resolve health, safety, and public nuisance problems that adversely affect the quality of life for Vacaville residents. Code Compliance enforces the City of Vacaville Municipal Code as it applies to property maintenance, property nuisances, and other violations in residential and commercial districts.

Health and Safety Code 17980(b)(2) requires local governments to give consideration to the needs for housing as expressed in the Housing Element when deciding whether to require vacation of a substandard building or to repair as necessary. The City gives preference to the repair of the building over condemning it, whenever the repairs are economically feasible.

Development Fees

The justification for requiring buyers of new homes to pay through their mortgages for the partial cost of parks, schools, arterial streets, and other infrastructure that in the pre-Proposition 13 period was financed by taxes and assessments is widely debated. Where the land supply is constricted, fees are not compensated by lower raw land values as economic theory would suggest. Because virtually all jurisdictions have somewhat similar fee packages, it can be argued that housing prices in a metropolitan area include an "average fee" component whether the amount is collected by local governments or not. Fees saved that can effectively be included in sales prices are a windfall to the seller of a house built prior to enactment of fee requirements, or to the land seller or builder of house. The residential housing market impacts sales prices for new homes to a much greater degree than development fees.

In 1992, as required by State law (Assembly Bill 1600), Vacaville completed a comprehensive development impact fee study. Through this study, the costs for infrastructure needed to serve future growth were identified and the fees were adopted based upon future growth projections, infrastructure needs and infrastructure costs. It is expected that the fee study will be updated within the next two years.

Vacaville's development fees are comparable to other cities with needs to build infrastructure to serve future development. As of July 2013, typical fees for single-family units range from \$31,261 to \$35,224 for dwellings between 1,000 and 1,400 square feet, and \$33,673 to \$37,645 for dwellings between 1,600 and 2000 square feet. Fees for a typical 2,500-square-foot home are between \$36,481 and \$38,245, fees for a typical 3,000-square-foot home are \$38,841, and fees for a 3,500 square foot home are \$39,389. School impact fees and County fees are not included in these estimates. Set by State law, the Vacaville Unified School District school impact fee is \$2.05 per square foot for residential development and \$0.33 per square foot for nonresidential development, while the Travis Unified School District school impact fees are

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

\$4.91 per square foot for residential development and \$0.47 per square foot for nonresidential development. This is actually about half of what was collected several years ago, because of changes in State law that limit the amount that can be collected. However, in some instances, developers have agreed to provide further mitigation where school impacts are not fully mitigated by the standard fee.

Fees for apartments are significantly less than for single-family development. Estimated building and development fees for the Quinn Crossing Project, a 222-unit standard apartment project, averaged \$20,170 per unit. This average includes the office, recreation building, and carports. This project was exempt from the Community Facility District fee, which would have resulted in an additional \$600 per unit charged on an annual basis. See the next section for more information about Community Facility Districts.

The cost of development fees is a necessary component of new construction. Without adequate development impact fees, the City would be unable to serve future growth with adequate municipal services. These fees can add considerably to the cost of residential development, but these fees are necessary in order to provide municipal services and infrastructure for new development. It should be noted that the City has no control over fees assessed by other local agencies, such as the school districts or Solano County. In Vacaville, fees controlled by the City make up less than 30 percent of the total fees charged to residential development.

Community Facility Districts for Police and Fire Services

The 2007-2009 Strategic Plan emphasizes the need to maintain and improve public safety for the community. Historically, the City's General Fund revenues have been used as the primary source of funding for police and fire protection services. However, as City access to funding sources has continued to decline due to State takeaways, the City has been tasked with the need to establish new funding sources to continue to provide public safety services. The formation of community facilities districts ("CFDs") is a funding source that mitigates the added cost of providing public safety services for new development and helps avoid any degradation of public safety services to current residents.

Funding for public safety services is limited to general fund sources, and by law cannot be supported by impact fees. Impact fees are one time charges tied to the issuance of building permits and can only be used for capital improvements needed to mitigate the specific impacts of development. Further, impact fees cannot be used for the ongoing costs associated with staffing and related non-capital equipment. Because of this, the City has had to look to generating other sources of recurring revenue for services and equipment associated with supporting new development.

The City has been utilizing CFDs as a tool to assess new residential development for the direct costs associated with police and fire services. Currently the City has 12 CFDs. Examples of residential developments where CFDs have been approved are: Gentry-Meadowlands, North Village, Southtown, Reynolds Ranch (Cheyenne), Lagoon Valley and Portofino. In newly annexed areas, the participation in the CFD has been negotiated as a requirement in the projects' Development Agreements. These annexation areas and areas of future annexation are not proposed to be a part of the proposed infill CFD, as the costs and issues associated with such areas are different than infill areas already located within the City.

The City commissioned Bay Area Urban Economics (BAE) to analyze the impacts of CFDs on apartment project feasibility. BAE found that the sample apartment project evaluated in the

study was not feasible under current economic conditions. While the CFD requirement was found to contribute to the project shortfall, 80 percent of the feasibility gap was found to be related to other project costs or revenue shortfalls. Therefore, the CFD does represent a cost for developers, and the CFD could be considered to be a constraint to development. To address this potential constraint, the City has identified a new housing policy, Policy H.1 – I 23, that states the City will conduct an affordable housing impact fee study that considers the Community Facilities District fees for multi-family developments. The report prepared by BAE is contained in Appendix C.

Local Development Standards

Development standards for Vacaville are set by the Land Use & Development Code and the 2013 California Building Code (CBC), as amended by the Vacaville Municipal Code, adopted in 2014. The ordinance includes these specific additions to the CBC: minimum requirements for shaft enclosures in factory-built chimneys; information regarding the schedule of permit fees; minimum Class B fire rating requirement for wood roofing and siding materials; concrete paving requirements for driveways; and minimum requirements for the repair of structural elements. None of these requirements constitute a significant constraint on housing development. In adopting the 2013 California Building Code, the City amended its Municipal Code to remove language regarding front door locking mechanisms that is not consistent with State standards; in removing this language, the City reduced cost burdens for residential builders. A more detailed discussion regarding zoning standards is provided below. In addition, Appendix A lists the applicable sections from the Land Use & Development Code and other City documents. The Land Use & Development Code was completed in 1998 and was written to provide flexibility in applying standards to projects. Through a planned development, the Planning Commission has the ability to permit flexibility in various standards including setbacks, building height, landscaping, parking and design.

Analysis of Zoning District Standards

The Vacaville Land Use & Development Code has established seven categories of residential zoning, all tied to General Plan density ranges. There are also two Overlay Districts related to residential development. The Land Use & Development Code contains the development standards for each district:

- Rural Residential (RR): 0.4 to 1 unit per acre (2.5 to 10 acres)
- Residential Estate (RE): 0.5 to 3 units per acre
- Residential Low Density (RL): 3.1 to 5 units per acre
- Residential Low-Medium Density (RLM): 5.1 to 8 units per acre
- Residential Medium Density (RM): 8.1 to 14 units per acre
- Residential High Density (RH): 14.1 to 24 units per acre
- Residential Overlay District (RO): Commercial zoned parcels may be placed in this district, which permits densities allowed in the Medium and High Density districts
- Residential Urban High Density Overlay District (RUHD): Parcels in the Downtown Commercial district may be placed in this district, which permits mixed use or residential only projects up to 36 units per acre.

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

Single-Family Residential Districts

Density ranges are further defined through specific lot size suffixes. For example, the Residential Low Density (RL) districts permit minimum lot sizes of 5,000 square feet, 6,000 square feet, 8,000 square feet, and 10,000 square feet. The RLM, RE, and RR zones also have similar suffixes. These districts primarily support single-family dwellings. The RM District is a transitional district that supports small lot single-family, court homes, townhouses and attached single-family. In some instances, the RM district can also support apartments. This is especially true when the site has been granted a density bonus for providing affordable housing or housing for seniors.

Single-family districts require front setbacks varying between 15 and 50 feet; side yards between 0 and 30 feet; and rear yards between 15 and 40 feet. Maximum building heights are between 30 and 40 feet. These zones require two enclosed parking spaces for each home. Garage conversions are permitted, however the site must still be capable of accommodating on-site parking spaces.

Multi-Family Residential Districts

The RM, RH, RO and RUHD Districts are intended for higher density multifamily development, including rental apartments, condominiums, and mixed use. As previously discussed, the RM district can also support multi-family construction.

The Residential Medium (RM) Density district provides for attached multi-family housing, such as duplexes, townhouses, and apartments, as well as for single-family detached housing on small lots. The allowed density ranges from 8.1 to 14.0 units per gross developable acre. However, the density can be increased with the approval of a density bonus. As shown in Table 51, Vacaville has had two apartment complexes constructed in RM zones with a density bonus. The density bonus increased the permitted density from maximum 14 units per acre.

TABLE 51 LANDS ZONED RM WITH PROJECTS CONSTRUCTED WITH DENSITY BONUSES

Project Name (File No.)	Zoning Designation/ Density Range	Units in Project	Approved Density (Units per Acre)
Autumn Leaves (85-PUD-4)	RM (8.1 - 14.0 un/ac)	56	37.3
Lawrence Drive Senior Apartments	CG (RO) (8.1 - 24 un/ac)	60	31
Saratoga Senior Apts.– Phase (98-145)	RM (8.1 - 14.0 un/ac)	108	24.0

Source: Community Development Department.

The RM district requires a minimum project area of 7.5 acres. The maximum site coverage for this zone is 40 percent. This district was established to reserve appropriately located areas for medium density, single- and multi-family residential development.

The Residential High (RH) Density district provides for higher density multi-family housing, including townhouses, condominiums, and apartments. The allowed density ranges from 14.1 to 24.0 units per gross developable acre, with a minimum project area of 5.0 acres. The maximum site coverage for this zone is 40 percent. This district was established to reserve appropriately located areas for high density, multi-family residential development. As shown in Table 42 in Chapter 6, the City has approximately 83 acres of vacant and/or underutilized land zoned for

high density development, or that is zoned with a residential overlay that permits high density development. The City's General Plan Update, expected in early 2015, may result in a change to the density range of the RH Density district. However, to ensure the City's land inventory of multi-family sites remains adequate to meet the RHNA, Policy H.1- I 15 (adopted as Policy H.1-16 in the 2007–2014 Housing Element) requires that all RHD sites identified on the land inventory will be required to develop at a minimum of 20 units per acre.

The Residential Overlay (RO) district requires residential projects to comply with the development standards of the RM or RH zoning district, depending on the nature of the proposed project. Projects in the RO district must consist of attached units. Development standards regarding parking, density, site coverage, open space and recreation areas, building height, and required yards are determined by the applicable zoning district. If a residential project is proposed in conjunction with a non-residential use, such as a part of a mixed-use project, the development standards are determined by a planned development. Development standards for the RUHD district are shown in Table 52.

The Residential Urban High Density (RUHD) Overlay district, which permits 24.1 to 36 units per acre, provides for the development of high density residential or mixed use development in the downtown area. The overlay applies to the Downtown Commercial areas and to those General Commercial areas shown in Figure B-1 of Appendix B, Residential Urban High Density Overlay. Freestanding townhouse, condominium, and apartment development, or attached multi-family development as part of a mixed use project, are allowed in separate buildings east of Wilson Street and Andrews Park between E. Monte Vista Avenue and Mason Street, subject to the approval of a planned development or design review; freestanding multi-family structures are not allowed in the Main Street Vacaville Historic District.

There are two examples of mixed-use projects that have recently been constructed in the RUHD overlay district. In 2003, the Vasquez Deli mixed-use project was approved and constructed at 620 East Main Street. The ±5,900-square-foot building includes a 2,800-square-foot deli on the first floor and three (3) apartment units (2,800 ± square feet) and a 257-square-foot office space (for the deli) on the second floor. The project required a Planned Development because it did not include the construction of additional parking. Parking to serve the site is available in a public lot located behind the deli.

In 2007, two existing commercial buildings on Main Street were approved and remodeled as mixed-use buildings. Each building contains a 1,450-square-foot, ground level, commercial space and two one-bedroom units on the top floor. One parking space for each unit has been provided behind the buildings and is accessible from Elizabeth Street.

In 2008, the City Council initiated a General Plan Amendment to allow up to 65 units per acre within the Opportunity Hill Master Plan area, and the General Plan Update, expected in early 2015, will incorporate this density increase into the RUHD Overlay, which includes both the General Plan's Opportunity Hill and Depot Street opportunity sites. The Opportunity Hill Master Plan area is located within the RUHD Overlay Boundary where freestanding residential buildings are permitted. For more information about the Opportunity Hill Master Plan Area refer to Chapter 6, "Ability to Meet Housing Needs."

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

TABLE 52 RESIDENTIAL URBAN HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

RUHD Overlay District	Density (Units per Acre)	Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)^a	Minimum Site Area (ft)^b	Minimum Yard Adjoining A Street (ft.)^c	Minimum Yard Not Adjoining A Street (ft.)	Maximum Building Height (ft.)^d	Off-Street Parking (per Dwelling Unit)^e
Mixed Use Project	Up to 36.0	3.0 / 2.0	None	CD: none CG: 20	None	40	1
Residential Only Project	20.1 to 36.0	—	10,000	CD: 10 CG: 20	10	40	1

^a Maximum Floor Area Ratio. The Downtown area shall be subject to a maximum FAR of 3.0 for the area in the 1967 Downtown Parking Assessment District, as defined in Chapter 14.09.128, Off-Street Parking and Loading, of this division. The FAR for the rest of the Downtown area may range up to 2.0. The Downtown area is generally identified as the area between Stevenson Street, Cernon Street, Monte Vista Avenue, and the former Southern Pacific Railroad track, including the Basic American Foods plant site.

^b Minimum Site Area. Lots which were in existence prior to the effective date of Ordinance No. 1708 (May 27, 2004) are developable subject to the requirements of this chapter. The minimum number of dwelling units per site is five for residential only projects. Projects may not be subdivided into individual units under separate ownership except through a condominium or other similar form of ownership which provides for common maintenance of the site and facilities.

^c Minimum Yard Adjoining a Street.

1. For Mixed Use Projects in the CD district, no minimum yard shall apply, except as follows:
 - i. A minimum yard of 10 feet shall be required when a front, side, or rear yard is on a site adjoining Mason Street, between Davis and McClellan Streets.
2. In the CG district, the minimum yard shall be 20 feet. The following exceptions shall apply to mixed use projects:
 - i. The decision-maker may approve a reduction of a required front yard adjoining a non-arterial street by no more than 5 feet, subject to the finding that the lesser setback would be compatible with the surrounding area and consisting with existing building setbacks in the surrounding area.
 - ii. The required yard shall be increased by 1 foot for every 2 feet of building height above 20 feet when adjoining a street.
3. For Residential Only Projects in the CD district, the minimum yard shall be 10 feet. In the CG district, the minimum yard shall be 20 feet.

^d Maximum Building Height. The maximum building height may be adjusted up to 70 feet through a planned development.

Exceptions to building height: Towers, spires, cupolas, chimneys, penthouses, water tanks, flagpoles, monuments, scenery lofts, radio and television aerials, telecommunication equipment, light poles, transmission towers, fire towers, and similar structures and necessary mechanical appurtenances covering not more than 10 percent of the ground area covered by the structures may be erected to a height not more than 25 feet above the height limit prescribed by the regulations for the district in which the site is located. Electric utility poles and towers shall not be subject to the height limits prescribed.

^e Off-Street Parking. One covered parking space shall be provided per dwelling unit, except that no parking shall be required when the upper floor of an existing commercial building is converted to residential use.

Source: City of Vacaville Land Use and Development Code.

Parking Standards

On September 23, 2014, the City Council amended the Land Use and Development Code to include parking requirements for studio apartments. Studio apartments are required to provide one parking space. This is less than the required 1.5 parking spaces required for one bedroom units. Parking requirements for multi-family dwellings in the Land Use and Development Code are shown in Table 53.

The Planning Commission may reduce the parking requirement for senior or subsidized multi-family developments. Parking costs can be a significant cost in urban areas with higher land costs where parking structures are needed in order to provide on-site parking for multi-family projects. However, in Vacaville, the cost of providing parking for multifamily projects is not identified as a constraint because land costs are relatively more affordable than in urban areas and parking structures are not required.

TABLE 53 MULTI-FAMILY REQUIRED PARKING

No. of Bedrooms Per Unit	No. of Parking Spaces Required
Studio	1
1 bedroom	1.5
2 bedrooms	2
3 or more bedrooms	2
Guest parking	1 per each 5 units

Notes: One covered space shall be provided for each dwelling unit within the project.

No multiple-family project shall provide less than 1.75 spaces per dwelling unit.

Source: City of Vacaville Land Use and Development Code, Chapter 14.09.128.

Landscaping Standards

Landscaping requirements vary. Landscaping by developers is not required for single-family projects of 3 or fewer units. Front yard and corner lot street side yard landscaping is required to be installed for all units in projects of four or more units. Landscaping must comply with the Water Efficient Landscape Requirements, which encourage the use of plants which have a low water usage need. A yard tree is typically required in single-family districts. For multi-family districts, 20 feet of landscaping is required along street frontages, ten feet is required next to a property line. Parking lots are required to have a shade plan which allows 50 percent of the lot to be shaded within ten years. The impact of the City's landscaping requirements is typical of most suburban cities and is not considered to be a constraint to residential development.

Other Development Standards

The RH, RO and RUHD zones require a private patio, balcony or yard for all units. A common open space recreational area is required for projects of ten or more units and is to include facilities such as picnic areas, tot lots, sports courts, swimming pools, clubrooms and other similar facilities of a size commensurate with the size of the project. Standards for setbacks may be adjusted through a planned development

Appendix A provides a list of standard conditions placed on residential projects, including subdivision standards. These standards are fairly typical and do not pose constraints. Copies of these standards are available upon request.

The Residential Design Requirements for New Single Family Development also contain standards for subdivision and single-family design. These standards allow private roadways to serve single-family development and these roadways can have a 20-foot width with reduced standards such as sidewalks on only one side of the street. There are no adopted residential design requirements for multi-family developments.

Provision for a Variety of Housing Types

The City of Vacaville's Land Use and Development Code encourages a variety of housing types, including community care facilities, emergency shelters and transitional housing, farm worker housing, lodging houses, manufactured housing, multi-family housing, and secondary living units as follows:

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

Community Care Facilities

The Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Lanterman Act) sets out the rights and responsibilities of persons with developmental disabilities. The Lanterman Act impacts local zoning ordinances by requiring the use of property for the care of six or fewer disabled persons to be classified as a residential use under zoning. More specifically, a State-authorized, certified or licensed family care home, foster home, or a group home serving six or fewer disabled persons or dependent and neglected children on a 24-hour-a-day basis is considered a residential use that is to be permitted in all residential zones. No local agency can impose stricter zoning or building and safety standards on these homes.

The City of Vacaville Land Use and Development Code identifies “residential care facilities” (six or fewer occupants) for the elderly and disabled as a permitted use in all residential zoning districts. Residential care facilities providing intermediate care and/or alcohol and drug treatment are permitted in the RR, RE, RL, and RLM zoning designations. Such facilities are often established in existing single-family homes and house individuals with low or very-low incomes.

The City requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for residential care facilities serving seven or more persons. Community care facilities serving seven or more residents are a conditional use in the RL, RLM, RM, RH, CD, CG, CN, CO, and CS zoning designations. These types of facilities typically house elderly individuals or other persons that require assistance and cannot live independently. The purpose of the CUP process is not to deny such facilities; it is to ensure that the design and proposed operation of the facility is compatible with neighboring homes and uses. Vacaville has six commercial care facilities, four of which have the capability of serving patients with Alzheimer’s disease and other memory-related conditions.

Transitional and Supportive Housing

Transitional Housing (per Health and Safety Code 50675.2(h)) is defined as buildings configured as rental housing developments, but operated under program requirements that call for the termination of assistance and recirculation of the assisted unit to another eligible program recipient at some predetermined future point in time, which shall be no less than six months.

Transitional housing programs provide extended shelter and supportive services for homeless individuals and/or families with the goal of helping them live independently and transition into permanent housing. Some programs require that the individual/family be transitioning from a short-term emergency shelter. The length of stay varies considerably by program but is generally longer than two weeks and can last up to 60 days or more.

In many cases, transitional housing programs will provide services for up to two years or more. The supportive services may be provided directly by the organization managing the housing or by other public or private agencies in a coordinated effort with the housing provider. Transitional housing/shelter is generally provided in apartment style facilities with a higher degree of privacy than short-term homeless shelters; may be provided at no cost to the resident; and may be configured for specialized groups within the homeless population such as people with substance abuse problems, homeless mentally ill, homeless domestic violence victims, veterans or homeless people with AIDS/HIV.

Supportive Housing (per Health and Safety Code 50675.14(b)) is defined as housing with no limit on length of stay, that is occupied by the target population as defined in subdivision (d) of

Section 53260, and that is linked to onsite or offsite services that assist the supportive housing resident in retaining the housing, improving his or her health status, and maximizing his or her ability to live and, when possible, work in the community.

SB 2 required that transitional and supportive housing types be treated as residential uses and subject only to those restrictions that apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone. As a result, the City revised the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) to explicitly permit both transitional and supportive housing types within residential zones. These uses are permitted by right in the SS-10 and SS-11 zoning overlay districts, and the LUDC is in the process of being revised to allow transitional and supportive housing in all districts where residential uses are permitted, subject only to the same restrictions as other residential uses. City Council voted to support these amendments to the LUDC at their January 13, 2015 meeting, and the amendments will have their second reading on January 27, 2015.

Emergency Shelters

California Health and Safety Code (Section 50801) defines an emergency shelter as “housing with minimal supportive services for homeless persons that is limited to occupancy of six months or less by a homeless person. No individual or households may be denied emergency shelter because of an inability to pay.” In late 2008 and early 2009, the City Council adopted two special standard overlay zones (SS-10 and SS-11) which permit social services facilities, which include emergency shelters, homeless shelters, food banks, and other similar types of facilities, without the need for a conditional use permit. Cumulatively, these zones include 20 parcels (2.13 acres) and are located within the Residential High Density zoning district. There are no special development standards for homeless shelters, transitional, or supportive housing. These uses are subject to the design and development standards applicable to the residential zoning district.

In 2012, Opportunity House, the City’s homeless facility, relocated into a larger facility at 267 Bennett Hill Court, which is located within the SS-10 special standards overlay zoning district. For more information regarding Opportunity House and the social services available within the nearby area, see Section 5.3 in Chapter 5 of this document. Social services facilities continue to be permitted with a conditional use permit in the Downtown Commercial, General Commercial, and Neighborhood Commercial zoning districts. This is typical of many suburban communities. These commercial districts make up the majority of the City’s commercial land area.

Farm Employee Housing

Most farm worker households are monolingual and Spanish speaking, so many farm worker families tend to live in close proximity in a supportive community environment. Local service providers believe most farm workers live in lower-rent mobile home parks and apartments. While the special housing needs of the farm worker population are similar to that of other lower income residents, there is an emphasis on larger units (with three or more bedrooms), access to social services which serve their specialized needs (including ESL, naturalization, and health services) and access to transportation routes to outlying agricultural (employment) sites.

To the extent that farm workers are primarily low-income residents, their housing needs are similar to other low-income households. Because most of the heads of households speak only Spanish, the City of Vacaville, the Vacaville Housing Authority, and local social services providers employ bilingual staff and use outreach methods and materials designed to reach Spanish speaking residents to inform households of affordable housing opportunities,

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

particularly the Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program, and subsidized rental units located throughout the city. It should be noted that, within the city, there is no active agriculture that would create a demand for farm worker labor.

Farm employee housing is permitted without the need of a conditional use permit or other zoning variance within the Agriculture Zoning District.

Lodging houses

The Land Use and Development Code defines a lodging house as “a dwelling in which lodging or lodging and meals are provided for compensation for more than three but not more than 15 persons other than members of the resident family. Lodging house does not include hotels, motels, bed and breakfast inns, or residential care type facilities.” These types of facilities typically provide room and board to individuals with low or very-low incomes. Lodging houses are permitted within the RM and RH zoning districts.

Manufactured Homes and Mobile Home Parks

The Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 offers an affordable home ownership option to many low- and moderate-income households. In accordance with State law, the City of Vacaville Land Use and Development Code permits certified mobile homes in all zoning districts that allow single-family dwellings. The same development regulations that apply to single-family dwellings also apply to mobile homes, including the provision of covered parking and permanent foundation. Mobile homes that are not certified under the National Mobile Home Construction and Safety Act of 1974 may only be placed in mobile home parks.

Mobile home parks are conditionally permitted in all of the City’s residential zoning districts, with the exception of the Manufactured Housing Park zoning district, which permits them by right. The Manufactured Housing Park zoning district includes regulations to ensure that new, expanded, or reconstructed mobile home parks are located and established in a manner that is compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. The minimum site area for a mobile home park is 10 acres. A maximum of ten mobile home spaces per gross developable acre is permitted. Each development is required to contain a common open space recreation area for the residents.

Additionally, any subdivision of an existing mobile home park or conversion of an existing mobile home park to another land use is subject to the provisions of the Government Code related to mobile home park closure, commencing at Section 65863.7.

Permit Processing Time

Because most of Vacaville's residential development occurs in large, planned subdivisions, plan-checks are fairly straightforward and lengthy delays are not normally encountered. Such delays do occur from time to time depending on the complexity of the project, or when unexpected issues arise during plan check. The City of Vacaville prides itself on excellent customer service and this is evidenced by the timely review of development applications, subdivision maps and building permit requests.

City processing of residential developments is governed by federal, State and local regulations. For residential projects the City must adhere to the State Subdivision Map Act; State Planning, Zoning and Development Law; and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The timeframes for public review and permit processing outlined in regulations, as well as the

regulations adopted to implement them, impact the cost and time associated with permit processing and approval. In addition, obtaining environmental clearances from the State Department of Fish & Wildlife (DFWS) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is required for many projects. Because of a federal requirement that the City prepare a Habitat Conservation Plan, development proposals within areas denoted as habitat for the California Red Legged Frog or Vernal Pool Shrimp must receive clearance from USFWS. In addition, normal pre-construction surveys for burrowing owls or Swainson's hawk can sometimes affect the plan check review timelines.

Staff level review of residential projects normally consists of a Design Review application, while Planning Commission approvals may include Design Review or Planned Development applications, in addition to the required environmental and map applications.

The Community Development Department coordinates the City's development review process with other City departments and outside affected agencies. This is accomplished through the Department's Project Review Committee (PRC), which meets on a weekly basis. PRC is comprised of staff from each City department who review development applications and determine the appropriate project conditions of approval. For complex projects, Staff encourages the applicant to attend these meetings to provide an introduction to the project and its scope. The PRC also reviews applications to determine completeness and to determine whether a project meets City standards and requirements. Through the PRC, projects are reviewed in an efficient manner and potential issues are identified at an early stage in the development review process.

The country-wide economic downturn and the dissolution of the City's Redevelopment Agency has affected staffing in the Community Development Department. While staffing has decreased, the number of non-residential projects has not, and this affects the processing of residential projects. The approximate timelines identified below reflect reduction in staffing and the remaining staff's ongoing workload. Please note that new residential subdivision projects are typically reviewed by the Planning Commission and sometimes by the City Council.

Planning Division

Staff approvals: 45–60 days from date application is complete

Planning Commission approvals: 60–75 days from date application is complete

Phone Call returns: within 24 hours

Public Works

Final Maps and Improvement Plan Check

First submittal review: 45 days

Subsequent submittal review: 21 days

Building Division

Building Permit Plan Check

Residential plot plans: 10 calendar days

Single-family residential: 30 calendar days

Multi-family residential: 30 calendar days

Building Inspections: next day

In some cases where it is clear an efficient project review will be achieved, the Planning Division will allow the concurrent processing of applications. For example, a project requiring a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and a Planned Development can go through a single review

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

and hearing process. For projects requiring an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), approximately six months can be added to the timeline for a project. EIRs are not typically required for individual residential projects. The City generally relies on area plan EIRs and, in some instances, a Mitigated Negative Declaration, which does not require any additional processing time. All recently approved apartment projects required a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

As a part of the project review process, it is the City's standard practice to hold informal neighborhood meetings for most development applications. These meetings allow City staff and the builder to meet with residents, and identify and resolve neighborhood issues prior to the formal public hearing process, eliminating the risk of a continued public hearing because of new issues that might arise at a public hearing.

Housing for Persons with Disabilities

As part of the update of the Housing Element in 2001, the City conducted a comprehensive review of its zoning laws, policies, and practices for compliance with fair housing laws. The City has not identified any zoning or other land-use regulatory practices that could discriminate against persons with disabilities and impede the availability of such housing for these individuals. The City does not impose special permit procedures or requirements that could impede the retrofitting of homes for accessibility. The City's requirements for building permits and inspections are the same as for other residential projects and are straightforward and not burdensome. City officials are not aware of any instances in which an applicant experienced delays or rejection of a retrofitting proposal for accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Procedures for Ensuring Reasonable Accommodations

To provide exception in zoning and land use for housing for persons with disabilities, the City of Vacaville utilizes either a variance or encroachment permit processes to accommodate requests such as special structures or appurtenances (e.g., access ramps or lifts) needed by persons with physical disabilities. While both variance and encroachment permit applications may be handled through an administrative procedure, the standard used to evaluate such deviations conflicts with laws applicable to housing for persons with disabilities.

On September 23, 2014, the City Council amended Chapter 14.09.074, Residential Districts Development Standards, of the Land Use and Development Code to exempt construction projects related to accessibility retrofitting from setback requirements. In addition, accessibility-retrofitting projects are subject to administrative design review. This process includes minimal review by the Community Development Director and includes the following criteria:

- The request for reasonable accommodation will be used by an individual with a disability protected under fair housing laws.
- The requested accommodation is necessary to make housing available to an individual with a disability protected under fair housing laws.
- The requested accommodation would not impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the City.
- The requested accommodation would not require a fundamental alteration in the nature of the City's land-use and zoning program.

Efforts to Remove Regulatory Constraints for Persons with Disabilities

The City does not impose additional zoning, building code, or permitting procedures other than those allowed by State law. The City allows residential care facilities of six or fewer persons by right, as required by State law. A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) or other special permitting requirements do not apply to such homes. The City does require a CUP for residential care facilities of more than six persons in all residential and commercial zones that allow for residential uses. However, such permits only consider the City's design review requirements. The City does not impose additional zoning, building code, or permitting procedures other than those allowed by State law. There are no City initiated constraints on housing for persons with disabilities, and no such constraints are caused or controlled by the City.

The City also allows residential retrofitting to increase the suitability of homes for persons with disabilities in compliance with accessibility requirements. Further, the City works with applicants who need special accommodations in their homes to ensure that application of building code requirements does not create a constraint.

Information Regarding Accommodation for Zoning, Permit Processing, and Building Codes

The City of Vacaville implements and enforces the 2013 California Building Code. The City provides information to all interested parties regarding accommodations in zoning, permit processes, and application of building codes for housing for persons with disabilities.

Building Codes

The City of Vacaville provides reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in the enforcement of building codes and the issuance of building permits through retrofitting or converting existing buildings and construction of new buildings that meet the shelter needs of persons with disabilities. The City implements the 2013 California Building Code. The City has adopted amendments to the California Building Code to (a) match the current practice of the City Council adopting building fee schedules; (b) adopt certain parts of model codes not adopted by the State of California, for administrative purposes; (c) provide greater safety from fireplace fire damage; (d) provide greater fire safety of wood shake and shingle roof material; (e) require reinforcing steel in driveway slabs.

7.2 NON-GOVERNMENTAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE PRODUCTION OF HOUSING

Availability of Urban Services

The availability of services constitutes a constraint primarily for new growth areas beyond the current City limits. The only remaining large growth areas within the City limits are Lagoon Valley, North Village, and Southtown. Lagoon Valley is a future community of 1,025 units, located in the southwest quadrant of the City; North Village is a community of approximately 2,200 units, located in the northeast quadrant of the City; and Southtown is a community comprised of approximately 1,500 units located in the southeast quadrant of the City. Infrastructure has been constructed for the first phases of North Village and Southtown, and construction of houses is under way. Lagoon Valley and the remaining phases of North Village and Southtown all require significant infrastructure; however, assessment districts have been created for each of these projects to finance the installation of needed improvements. Brighton Landing, a smaller growth area on the east side of Vacaville, has an approved Specific Plan with capacity for about 770 single-family homes. It would require new infrastructure that would

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

need to be coordinated with future development to the north and south, outside the City limits, in the “East of Leisure Town Road Growth Area” planned for in the City’s pending updated General Plan.

Chapter 5, “Public Facilities, Institutions and Utilities,” of the General Plan includes analysis of existing capacity and projected needs, and policies to ensure orderly development. Vacaville has water entitlements to provide water for all lands within the current City limits, as well as for additional growth areas beyond the existing City limits. Due to differing elevations, pump stations and reservoirs are required to serve some development areas, such as Lagoon Valley. The Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant is currently capable of treating 15 million gallons per day.

Vacaville has a sufficient residential land inventory to accommodate its share of the regional housing need allocation (RHNA) without the need to rezone any properties or annex additional lands. The City has sufficient water and wastewater capacity to accommodate its RHNA.

Land and Construction Costs

Based on interviews with local developers, there are three major cost components related to constructing new housing units: the cost of construction materials and labor, city and county fees, and land costs. Prior to the economic downturn in the mid-2000s, land cost was the most variable cost in residential development because it varied considerably depending upon the site.

Construction costs include both “hard” (e.g., labor and material costs) and “soft” costs (e.g., architectural and engineering services, development fees, construction financing, and insurance). Although the cost of construction financing has recently declined, it remains a significant part of the total cost of residential development.

Construction costs vary widely according to the type of development, with multi-family housing generally less expensive to construct than single-family homes. However, wide variation within each type exists, depending on the size of the unit and the amenities provided, such as fireplaces, swimming pools, and interior fixtures, among others. The typical construction price of an average 1,800-square-foot single-family home in the area, built by a public builder, is estimated to be approximately \$220,000, including materials, labor, permits, financing, and administration.

In addition to construction costs, the price of land is also one of the largest components of housing development costs. Land costs may vary depending on whether the site is vacant or has an existing use that must be removed. Similarly, site constraints such as environmental issues (e.g., lack of proper drainage, soil stability, seismic hazards, or flooding) can also affect the cost of land.

Availability of Financing / Cost of Financing

Maximum affordable purchase prices for different household income ranges are shown in Table 54. It can be difficult for very low, low, and moderate income first-time homebuyers to acquire sufficient savings and income to pay for a down payment, closing costs, monthly mortgage, and tax and insurance payments. Although they have remained fairly low in recent years, mortgage interest rates will continue to play a major role in determining the affordability of housing. As of March 2014, the United States is experiencing historically low interest, as low as 5 percent. Interest rates and availability of financing in Vacaville are no different than in the

TABLE 54 MAXIMUM AFFORDABLE PURCHASE PRICE FOR DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGES AND INTEREST RATES, 2014

Income Category	5% Interest Rate			6% Interest Rate		
	With 5% Down	With 10% Down	With 20% Down	With 5% Down	With 10% Down	With 20% Down
Extremely Low (\$24,800 or Below)	\$61,090	\$63,990	\$70,690	\$55,520	\$58,190	\$64,390
Very Low (\$24,801 to \$41,300)	\$130,700	\$136,890	\$151,230	\$118,770	\$124,490	\$137,750
Low (\$41,301 to \$65,000)	\$230,480	\$241,400	\$266,670	\$209,440	\$219,520	\$242,900
Moderate (\$65,001 to \$99,100)	\$374,250	\$391,980	\$433,020	\$340,090	\$356,460	\$394,420
Above Moderate (Above \$99,100)	Above \$374,250	Above \$391,980	Above \$433,020	\$340,090	Above \$356,460	Above \$394,420

Notes: Assumes a four-person household, paying 30 percent of its annual income for housing, a portion of which goes to taxes, insurance, and HOA fees; 30-year fixed-rate loan; down payment as specified. Loan organization fees (points), title insurance, and other closing costs could add another 3 percent to the down payment and effectively lower the affordable purchase threshold. Income ranges shown are based on 2014 income limits for Solano County published by California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Affordable housing amounts do not factor other household debts such as auto loans, student loans, installment loans, and/or revolving accounts. Other household debt may effectively lower the affordable purchase threshold.

region. There are no known areas or income groups that are undeserved for new construction or rehabilitation loans.

A variety of federal, state, and local programs exist to provide homebuyers with below-market-rate mortgages, either by insuring loans, purchasing them on the secondary mortgage market, or making them directly. The effectiveness of these programs usually depends on their income and sales price ceilings and how competitive market-rate loans are. Generally, when interest rates are low, there is little incentive to use these programs. Interviews with local developers, realtors, and mortgage bankers indicate that Federal Housing Administration, Veteran's Administration, and California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) loans are being used for the most part for townhouses, condominiums, and smaller, older single-family homes. Even for financing the purchase of these units, price limits are too low to allow broad use of the programs. Prior to Redevelopment Agency dissolution, a combination of below market rate loans funded by the Redevelopment LIHF assisted over 528 families to purchase their first homes. The City still continues to provide the CalHOME first-time homebuyer loan program, and is currently pursuing reinstating the City's Housing Counseling program to provide counseling services to first-time homebuyers to lessen some burden. The City will pursue other State and federal funding sources for first-time homebuyer loans.

Due to market conditions, the construction of rental units has also decreased dramatically. A key funding source for the development of affordable rental units has been tax exempt bond financing and tax credits. However, due to market conditions, investors are less interested in tax exempt vehicles. In addition, with the exception of senior apartments, the vacancy rate has been relatively high.

7.3 ENERGY CONSERVATION

Development of California's Energy Standards

The State of California pioneered the development of energy conservation legislation, mainly as a result of the 1973 energy crisis. In 1974, the legislature adopted the Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources and Development Act, which established the Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (California Energy Commission). The Energy Commission was delegated the authority to adopt standards and regulations encouraging energy conservation in new buildings and rehabilitation of existing buildings.

The State building requirements that address energy conservation are included in Title 24 of the State Building Code. The State of California presently requires local governments to recognize and address energy conservation measures in the preparation of housing elements. Title 20 of the California Administrative Code, section 1406 gives local governments the authority to adopt more stringent standards and provides for documentation on energy savings and cost effectiveness.

Some of the methods, designs, or technologies required by State energy conservation standards could increase the cost of housing production and rehabilitation, but these expenses are necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare, and to meet statewide energy goals. Energy efficiency can greatly reduce the impact of residential development and provide long-term cost savings for residents. The standards of Title 24 offer a great deal of flexibility for individual builders to achieve energy savings.

Energy Conservation Programs

Local utility companies, in conjunction with State and federally funded initiatives, offer a number of programs to promote energy-efficient homes. Listed below are some of the programs that are currently active.

- **California Advanced Homes Program (CAHP)** – The CAHP is sponsored by PG&E and administered by TRC Solutions. The CAHP is a comprehensive residential new construction concept with a focus on sustainable design and construction, green building practices, energy efficiency, and emerging technologies. Incentives are available to builders of single-family homes that are at least 15 percent more efficient than required by Title 24. Additional incentives are also available for Energy Star, Green Program Participation, Compact Home, kW Reduction, and New Solar Home Partnership Tier II level participation. Additionally, the CAHP requires that all appliances provided by the builder be Energy Star qualified. PG&E will help prospective buyers locate homes that meet the Energy Star specifications.
- **California Multi-Family New Homes (CMFNH)** – The CMFNH program is sponsored by PG&E and administered by TRC Solutions to facilitate and encourage energy-efficient design in multi-family housing through design assistance, cash incentives, and Energy Star marketing benefits.
- **Energy Efficiency for Multi-Family Properties** – PG&E offers rebates to multi-family property owners and managers of existing residential dwellings that contain two or more units when they implement specified measures to increase energy efficiency. The program encourages the installation of qualifying energy-efficient products in individual tenant units and in the common areas of residential apartment buildings, mobile home parks, and condominium complexes.

- **New Solar Homes Partnership** – The New Solar Homes Partnership (NSHP) provides financial incentives and other support for installing eligible solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on new residential buildings that receive electricity from qualifying utility companies. The California Energy Commission implements the New Solar Homes Partnership in coordination with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as part of the overall California Solar Initiative. The incentives for NSHP will decline over time as it reaches its megawatts capacity goals, and this program will end no later than December 31, 2016.

Residential Energy Efficiency Standards

The Energy Commission issued the current building energy standards in 1998, with an update in 2013. The standards for residential buildings incorporate different requirements for low-rise buildings (three or fewer stories) and high-rise buildings (four or more stories). Any building, building addition, or alteration that increases the heated or cooled floor area of a building must comply with the State Energy Conservation Standards. Enforcement of the standards is carried out during the building permit process by building departments.

The State standards require new residential buildings, alterations, and additions to existing buildings to meet or exceed a specific set of energy conservation requirements. Because energy use depends partly upon weather conditions, which vary considerably throughout the state, the Energy Commission has created 16 different “climate zones.” Each climate zone represents a distinct microclimate in the state. The energy conservation requirements are tailored for each climate zone. The City of Vacaville is located in Climate Zone 12.

There have been several residential subdivisions constructed in Vacaville with energy efficiency features beyond what is mandated by State Law. The 47-unit Ventana project was constructed with roof-mounted solar panels on all homes and was Vacaville’s first solar home community. The 31-unit Sterling Chateau single-family residential subdivision is also a solar home community-featuring roof mounted solar panels. Other projects have followed the lead of the developers of these two projects and offered solar packages as an option to new homebuyers.

Compliance Methods

There are two compliance methods available to builders and designers of residential structures. The *prescriptive method* involves selection of prescribed compliance features from a list of alternative component packages. Each climate zone has four packages to choose from and each offers a different combination of energy conservation requirements. Parameters of the building, such as the insulation R-values of the walls and ceilings, percentage of glazing, the solar heat gain coefficient of the glazing, thermal mass area, and heating and cooling equipment efficiencies are required to meet specific minimums for each package.

The computer performance method requires the use of an Energy Commission-approved computer program. The computer program actually models the energy performance of the structure two ways. The energy budget is calculated for the structure through the use of a selected set of standard parameters set forth by the Energy Commission. The structure is then modeled with the parameters proposed by the designer. The predicted energy budget of the proposed design may not exceed the calculated energy budget of the structure modeled with the standard parameters of the Energy Commission. This method involves the most effort to demonstrate compliance; however, it does offer the greatest flexibility for design.

When using the computer performance method, additional compliance credit can be obtained for improvements in the quality of design, installation of heating and cooling ducts, and

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

construction of less-leaky building envelopes. The compliance credit options require installer diagnostic testing and certification, as well as independent diagnostic testing and field verification by a certified Home Energy Rater.

Mandatory Energy Conservation Requirements

There are also mandatory energy conservation requirements that must be met by all new residential structures and by additions and alterations to existing structures. A condensed summary of these is listed on the mandatory measures checklist, or MF-1 form, submitted at the time of plan review to the City's Building Division.

Adoption of Local Conservation Ordinances

The City of Vacaville implemented the California Green Building Standards Code in 2010, as mandated by law.

Conservation Policies for Subdivisions

It is unlikely that all developers will consistently take the initiative to incorporate conservation features into their projects during the planning and design phases of development unless they are cost-effective and buyers demand the features. The City's single-family design guidelines represent a logical place to include design guidelines for energy conservation. The types of policies that help to promote energy conservation are:

- Location of retail uses near new residential subdivisions.
- Providing access to schools, recreation facilities, and other public and private services that would reduce the need for automobile trips.
- Use of landscaping to help reduce the energy needs of residences (such as the use of deciduous shade trees).
- Policies to encourage building orientation that reduces east-west surface areas and, therefore, the amount of summer heat gain.
- Use of shaded south glazing to take advantage of winter insolation.
- Encouragement of solar energy by ensuring that new subdivisions allow for solar access to individual dwelling units. Solar access for passive and active solar systems (such as solar water heaters) must be protected for these systems to operate properly. The City can ensure solar access by establishing design guidelines that require a zone of unimpeded solar access for each residential building to make use of passive and/or active solar systems.
- Examination of the City's Zoning Ordinance to determine if building height, setback, and yard area requirements allow for sufficient solar access

Revisions to the City's Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances can evolve over a period of time sufficient to allow planners, land developers, and builders to acquire sensitivity to solar potential and other energy conservation measures.

Energy and Conservation Action Strategy

Since the last Housing Element cycle, the City of Vacaville has prepared and published a Draft Energy and Conservation Action Strategy (ECAS) in parallel with its General Plan Update. The ECAS includes several measures to increase green building, renewable energy, and energy conservation in all types of development in Vacaville, such as measures to reduce energy use

through solar orientation, work with PG&E to develop an Alternative Energy Development Plan, and mandate the use of energy-efficient appliances in new development. The ECAS will be considered for adoption by the City Council in 2015.

7.4 PRIORITY FOR WATER AND SEWER PROVIDERS

Per Chapter 727, Statutes of 2004 (SB 1087), upon completion of an amended or adopted housing element, a local government is responsible for immediately distributing a copy of the element to area water and sewer providers. In addition, water and sewer providers must grant priority for service allocations to proposed developments that include housing units affordable to lower-income households. Chapter 727 was enacted to improve the effectiveness of the law in facilitating housing development for lower-income families and workers.

Local public and/or private water and sewer providers must adopt written policies and procedures that grant a priority for service hook-ups to developments that help meet the community's share of the regional need for lower-income housing. In addition, the law prohibits water and sewer providers from denying, conditioning the approval, or reducing the amount of service for an application for development that includes housing affordable to lower-income households, unless specific written findings are made.

7. Constraints on the Production of Housing

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