

CITY OF CONCORD HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE 2008

Housing Needs and Constraints

Working Paper

City of Concord

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Housing Needs and Constraints

INTRODUCTION

This Housing Needs and Constraints report serves as a draft for the housing needs assessment portion of the City of Concord Housing Element. It provides background information using the latest Census data, the Housing Element Surveys, housing market and other data to support analyses of current conditions for housing development.

Major sections of this report are organized to correspond with the legislative requirements of the Housing Element. They include:

- *Introduction.* This section highlights the purpose and requirements of the Housing Element and its relation to General Plan.
- *Demographic and Housing Characteristics.* This section presents an assessment of current demographic and housing conditions in Concord to assist in the subsequent formulation of housing policies.
- *Housing Needs.* This section presents a discussion of the city's share of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and the housing needs of special groups, such as female-headed households and senior households.
- *Housing Constraints.* The Housing Constraints section reviews government, market and environmental conditions to identify potential constraints to housing development.
- *Opportunities for Energy Conservation.* This section analyses opportunities for energy conservation to encourage the incorporation of energy saving features, energy saving materials, and energy efficient systems and design for residential development in Concord.

WHAT IS A HOUSING ELEMENT?

The Housing Element is one of the seven required elements of the General Plan. State Housing Element law, enacted in 1969, mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all segments of the population. It requires that the Element be consistent with all parts of the general plan and be closely related to the Land Use Element, which specifies land within the jurisdiction that can be utilized for housing development. The law acknowledges that, in order for the private market to adequately address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt plans and regulatory systems which supports housing development. As a result, the successful growth of a community rests largely upon the implementation of local general plans, and in particular, the Housing Element.

Unlike the general plan which looks out 10 to 20 years into the future, the Housing Element has a shorter planning period of five years.¹ It is programmatic in focus and is required to meet specific requirements set by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

WHAT PERIOD DOES THE HOUSING ELEMENT COVER?

The process of updating Housing Elements is triggered by HCD through the “regional housing needs” process. The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process is a State mandate on planning for housing, whereby each jurisdiction in the State is given a “fair share” of local housing needs according to income distribution. Prior to the current update, the last time the State initiated the regional housing needs process was in 1999.

Concord’s previous Housing Element was adopted in January 2003 to cover the 1999 to 2006 planning period. The current update will therefore serve the planning period beginning January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2014. This is a seven year period instead of the usual five due to a request by ABAG to coincide the RHNA process with the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan update. The due date for jurisdictions in the Bay Area region to update their Housing Elements is June 30, 2009.

Like the 2030 General Plan, the current update does not anticipate the development of the Inland CNWS area which is being converted from military to civilian use as part of an ongoing base reuse plan.

INFORMATION SOURCES

The information presented here is gathered from a variety of sources. The U.S. Census Bureau is a major source of information. Data from the Census Bureau are taken from the 1990 Census, the 2000 Census, and the 2006 American Community Survey. Unlike the decennial censuses, which are more comprehensive in scope and occurs every ten years, the American Community Survey is a yearly nationwide survey of geographic areas. The American Community Survey provides more up to date information but is smaller in scope and has fewer details than the decennial censuses. Comparisons of data from the 1990 Census, 2000 Census, and the Census Bureau’s 2006 American Community Survey are carried out wherever appropriate to reveal growth patterns and to draw conclusions on demographic, housing, or economic conditions. Others sources relied upon to supplement Census data included information from the California Department of Finance, the California Housing Partnership Corporation, and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). Various other sources (both private and public) were also used. Wherever possible, data from the City or County

¹ Theoretically, all housing elements have a planning period of five years. But regional housing authorities like ABAG occasionally ask for, and are granted, extensions for any number of reasons. In the previous and current planning periods, ABAG was granted extensions of two and a half years and two years, respectively, to finalize RHNA allocations by HCD. The current housing planning period, for instance, was supposed to span from 2007 to 2012 – a total of five years. However, the housing update did not start in 2007 due to a request by ABAG to coordinate RHNA allocation with the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan. As such, Housing Elements in the Bay Area will only be completed in 2009 and be counted for five years thereafter to 2014. The official “start” of the planning period, however, remains 2007.

were used to facilitate an understanding of local needs and conditions. These include windshield surveys, a resident survey (hereafter called the “Concord Housing Resident Survey”) conducted in January 2008, and a survey of non-residents who work in Concord (hereafter called the “Concord Housing Non-Resident Worker Survey”) conducted in January through March 2008. Both of these surveys were conducted by Godbe Research; full survey results are on file at the City’s Planning Division.

It is worthy of note that on some occasions, data in one section may not match with those found in another section. This is because the data may originate from different sources. For example, “Projections 2007” from ABAG has a different population estimate from the Census Bureau’s 2006 American Community Survey. Generally, this report uses the most recent data available. Also worthy of note is that while “Projections 2007” is the most recent data available, it also assumes some development at the Inland CNWS area which is excluded from the current 2030 General Plan. As such, data from “Projections 2007” is used selectively.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The type and amount of housing needed in a community is largely determined by population growth and various demographic variables. Factors such as population size, age, race, and occupation can be used to analyze the effectiveness of existing housing policies and provide a general direction and focus for future housing initiatives.

Population

Concord’s population has grown at an average rate of 1 percent annually for the last few decades. In 1980, Concord had a population of just 101,800, but its population reached 121,800 in 2000. Growth had been primarily driven by immigration due to the city’s proximity to job centers and the availability of housing.

Table 1 summarizes current population for Concord in comparison to Contra Costa County. The City had a population of 125,100 in 2007. Over the next two decades from 2007 to 2030, Concord is expected to continue to grow at a rate of 0.6 percent annually. This amounts to an increase of about 660 persons and 250 households every year citywide. At full buildout of the General Plan, the total population in Concord is expected to reach around 142,210 by 2030.

Table I. Current Population and Projections

<i>Population</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>Annual Growth Rate</i>
Concord ¹	125,100	130,800	142,210	0.6%
Contra Costa County	1,038,800	1,107,300	1,255,300	0.8%

¹Figures for the city are projected from California Department of Finance’s 2005 data which are consistent with the 2030 General Plan. The Department has since revised its data for 2007. However, to ensure compatibility with the General Plan, data from 2005 are projected here rather than the more recent DOF release. The difference between the two projections is marginal and makes little difference to a city of Concord’s size.

ABAG has a different population count for the city in its ‘Projections 2007’ because it assumes development in the CNWS Inland area, which is excluded in the 2030 General Plan.

Source: Department of Finance, 2005. City of Concord 2030 General Plan, ABAG ‘Projections 2007’, 2008.

Race and Ethnicity

Table 2 compares the racial makeup of the Concord in 1990, 2000 and 2006. Over the years, the racial diversity of Concord has increased following a pattern representative of the wider Contra Costa County population. According to the U.S. Census, 84 percent of Concord residents were White, 8 percent were Asian, and 11.5 percent were of Latino or Hispanic origin in 1990.² A decade and a half later in 2006, the White proportion of the population decreased to 64 percent, while the Hispanic population proportion showed a marked increase to nearly 30 percent of the population. There were also a greater number of residents who classified themselves as belonging to “other” races, including persons belonging to two or more races.

² Latino or Hispanic is not a separate race category in the Census. All persons who were reported as Latino or Hispanic were also reported as belonging to another racial category.

Table 2. Population by Race and Ethnicity

Race/ Ethnic Group	Percent of Total			Percentage Change from 1990
	1990	2000	2006	
White	84.0%	70.7%	64.1%	-16.6%
Asian	8.3	9.4	11.3	+49.2
Black	2.4	3.0	1.6	-27.1
All others	5.4	16.9	23.1	+370.9
Hispanic	11.5	21.8	29.3	+178.9

Note: The 'total' of individual years do not add up to 100 because the Hispanic count is not classified as a race but an ethnic group in the Census.

Source: Census 1990, American Community Survey, 2006.

Age and Population Trends

Population demographics provide the City with background information necessary to assess current and future housing needs. Supplemented with analysis of housing characteristics, a look at population trends enables and supports more effective planning and policymaking process for the Housing Element update.

A survey of population distribution in Concord over the last two decades indicates a gradually aging population. According to the 1990 Census, only 9 percent of the city's population was 65 years of age or older. This increased to 12 percent of the population by 2006 according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Similarly, the middle-age population (age 45-64) has also increased. The age groups that experienced a decline were children and teens (0 to 19 year olds) and young adults (20 to 44 year olds). As a result of this shift, the median age increased from just under 34 in 1990 to 35.4 in 2006. Table 3 summarizes population trends from 1990 to 2006 in four major age groups.

Table 3. Population Trends

Age groups	Percent of Total			Percentage Change from 1990
	1990	2000	2006	
0 to 19	27.1%	27.8%	23.2%	-6.4%
20 to 44	44.6	39.2	40.7	-0.2
45 to 64	18.9	22.2	24.5	+41.8
65 and above	9.3	10.8	11.5	+34.9

Source: Census 1990, American Community Survey, 2006.

If current trends are to continue, most of those in the current 45 to 64 age group will be retired by 2030. This indicates that the city will face an increased need for senior housing.³

Employment

Employment types, income levels, and other factors determine the type of housing residents can afford, while the unemployment rate is an indicator of the level of housing assistance needed. Employment and income levels are generally the function of regional growth or decline, which depends on factors beyond City control. But an understanding of how Concord is fairing among peer cities is helpful in allocating resources and formulating housing policies.

Table 4 shows average household income and the unemployment rate in Concord and peer cities. In 2006, Concord had a lower average household income level when compared to most peer cities and the county average. It also had a higher unemployment level than most cities surveyed, except Richmond. This suggests that the cost of housing should be appropriately lower than the county average, or residents will not be able to afford to live in the city. The level of unemployment indicates that there is a continuing need for housing assistance and emergency support services to help unemployed and otherwise economically disadvantaged residents.

Table 4. Peer Cities Mean Household Income and Unemployment Rate

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Mean Household Income 2006¹</i>	<i>Unemployment Rate in 2007</i>
Concord	\$83,100	5.1%
Martinez	89,900	3.8
Pleasant Hill	91,900	3.8
Richmond	68,200	7.9
Walnut Creek	96,800	3.1
Contra Costa County	\$99,400	4.7%

¹Mean Household Income¹ for 2006 is projected from ABAG’s ‘Projections 2007’ numbers for 2005, assuming constant growth rate between 2005 and 2010.

² The county’s mean household income is similarly projected from 2005 based on ABAG’s ‘Projections 2007’, assuming constant growth rate between 2005 and 2010.

Source: ABAG ‘Projections 2007’, 2008. California Economic Development Department, 2008.

³ The Census Bureau generally defines seniors as people age 65 and older, and their survey data are usually grouped in five year increments. HCD’s Housing and Policy Development’s Housing Element samples follow the Census Bureau in grouping seniors in the 65 and older age group. The State’s Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) General Plan Guidelines (2003), however, defines them as 62 years and older. The Civil Code also defines “senior citizen” as “a person 62 years or older, or 55 years or older in a senior citizen housing development”. For this Housing Element update, we are following the Census and HCD definition. However, for land use and development purposes, senior citizen housing developments can use 55 years of age and granny flats (second units) can use 62.

Table 5 shows current and projected jobs and employed residents in Concord in comparison with Contra Costa County. “Jobs” are defined as employment opportunities available within the city, while “Employed Residents” includes all employed residents, whether or not they work within or outside the city. As shown in the table, Concord had 61,900 jobs in 2007. With implementation of the 2030 General Plan, job growth is projected to outpace employed residents growth in the next two decades and reach 88,800 by 2030. This will bring the ratio of jobs per employed residents from 0.93 in 2007 to 1.17 in 2030. A jobs/employed residents ratio of greater than one suggests a net in-commute of workers into the city, while a ratio of less than one suggests a net out-commute.

Table 5. Current Employment and Projections

<i>Jobs</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>Annual Growth Rate</i>
Concord ¹	61,900	70,100	88,800	1.5%
Contra Costa County	388,600	436,970	551,530	1.5%

<i>Employed Residents</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>Annual Growth Rate</i>
Concord	66,400	69,500	75,840	0.6%
Contra Costa County ²	473,900	533,300	662,400	1.4%

¹ Figures for the city are projected from California Department of Finance’s 2005 data which are consistent with the 2030 General Plan. The Department has since revised its data for 2007. However, to ensure compatibility with the General Plan, data from 2005 are projected rather than the more recent DOF release. ABAG has a different population count for the city in its ‘Projections 2007’ because it assumes development in the CNWS Inland area, which is excluded in the 2030 General Plan.

² Employed residents for Contra Costa County using ABAG’s Special Statistical Area estimates.

Source: Department of Finance, 2005. City of Concord 2030 General Plan, ABAG ‘Projections 2007’, 2008.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Household type and size, income levels, and other household characteristics determine the type of housing needed by residents. This section details the various household characteristics affecting housing needs.

Household Sizes

The U.S. Census defines a household as any group of people who occupy a housing unit, including families, single people, or unrelated persons sharing living quarters. Persons living in licensed facilities, retirement homes, or dormitories are not considered households. Household characteristics are important indicators of the type and size of housing needed in a community.

From 2000 to 2006, Concord witnessed a minor decrease in the total number of households from 44,020 to 43,980. The percentage of households consisting of families also declined from 69 to 64 percent. Most of the city’s non-family households were people living alone, and increased slightly from 31 to 34 percent.

From 2000 to 2006, household size increased slightly from an average of 2.74 to 2.79 persons per household. Thus, while the number of households decreased, the size of the households increased to produce a net gain in population. This trend is not expected to last. According to ABAG’s Projections 2007, the average household size in the city is expected to decline from 2010 onward due to an aging population. Table 6 shows the number of households and household size from 2000 to 2006, and includes projections up to year 2030.

Table 6. Family Households and Average Size

	2000	2006	2015	2030
Total Households	44,020	43,980	47,500	50,560
Family Households	30,322	27,945	30,200 ²	32,100 ²
Average Size ¹	2.74	2.79	2.72	2.67

¹ The 2030 General Plan assumes a uniform household size for buildout (2.7 persons per household). ABAG’s Projections 2007 included new estimates for average household sizes, which are shown here, but not in the 2030 General Plan.

² Family Household sizes for 2015 and 2030 are estimates based on the assumption that the ratio of Family Households to Total Households remains constant from 2006.

Source: 2000 and 2006 data from Census 2000 and American Community Survey 2006. ABAG ‘Projections 2007’, 2008.

Household Income

Median household income represents the mid-point in income for all households in the city, with half earning more and half earning less. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median household income for Concord in 1999 was \$55,597.⁴ In comparison, Contra Costa County had an overall median household income of \$63,675. This was 14 percent higher than Concord’s figure. According to the 2006 American Community Survey, the median household income in Concord was \$60,221. In comparison, in 2006 the County had an overall median household income of \$74,241. This was 23 percent higher than Concord’s figure. Comparing both years, the data suggests that Concord had become less wealthy relative to the County over this period.

To determine eligibility for housing programs, both federal and state governments categorize households according to their income, in comparison to the area median income (AMI). The AMI is the median household income for a defined geographic area. AMI is determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The following income groups are the standard categories used:

- Extremely low-income= 30 percent median or less;
- Very low-income = 31 to 50 percent;
- Low-income = 51 to 80 percent;
- Moderate-income = 81 to 120 percent; and
- Above moderate-income = 120 and over.

⁴ The 2000 Census usually reports data from the same year (i.e. 2000). However, in some cases, it reports data from 1999 – one year prior to the census.

California only began requesting analysis of households defined as extremely low-income since adoption of the previous Housing Element. While a city is not obligated to include a separate category for extremely low-income households in its Housing Element, the Housing Element as a whole must analyze the obstacles and needs for this category and include proposed actions and programs to meet those needs.

Table 7 shows the percent of city and county residents by income category. Within Concord, the 2000 Census (survey done in 1999) counted 5,568 extremely low-income households, 5,475 very low-income households, and 8,687 low-income households—these made up 13, 12, and 20 percent, respectively of the households in the city. Moderate income households comprised 23 percent of the city’s households and about one third (32 percent) were above moderate income. In comparison, the county had a lower proportion of extremely low- to low-income residents and a higher proportion of above moderate income residents than the city.

Table 7. Households by Income Group in 1999

<i>Income Group</i>	<i>Income Criteria</i>	<i>Concord</i>	<i>Contra Costa County</i>
Extremely low	Less than \$19,103	5,568 13%	40,229 12%
Very low	\$19,104- \$31,838	5,475 12%	35,183 10%
Low	\$31,839 - \$50,940	8,687 20%	58,915 17%
Moderate	\$50,941 - \$76,410	10,256 23%	69,660 20%
Above Moderate	Over \$76,411	14,124 32%	140,435 41%
Total	-	44,111 100%	344,422 100%

Note: The 2000 U.S. Census uses income ranges that do not correspond exactly to the income categories. The numbers in the table were derived through interpolating the Census data.

Source: Census 2000.

Table 8 presents average household income data for Concord and other Contra Costa County jurisdictions for year 2000 and 2006 for comparison. The data shows that Concord has a lower household income than most of its peer cities except Richmond. This trend is consistent for both years with less than 1 percent change in average household income for all jurisdictions.

Table 8. Average Household Incomes, Concord and Selected Contra Costa County Jurisdictions

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>Annual Growth Rate</i>
Concord	\$81,100	\$83,100	0.4%
Martinez	88,200	89,900	0.3%
Pleasant Hill	92,400	91,900	-0.1%
Richmond	67,900	68,200	0.1%
Walnut Creek	98,400	96,800	-0.3%
Contra Costa County	\$100,500	\$99,400	-0.2%

The county's mean household income is projected from 2005 based on ABAG's 'Projections 2007' to get 2006 values, assuming constant growth rate between 2005 and 2010.

Source: ABAG 'Projections 2007', 2008.

HOUSING STOCK

Housing types, age, vacancy rates, conditions and other factors affecting housing stock determine if the current supply of housing is in good condition or in adequate supply for residents. This section will examine various housing stock characteristics that affect the living environment of Concord residents.

Housing Types

According to the California Department of Finance, detached single-family homes make up the majority of residential units in Concord, comprising about 60 percent of the total housing stock in 2006 (Table 9). Multifamily apartments with more than five units are the next most common type, comprising about 25 percent of the housing stock. The composition of the housing stock essentially did not change from 2000 to 2006. While the housing mix changed little, the total housing units increased from 45,084 in 2000 to 46,289 in 2006.⁵ During the seven years from January 1, 1999 to December 31, 2006, the City has already approved or built 2,501 units, according to city records.⁶

In the Non-Resident Worker Survey, respondents confirmed their preference for single-family detached housing. Of those individuals who said they would consider moving to Concord, the vast majority (88 percent) preferred a single-family home under 3,000 square feet, over other housing types.

⁵ Additional information on the exact number of entitled units will be added to the Housing Element at a later date provided by City Staff.

⁶ Source: City of Concord, General Plan Progress Report, March 25, 2008. The State Department of Finance records show only 1,205 units built between 2000 and 2006, with the balance presumably units with entitlements that have not yet been constructed. City staff will provide additional data on these distinctions for the next phase of the Housing Element Update.

Table 9. Units by Housing Type

Housing Type	2000		2006		Percentage Change
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	
Single-Family Detached	26,952	59.8%	27,683	59.8%	2.7%
Duplex	2,851	6.3	2,911	6.3	2.1
Multifamily 2-4 units	2,871	6.4	2,929	6.3	2.0
Multifamily 5+ units	11,033	24.5	11,389	24.6	3.2
Mobile Homes	1,377	3.1	1,377	3.0	0.0
Total	45,084	100.0%	46,289	100.0%	2.7%

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Source: California Department of Finance housing estimates for 2000 and 2006.

Housing Growth

Construction of new units by type was roughly proportional over the ten-year period from 1997 to 2006. A review of housing number by year (Table 10) indicates relatively steady construction of new single-family units, at an average rate of around 0.4 percent annually. The construction of multifamily housing units was more sporadic. The stronger growth of single-family units over multifamily units before 2000 was probably due to the higher profitability of single-family development. However, with the single-family market gradually becoming saturated in recent years, and the increasing popularity of high-rise living and transit-oriented development in Bay Area cities, developers have again begun developing multifamily housing.

Table 10. Annual Growth In Housing Units by Type, 1997 to 2006

Year	Single Family	% Change	Multifamily	% Change	Total ¹	% Change
1997	29,349	-	14,041	-	43,390	-
1998	29,513	0.6%	14,005	-0.3%	43,518	0.3%
1999	29,678	0.6	13,952	-0.4	43,630	0.3
2000	29,784	0.4	13,915	-0.3	43,699	0.2
2001	29,933	0.5	13,910	0.0	43,843	0.3
2002	30,056	0.4	14,088	1.3	44,144	0.7
2003	30,116	0.2	14,088	0.0	44,204	0.1
2004	30,308	0.6	14,200	0.8	44,508	0.7
2005	30,486	0.6	14,280	0.6	44,766	0.6
2006	30,594	0.4%	14,318	0.3%	44,912	0.3%

¹ Only single-family and multifamily units are counted. 'Total' does not include mobile homes.

² Year 2000 to 2006 data are taken from the Department of Finance's E-5-2008 table while 1997 to 1999 data are taken from the Department's E-8-2000 table. It should be noted that the data are collected years apart of each other and are merely estimates of housing units. (The decennial censuses are also estimates). As with all types of estimate data, measurement and non-measurement errors can be expected. Hence, the negative growth of multifamily housing units reported between 1998 and 2000 may simply be part of this error in estimation. For full methodology and caveats of the data please refer to http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-5_2001-06/ and <http://www.dof.ca.gov/HTML/DEMOGRAP/ReportsPapers/Estimates/E8/E-8.php>

Source: California Department of Finance, 2008.

Housing Age and Condition

Housing age is an important indicator of the condition of Concord's housing stock. Homes and structures weather with use and deteriorate with time. If they are not properly maintained, housing can deteriorate quickly and become eyesores or potential sources of danger. This directly affects property prices and the quality of life of city residents. A city with an older housing stock will have to budget more for preservation assistance, home repair costs, and energy requirements. Thus, improving and maintaining housing quality is an important goal for the City.

Concord's housing stock is aging. As shown in the estimated breakdown of housing units by age and occupancy status in Table 11, in the year 2006, more than half of the existing homes in Concord were more than 37 years old, and 25 percent were more than 47 years old. City staff regularly conducts windshield surveys of the city to assess the age and condition of Concord's housing stock. Housing in the Monument Corridor area is an area of particular concern. Rehabilitation efforts in the last few years included staff visits through the City's Neighborhood Code Enforcement and Multifamily Housing Inspection Program (MFHIP) and loans through the Multifamily Rehabilitation Loan Program.⁷ According to the City's Building & Neighborhood Services annual reports, Monument Corridor Partnership Housing Task Force Projects have included quarterly tenant rental education and certification

⁷ The Multifamily Rehabilitation Loan Program is now administered through the County.

workshops called “How to be a Good Tenant” to highlight the importance of maintenance.⁸ City staff also attended the annual Monument Pride Festival from 2005 to 2007 to reach out to residents and stakeholders.⁹

Table 11. Tenure by Year Structure Built of All Occupied Housing Units, 2006

Age	Renter Occupied	Owner Occupied	Total	% of Units in Age Category
47+ Years	2,723	8,052	10,775	25.0%
37–46 Years	4,300	6,992	11,292	26.3%
27–36 Years	4,663	6,640	11,303	26.3%
17–26 Years	3,726	2,782	6,508	15.1%
7–16 Years	312	887	1,199	2.8%
Less than 6 Years	812	1,126	1,938	4.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006.

In 2004, a new self-certification option was introduced to the MFHIP. The purpose of this program is to provide an incentive and reward property owners who take it upon themselves to do a self-inspection of their property prior to the City performing a 20 percent random unit inspection. As a result of this program, many property owners have become more accountable and have taken proactive measures to monitor and maintain their old buildings. The program requires property owners to inspect their buildings on an annual basis and to certify by filling out an affidavit that the property meets or exceeds the standards identified on the City’s self-certification inspection list.

Many of the city’s older homes built before 1978 are at risk of containing lead-based paint. Lead can cause brain and nervous system damage in young children who can ingest deteriorated interior or exterior lead-based paint either intentionally or inadvertently through normal play activities. The City places a priority on eliminating lead hazards in its single-family housing and runs a lead abatement program with funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). From fiscal years 2002 to 2007, \$177,200 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and \$38,900 in RDA set-aside funds were granted to test and remediate lead hazards in housing that was undergoing rehabilitation funded by the City. More recently, Concord was awarded a \$1.4 million Lead Hazard Control grant from the HUD for the Monument Corridor, which it intends to use for testing and rehabilitating housing in the current Housing Element planning period.

Additionally, the City provides a variety of rehabilitation loan programs, including single-family repair loans, mobile home repair loans, multifamily housing repair loans, exterior enhancement rebates, weatherization and home security grants for seniors. According to the City’s financial loans and grants reports, the average size of these grants is between \$1,500 and

⁸ Source: City of Concord Building & Neighborhood Services Department 2004-2006 Year End Reports, Part II – Special Housing Projects/Studies. (The reports are not paginated).

⁹ Further information on the Monument Pride Festival and other Monument Corridor-related issues can be found at <http://www.monumentcommunity.org/>

\$2,000. Through its various rehabilitation loan programs, the City helped improve 30 single-family homes, 124 multifamily housing units at Lakeside Apartments, and six mobile homes in 2006. Besides providing assistance through City departments, City staff also regularly work with nonprofit and private corporations to extend rehabilitation opportunities to residents.

Housing Tenure and Vacancy

Table 12 describes the tenure and type of housing units in Concord according to the 2000 Census and 2006 ACS. In 2000, the overall tenure pattern in the city was 61 percent owner-occupied and 37 percent renter-occupied. By 2006, according to ACS estimates, the number of owner-occupied housing units in the city had dropped slightly by 4 percent, while the renter-occupied housing units increased by 0.4 percent. The overall owner- to renter-occupied ratio remained fairly constant at a six to four ratio.

The amount of vacant units in Concord is also shown in the table. The amount of vacant units in 2000 was recorded at 2.4 percent. By 2006, however, the amount of vacant units had risen to 7.6 percent. This indicates a trend of increasing vacancy in the city. According to real estate experts, a five percent vacancy is considered necessary to assure adequate choice and temper the rise in housing costs.

The housing crisis from 2007-2008 is expected to further weaken the demand for Bay Area housing and increase the amount of vacant units available in the city.

Table 12. Housing Tenure and Vacancy

Housing Tenure	2000		2006		Percentage Change
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	
Occupied Units					
Owner Occupied	27,542	61.1%	26,479	61.6%	-3.9%
Renter Occupied	16,478	36.6%	16,536	38.4%	0.4%
Vacant Units					
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	118	0.3%	-	-	-
Vacant (other reasons)	945	2.1%	3,553	7.6%	276.0%
Total¹	45,083	100.0%	46,568	100.0%	3.3%

¹ 2006 unit totals differ from Table 9 and the 2030 General Plan because the estimate here is from a different source (Census Bureau's American Community Survey).

Source: Census 2000. American Community Survey, 2006.

HOUSING COST AND AFFORDABILITY

The Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as housing for which the owner or tenant pays less than 30 percent of the household income. The cost of housing vis-à-vis income directly impacts the degree of affordability. If housing costs are high relative to income, there will be a correspondingly higher prevalence of borrowing in the case

of home owners, and overpayment in the case of renters. Overcrowding also increases as people turn to sharing homes and apartments to reduce housing costs. This section summarizes the cost and affordability of Concord’s housing stock.

Sales Prices and Rents

As in the rest of the Bay Area, home prices and rents increased substantially in Concord from the late 1990s to early 2000s until the 2007-2008 mortgage crisis. Average sales prices from recent years are summarized in Table 13 and comparative median price data from Concord and surrounding communities is in Table 14. Median gross rent by unit type is in Table 15.

According to data from The Real Estate Report, the average price for a single-family home in Concord in 2007 was about \$562,000. In 2000, the average sale price was \$344,200 (in 2007 dollars); thus, there was a 70 percent increase in the average price. The average price for a townhome or condominium in 2007 was \$302,000; nearly double the average price seven years ago (\$171,400). While these prices are considerably lower than peaks in 2005-2006, they are still very high. Persons in the extremely low-income category (those earning 30 percent or less of the county median income) and very low-income category (those earning between 30 to 50 percent of the county median income) cannot afford homes in Concord due to the high home prices. As such, rental housing is typically the only housing option available to persons in these income groups.

Table 13. Average Home Sale Prices, City of Concord, 2000 to 2007

Year	Single-Family Home			Townhome/ Condominium		
	Average Sale Price	% Change	Units Sold	Average Sale Price	% Change	Units Sold
2000	\$344,200	-	1,383	\$171,400	-	619
2001	396,500	15.2%	1,244	208,400	21.6%	563
2002	441,700	11.4	1,286	233,573	12.1	618
2003	470,800	6.6	1,309	255,520	9.4	613
2004	544,600	15.7	1,183	280,700	9.9	613
2005	662,700	21.7	1,092	353,100	25.8	538
2006	621,900	-6.2	967	353,600	0.1	428
2007	562,000	-9.6	634	302,000	-14.6	253

Note: Figures are in constant 2007 dollars.

Source: The Real Estate Report, 2007. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008. Dyett & Bhatia, 2008.

Table 14 compares median sale prices in Concord with those in peer cities from 1999-2001 and from 2006-2007. The data indicates that while Concord’s housing costs are lower than most of the peer cities surveyed and below those in the county as a whole, it has the steepest price fluctuations. From 1999 to 2001 when housing prices were rising, Concord’s housing costs rose faster than the county average and all cities surveyed, jumping 40 percent in a span of two years. More recently from 2006 to 2007, when housing prices were declining all across the Bay Area, Concord’s housing costs dropped faster than the county average and all cities surveyed by 24 percent. However, Concord’s housing prices are still out of reach of most

lower income residents and are more volatile than those in other cities and in the county as a whole (due to the more drastic change in prices as seen from August 1999 to May 2001 and November 2006 to November 2007, as shown in the table).

Table 14. Median Sales Prices in Concord and Surrounding Communities

City	Median Sales Price Aug-99	Median Sales Price May-01	% Change from Aug-99 to May-01	Median Sales Price Nov-06	Median Sales Price Nov-07	% Change Nov-06 to Nov-07
Concord	\$242,600	\$340,600	40.4%	\$534,700	\$407,500	-23.8%
Martinez	274,400	368,700	34.4	568,100	512,500	-9.8
Pleasant Hill	320,400	427,200	33.3	642,700	550,000	-14.4
Richmond	199,100	269,200	35.2	462,700	413,500	-10.6
Walnut Creek	398,200	533,800	34.1	663,200	609,500	-8.1
Contra Costa County	\$277,800	\$349,400	25.8%	\$588,200	\$521,000	-11.4%

Note: Figures are in constant 2007 dollars.

Source: California Association of Realtors. 2007. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008. Dyett & Bhatia, 2007.

According to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey in 2006, the median gross monthly rent for housing in Concord was \$1,150. In comparison, the 2000 Census reported a median gross monthly rent of \$1,030 (in constant 2006 dollars), signifying a general rent increase of 120 dollars or 11.6 percent between 2000 and 2006. This is a slight increase considering that in the same period, the median gross rent in Richmond increased by 22 percent. Notably, this data is not differentiated by type of housing or number of bedrooms. Table 15 compares rents in Concord to those in nearby cities.

While ACS data is not available for Martinez, Pleasant Hill, and Walnut Creek because these cities are too small to be included in the ACS, it is possible to compare Concord to the county as a whole. In 2000, the median gross rent in Concord was about 2 percent lower than in the county. Six years later, the margin remained about the same. Thus rents in Concord have increased at about the same pace as those in the county while remaining slightly more affordable than those in the county.

Table 15. Median Gross Monthly Rent for Concord and Surrounding Communities

City	2000		2006		Percentage Change
	Rent (\$)	Ratio over County	Rent (\$)	Ratio over County	
Concord	1,030	98.1%	1,150	97.8%	11.6%
Martinez	1,020	97.1	-	-	-
Pleasant Hill	1,150	109.5	-	-	-
Richmond	890	84.8	1,093	92.9	22.8
Walnut Creek	1,200	114.3	-	-	-
Contra Costa County	1,050	100.0%	1,176	100.0%	12.0%

Note: Figures are in constant 2006 dollars. Median Gross Rents are not available in 2006 for Martinez, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek in the American Community Survey of that year.

Source: Census 2000, American Community Survey, 2006. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008.

While rental statistics are not tracked in the same way as housing sales, it is possible to get a sense of current rents by looking through rental listings. Table 16 shows rental prices as posted on Apartmenthunterz in March 2008. These figures represent asking rents, not actual rents, and not all available rental units are listed. Still, many residents use online listings to find rental housing.

Table 16. Median Monthly Rent by Number of Bedrooms, 2008

Number of Bedrooms	Median Monthly Rent
Studio	\$850
One	\$930
Two	\$1,180
Three	\$1,760
Four	\$2,200
Five	\$2,500

Source: Survey on apartmenthunterz.com; search results from 17 March 2008 of all 305 Concord apartments and townhouses for rent.

Affordability

It is generally expected that people can afford to pay about 30 percent of their income on housing. Table 17 lists income limits for households in Contra Costa County, as determined by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Board for 2007. The Board conducts annual household income surveys nationwide, including Contra Costa County, to establish the maximum affordable housing payments for households of different sizes and their eligibility for federal housing assistance. In evaluating affordability, the maximum affordable rent refers to the maximum amount that households could afford at 30 percent of their respective income category. The data provided in Table 18 are rough calculations, meant as indicators only. Because household income and size vary, the price which is considered “affordable” for each household also varies. For example, a large family with one wage-earner can afford a

different type of housing than a double-income household with no children. The income limits with of some popular occupations as examples are shown in a graphic table on page 21

Table 17. Income Limits for Contra Costa County, 2007

Income Category	Number of Persons per Household							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Extremely Low	\$17,600	\$20,100	\$22,650	\$25,150	\$27,150	\$29,150	\$31,200	\$33,200
Very Low	29,350	33,500	37,700	41,900	45,250	48,600	51,950	55,300
Low	46,350	53,000	59,600	66,250	71,550	76,850	82,150	87,450
Median	58,700	67,000	75,400	83,800	90,500	97,200	103,900	110,600
Moderate	70,400	80,500	90,500	100,600	108,600	116,700	124,700	132,800

Source: "Memorandum: Official State Income Limits for 2007," California Department of Housing and Community Development, April 18, 2007.

Table 18. Affordable Rents for Contra Costa County, 2007

Income Category	Number of Persons per Household							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Extremely Low	\$440	\$503	\$566	\$629	\$679	\$729	\$780	\$830
Very Low	734	838	943	1,048	1,131	1,215	1,299	1,383
Low	1,159	1,325	1,490	1,656	1,789	1,921	2,054	2,186
Median	1,468	1,675	1,885	2,095	2,263	2,430	2,598	2,765
Moderate	1,760	2,013	2,263	2,515	2,715	2,918	3,118	3,320

Note: Assumes 30 percent of before-tax monthly income used for housing.

Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development, 2007. Dyett & Bhatia, 2008.

Extremely Low-Income Households: Extremely low-income households earn 30 percent or less of the county median family income. Given the relatively high housing costs found in Contra Costa County, extremely low-income households are very unlikely to afford any homes at market rate. Affordable housing for this group is limited to rental housing or housing offered by the City, Contra Costa County Consortium¹⁰, or nonprofit housing developers.

¹⁰ The Contra Costa County Consortium is the primary planning agency charged with providing affordable housing and supporting the homeless in Concord. It is formed by a partnership of four cities Concord, Antioch, Pittsburg, and Walnut Creek.

Very Low-Income Households: Very low-income households earn 30-50 percent of the county median family income. Given the relatively high housing costs found in Contra Costa County, very low-income households are unlikely to afford any homes at market rate. This is because the average cost for a condominium or townhome is \$302,000. The most popular housing option for this group is rental units. However, as shown in **Table 18** smaller households (1-3 persons) may not be able to afford to rent since the average monthly rent for a one bedroom unit is \$1,030 based on rental rates shown in **Table 15**. Thus, this group will need considerable housing assistance from the City, Contra Costa County Consortium, or nonprofit housing developers.













Low-Income Households: Low-income households earn 50-80 percent of the county median family income. The maximum affordable rent for the low-income category ranges from \$1,159 for one person to \$2,186 for an eight-person household. Unlike the previous two groups, low-income households are not limited to rental housing. Nonetheless, many may rent homes while they save up for downpayment for a home or may do so out of choice. Regardless of whether they own or rent, they will likely overpay if their housing is unsubsidized.

Moderate-Income Households: Moderate-income households earn between 80-120 percent of the county median family income. Unlike the other lower income groups, moderate-income households are likely able to afford condominiums, townhomes, as well as most single-family homes in the city. Nonetheless, many may rent homes while they save up for downpayment for a home or may do so out of choice.

Sixty percent of residents surveyed in the Concord Housing Resident Survey described affordable housing programs and services as important or very important issues. This proportion was even higher among younger residents, lower-income households, renters, and households containing a person with a disability.

Contra Costa County 'Income Limits' with household income examples

Family Size	Extremely Low Income (30% of median and below)	Very Low Income (50% of median and below)	Low Income (up to 80% of median)	Median Income	Moderate Income (up to 120% of median)	Above Moderate Income (above 120% of median)
1	\$17,600	\$29,350	\$46,350	\$58,700	\$70,400	over \$70,400
2	20,100	33,500	53,000	67,000	80,500	over \$80,500
3	22,650	37,700	59,600	75,400	90,500	over \$90,500
4	25,150	41,900	66,250	83,800	100,600	over \$100,600
5	27,150	45,250	71,550	90,500	108,600	over \$108,600

 <p>Industrial Truck Driver Single Dad, Two Children</p>	 <p>Retail Clerk Full-time, Single, No Children</p>	 <p>Medical Assistant Married, Stay-at-home Spouse One Child</p>	 <p>Admin Assistant Fulltime, Single</p>	 <p>Registered Nurse Single Mom, Two Children</p>	 <p>Firefighter Married, Stay-at-Home Spouse</p>
 <p>Childcare Worker Single Mom, Two Children</p>	 <p>911 Emergency Dispatcher Single Mom, One Child</p>	 <p>Landscape Supervisor Married, Stay-at-Home Spouse</p>	 <p>Elementary School Teacher Single Dad, Two Children</p>	 <p>Police Officer Married, Stay-at-Home spouse, Two Children</p>	 <p>Health Care Professional Married, Working Spouse, Two Children</p>

Note: Salary examples for sample occupations are annual means for Contra Costa County, taken to the nearest 'Income Limit' Category for 2007.
Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development, 2008. California Employment Development Department, 2008

Overpayment

In general, households that pay over 30 percent of their income on housing are considered “overpaying” and may experience difficulty in paying for other basic necessities. To truly evaluate housing affordability, individual circumstances and factors must be taken into account. These include long-term debt, mortgage interest rates, the number of children in a household, and other large, ongoing expenses (such as medical bills). Also, some households choose to pay over 30 percent of their income for various reasons, such as location, aesthetics, or other features. However, it is assumed that households will aim to minimize their housing costs whenever they can. Since it is impossible to take each household’s individual circumstances into account, the 30 percent rule-of-thumb provides a general measure of housing affordability for the average household.

Table 19 compares the percentage of Concord’s renter and owner households overpaying for 1999, the latest year such detailed information are available.¹¹ In general, the higher a household’s income, the smaller the percentage spent on housing. Also, extremely low- and very low-income households who own their home have lower rates of overpayment, while moderate and above-moderate income households who own tend to have higher rates of overpayment for housing. Overall, about 13,926 households in Concord are considered to be overpaying for housing.

Table 19. Overpayment for Housing by Income Category, 1999

Income Group	<i>Renters</i>			<i>Owners</i>		
	<i>Total Renters</i>	<i>Pay >30%</i>	<i>Percent who Overpay</i>	<i>Total Owners</i>	<i>Pay >30%</i>	<i>Percent who Overpay</i>
Extremely low	3,018	2,678	89%	1,352	1,099	81%
Very low	3,213	2,556	80%	1,735	898	52%
Low	3,824	1,513	40%	3,523	1,834	52%
Moderate	3,237	281	9%	5,882	2,152	37%
Above Moderate	2,491	17	1%	10,884	898	8%
Total (computed)	15,784	7,045	45%	23,376	6,881	29%
Not computed	647			124		
Total*	16,431			23,500		

Note: The 2000 U.S. Census uses income ranges that do not correspond exactly to the income categories. The numbers in the table were derived through interpolating the Census data.

* These numbers total 39,931. The universes for these figures are "specified renter- and owner-occupied units." This is different than the universe for Table 7 "Households by Income Group, 1999" which has "households" as its universe. This difference accounts for why these figures are similar but not the same.

Source: Census 2000.

¹¹ The 1999 Census data were selected for presentation here because although the American Community Survey of 2006 provides more recent data, the margin of error is too great for this category to be used to portray accurately the distinctions between owners and renters.

“AT RISK” HOUSING

“Assisted housing units” are defined as units with rents subsidized by federal, State or local governmental programs. California Government Code Section 65583 requires that housing elements include an inventory of all assisted rental housing units within the local jurisdiction that are at-risk of losing subsidies, mortgage prepayment, or being converted to other uses if the expiration date of their financing program is between 2008 and 2017 (i.e. 10 years from the beginning of the housing element planning period—2007). In all, there are a total of 406 units at-risk of conversion in Concord.

Conversion Risk

State law requires housing elements provide an inventory of all assisted housing units if the expiry date of their financing program is within the next ten years of the housing element planning period. These housing units are deemed to be “at risk” of being converted to market rate units. Additionally, HCD recommends jurisdictions assess the overall potential conversion risk of all assisted housing units. However, there is no “official” or prescribed methodology to conduct the analysis. Jurisdictions, therefore, are free to decide how to conduct the analysis by choosing a method most appropriate to their jurisdictions.

For this Housing Element update, the risk to each assisted housing project is determined based on the following factors: The total number of displaced households (if converted), conversion intent of the owner, economic condition of the local market, ownership of the property (profit or non-profit based), and date of earliest expiration of assistance for each assisted housing project. Each factor is assessed individually and given a score from 0.1 to 0.3. Those assisted housing projects with a combine score of 0.5 and up are described as being at “higher risk” of conversion, while those with a score of 0.4 and below are deemed to be at “lower risk” of conversion. It should be noted that the risk assessment is more qualitative than quantitative, as some of these factors, such as owner intent and market conditions, are difficult to judge and may change without warning. The assessed risk for assisted housing projects under federal and local assistance is shown on the right-most column of the tables below.

Federally-Assisted “At Risk” Units

The California Housing Partnership Corporation (CHPC) is a private, nonprofit organization created by the California Legislature in 1987 to assist nonprofit and government housing agencies to create, acquire, and preserve housing affordable to lower income households. According to CHPC, seven federally assisted rental housing projects are currently at-risk of conversion in Concord. These projects provide a total of 362 affordable units in the city and are shown in **Table 20**.

Table 20. Federally-assisted Housing Developments At Risk of Conversion

Project Name	Address	No. of Units	Type of Subsidy	Program Type	Current Owner	Earliest Expiration	At Risk ¹
Clayton Villa ²	4450 Melody Dr, Concord CA 94521	79	Section 8	Elderly	Profit Motivated	12/31/2008	Higher Risk
Hidden Creek Townhomes ²	1032 Mohr Ln, Concord CA 94518	57	Section 8	Multifamily	Profit Motivated	4/30/2008	Higher Risk
Concord Residential Club	2141 California St, Concord CA 94520	19	Section 8, 202	Elderly	Non-Profit	2/3/2012	Lower Risk
La Vista Apartments ²	3838 Clayton Rd, Concord CA 94521	75	Section 8	Multifamily	Profit Motivated	3/14/2008	Higher Risk
Phoenix Apartments ²	3720 Clayton Rd, Concord CA 94521	11	Section 8, 202	Elderly	Non-Profit	12/13/2007	Lower Risk
The Heritage ²	2222 Pacheco Blvd, Concord, CA 94520	121	Section 8, 236(j)(1)	Elderly	Non-Profit	7/31/2008	Lower Risk

¹Conversion risk (higher or lower risk) are determined based on the cumulative impact of individual factors that will affect risk including the total number of displaced households (if converted), conversion intent of the owner, economic condition of the local market, ownership of the property (profit or non-profit based), and date of earliest expiration of assistance for each assisted housing project. This assessment serves as a guide only, and may not reflect individual projects.

² Dyett & Bhatia will update the status of the housing projects in the final Housing Element using information from a separate consultant study the City has authorized.

Source: California Housing Partnership Corporation, 2008. Dyett & Bhatia, 2008.

230 units in the developments listed in Table 20 are dedicated to the elderly (people age 62 and over). All affordable housing projects for the elderly can be accessed by a wheel chair. Other developments are designed for low- and very low-income families (La Vista and Hidden Creek Townhomes). All housing projects surveyed are fully occupied and have a waiting list.

All federally assisted housing projects shown above are subsidized through the HUD Section 8 program. Property owners who accept Section 8 can opt to terminate the Section 8 contract (opt-out), or renew the contract for another year. The primary incentive for Section 8 property owners to opt-out is the higher rent that would be paid for these units at market value. In order for the property owner to opt-out of the Section 8 contract, the owner must satisfy certain procedural requirements. A Notice of Intent (NOI) must be filed with HUD one year before the termination date that indicates the owner's intent to convert the units to market rate. Upon filing of an NOI, HUD may offer several incentives to property owners to remain in their contracts, including re-financing the property mortgage and establishing higher rents.

When contacted for this report, all federally assisted housing projects indicated that they intend to continue with the affordable housing program and re-apply for federal assistance.

Property owners and management companies have little incentive to opt-out or convert to market value housing units because they receive compensation and subsidies very near the market value for those units, and all units are fully occupied. Only one (Phoenix Apartments) has an expired contract. Given that Concord Residential Club and The Heritage are all designed for the elderly or the disabled and managed or owned by non-profit organizations, their risk to conversion during the next 10 years seems minimal.

Locally Assisted “At Risk” Units

According to City data, the regulatory contracts of nine affordable housing projects receiving City or Redevelopment Agency (RDA) funds will expire in the next ten years (see Table 21). These projects provide a total of 33 units, comprising about four percent of all City/RDA funded housing units. All nine housing projects cater to low- or very-low income families. When contacted, most owners or their management companies replied that they have no plans to convert their properties presently. Should they decide to convert any units, owners of these apartments will notify the City in advance, as required by State law. If contacted, the City will make arrangements to inform and assist renters to find alternative housing. The risks of these properties converting within the next few years are low considering the current depressed housing market.

Table 21. Locally-assisted Developments At Risk of Conversion

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>No. of Units</i>	<i>Type of Subsidy</i>	<i>Program Type</i>	<i>Current Owner</i>	<i>Earliest Expiration</i>	<i>At Risk¹</i>
1681 Haller Court ³	1681 Haller Court, Concord CA 94520	1	City RDA	Multifamily	Private Owner	7/2008	Lower Risk
1691 Haller Court ³	1691 Haller Court, Concord CA 94520	1	City RDA	Multifamily	Private Owner	8/2008	Lower Risk
1750 Diane Court	1750 Diane Court, Concord CA 94520	8	City RDA	Multifamily	Private Owner	5/2012	Lower Risk
1760 Diane Court	1760 Diane Court, Concord CA 94520	11	City RDA	Multifamily	Private Owner	5/2012	Lower Risk
1854 Robin Lane	1854 Robin Lane, Concord CA 94520	2	City RDA	Multifamily/Rehab	Private Owner	6/2010	Lower Risk
1880 Robin Lane	1880 Robin Lane, Concord CA 94520	2	City RDA	Multifamily/Rehab	Private Owner	Unknown ²	Lower Risk
1890 Robin Lane	1890 Robin Lane, Concord CA 94520	2	City RDA	Multifamily/Rehab	Private Owner	9/2010	Lower Risk
Las Trampas ³	397 Mohr Lane, Concord CA 94520	4	City RDA	Multifamily	Non-Profit	6/2007	Lower Risk
Meadow Lane Apartments	1149 Meadow Lane, Concord CA 94520	2	City RDA	Multifamily	Private Owner	3/2009	Lower Risk

¹Conversion risk (higher or lower risk) are determined based on the cumulative impact of individual factors that will affect risk including the total number of displaced households (if converted), conversion intent of the owner, economic condition of the local market, ownership of the property (profit or non-profit based), and date of earliest expiration of assistance for each assisted housing project. This assessment serves as a guide only, and may not reflect individual projects.

²The City could not locate an amended Regulatory Agreement or Assumption of Loan Agreement with the current owner. The Loan Agreement with the previous owner is dated 4/13/00.

³Dyett & Bhatia will update the status of the housing projects in the final Housing Element using information from a separate consultant study the City has authorized.

Source: City of Concord, 2008. Dyett & Bhatia, 2008.

Cost of Replacement vs. Preservation

The surest solution to ensure no units convert to market rate within the planning period is to acquire and preserve all at-risk units or construct new housing to replace those units. Either of these methods will ensure affordable controls and price restrictions are extended to at-risk households under current federal, State, and local programs. In Concord, the cost of preserving assisted units is estimated to be less than that required to replace the units through new construction. Land prices, land availability and construction costs are generally the limiting factors to development of new affordable housing.

Table 22 analyzes the relative costs for replacing versus preserving a typical at-risk housing unit. The costs of replacing these units – based on a market survey of the costs of land and construction – would be approximately \$290,000 for a two-bedroom unit in 2008, including

financing and permit fees.¹² This assumes zero profit (a developer typically adds 8 to 14 percent per development project), sales and marketing fees, or permit fees, since the City would be developing these projects itself and will not need to profit from them. To replace all 395 federally and city-assisted multifamily units at-risk within the current planning period would cost approximately \$114.6 million (395 x \$290,000) for the City. If on the other hand, the City decides to acquire all 395 units at market rate and rehabilitate them, the cost would be \$105.5 million (395 x \$267,000). This would equal an average savings of approximately \$9.1 million or \$23,000 per unit.¹³

Table 22. Comparison of Replacement versus Preservation Cost of One Multifamily Unit

<i>Fee/Cost Type</i>	<i>Cost per unit (\$)</i>
Preservation	
Acquisition ¹	\$157,000
Rehabilitation ²	75,000
Financing/Other ²	35,000
Total Estimated Cost	\$267,000
Replacement	
Land Acquisition ³	\$126,000
Construction ⁴	126,000
Financing/Other ⁴	38,000
Total Estimated Cost	\$290,000

¹ Cost of acquisition is an average of the price of all current multifamily housing properties on sale from a survey of Loopnet and Ziprealty on 11 March.

² Cost of rehabilitation is assumed to be 50 percent of the cost of acquisition. Financing and other costs are assumed to be 15 percent of acquisition plus rehabilitation costs. Both based on estimates given by Keller Williams Realty and typical pro-forma of rehabilitation in Contra Costa County by Seifel Consulting.

³ Cost of land acquisition is based on an estimate of land price at 29 dollars per square feet, for one unit in a ten unit apartment on a one acre lot. Cost of land per square foot is an average of all land properties on sale on Ziprealty's and Loopnet's MLS listings on 11 March.

⁴ Cost of construction is based on unit of 720 square feet with estimated construction cost of \$175 per square feet. Financing and other costs are assumed to be 15 percent of land and construction costs.

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2008

As can be seen from the estimates, the cost of replacement far outweighs the costs associated with acquiring and rehabilitating all at-risk units. A more important factor to consider is that not all units identified as being at-risk are in need of rehabilitation, but may simply require acquisition in order to be preserved as affordable units. This will reduce the amount of money required for preservation. Nonetheless, the cost of acquisition alone is significant enough to discourage plans to acquire all units. The most economical option is to continue the status-quo by providing subsidies to households and helping property owners keep assisted housing affordable for lower income households, while at the same time, acquire and rehabilitate units

¹² Assuming two bedroom unit at 720 square feet in size.

¹³ Assuming all are two bedroom units. In reality, there will be greater savings because about half of the current affordable stock are single room units.

when necessary. From 1999 to 2006, the City rehabilitated a total of 77.25 units and carried out rehabilitation projects in Camara Circle, Jordan Court II, Lakeside Apartments, Maplewood & Golden Glen Apartments, Standard Housing, 1890 Farm Bureau Road, 2021 Sierra Road Apartments, and Victoria Apartments.

Qualified Entities

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) keeps a current list of all of the qualified entities across the state. A “qualified entity” is a nonprofit or for-profit organization or individual that agrees to maintain the long-term affordability of housing projects. The qualified entities that HCD lists for Contra Costa County are listed in Table 23.

Table 23. Qualified Entities for Contra Costa County

<i>Qualified Entity</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Contact</i>
ACLIC, Inc	Stockton	(209) 466-6811
Affordable Housing Associates	Berkeley	(510) 649-8500
Alameda County Allied Housing Program	Hayward	(510) 881-7310
BRIDGE Housing Corporation	San Francisco	(415) 989-1111
C. Sandidge and Associates	Hercules	(510) 724-7845
Christian Church Homes of Northern California, Inc.	Oakland	(510) 632-6714
Community Housing Developers, Inc.	San Jose	(408) 279-7676
Community Housing Development Corp.	Richmond	(510) 412-9290
Community Housing Opportunities Corporation	Davis	(530) 757-4444
Contra Costa Community Development Department	Martinez	(925) 335-7200
East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation	Oakland	(510) 287-5353
Eden Housing, Inc.	Hayward	(510) 582-1460
Eskaton Properties Inc.	Carmichael	(916) 334-0810
Foundation for Affordable Housing, Inc.	San Jose	(408) 923-8260
Kendra Care Incorporated	Sacramento	(916) 395-3418
Matinah Salaam	Concord	(925) 671-0725
Northern California Land Trust, Inc.	Berkeley	(510) 548-7878
O.P.E.N. Inc	Oakland	(510) 430-8103
Oakland Community Housing, Inc.	Oakland	(510) 763-7676
Pacific Community Services, Inc.	Pittsburg	(925) 439-1056
Phoenix Programs Inc.	Concord	(925) 825-4700
Resources for Community Development	Berkeley	(510) 841-4410

Table 23. Qualified Entities for Contra Costa County

<i>Qualified Entity</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Richmond Neighborhood Housing Service Inc.	Richmond	(510) 237-6459
Rubicon Programs, Inc.	Richmond	(510) 235-1516
Rural California Housing Corp	West Sacramento	(916) 414-4400
Satellite Housing Inc.	Berkeley	(510) 647-0700
Senior Housing Foundation	Clayton	(925) 673-0489
Vallejo Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc	Vallejo	(707) 552-4663
Walnut Creek	Walnut Creek	(925) 943-5899 x236

Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development, 2008.

Although none of the owners of at-risk housing units have expressed to City staff any intention to convert their properties to market rate housing or prepay their contracts, a number of them are at high risk of conversion because they are owned or run for-profit or their terms are slated to expire within the next ten years. If conversion becomes reality, the City will contact potential qualified entities to assess their interest in acquiring and managing at-risk properties to replace any converted units.

HOUSING NEEDS

REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION, 2007-2014

Every city and county in the State of California has a legal obligation to respond to its ‘fair share’ of the projected future housing need in the region in which it is located. For Concord and other Bay Area jurisdictions, the regional housing need is determined by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), based upon an overall regional housing need number established by the State. In accordance with State law, ABAG has determined the fair share of the regional housing need that must be planned for by each jurisdiction during the 2007 to 2014 planning period. That need is divided into four income categories of housing affordability (in accordance with State law). ABAG’s allocations are based on an analysis of:

- The projected growth in the number of households;
- The need for housing generated by existing local employment and projected job growth;
- Household growth and employment growth near existing transit; and
- The local and regional distribution of income.

Concord’s ‘Fair Share’ of the Regional Housing Need

Table 24 summarizes the housing need determinations for all of the jurisdictions in Contra Costa County. Concord’s ‘fair share’ of the regional housing need has been determined to be:

- 639 units affordable to very-low-income households;

- 426 units affordable to low-income households;
- 498 units affordable to moderate-income households; and
- 1,480 units affordable to above-moderate-income households.¹⁴

Table 24. Regional Housing Needs Determinations for Contra Costa County, 2007-2014

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Very Low Income</i>	<i>Low Income</i>	<i>Moderate Income</i>	<i>Above Moderate Income</i>	<i>Total</i>
Antioch	516	339	381	1,046	2,282
Brentwood	717	435	480	1,073	2,705
Clayton	49	35	33	34	151
Concord	639	426	498	1,480	3,043
Danville	196	130	146	111	583
El Cerrito	93	59	80	199	431
Hercules	143	74	73	163	453
Lafayette	113	77	80	91	361
Martinez	261	166	179	454	1,060
Moraga	73	47	52	62	234
Oakley	219	120	88	348	775
Orinda	70	48	55	45	218
Pinole	83	49	48	143	323
Pittsburg	322	223	296	931	1,772
Pleasant Hill	160	105	106	257	628
Richmond	391	339	540	1,556	2,826
San Pablo	22	38	60	178	298
San Ramon	1,174	715	740	834	3,463
Walnut Creek	456	302	374	826	1,958
Unincorporated	815	598	687	1,408	3,508
Contra Costa County	6,512	4,325	4,996	11,239	27,072

Source: Association of Bay Area Governments, Proposed Final Allocation, March 2008

These numbers represent approximately 10-13 percent of the total countywide need in each category. For the last Housing Element, Concord was responsible for only 6 to 7 percent of the total countywide need in each category. In other words, Concord is required to provide more of the housing need in the current 2007-2014 planning period.

¹⁴ As of mid-May, ABAG staff has finalized the proposed housing needs allocation and is expecting final adoption of the RHNA numbers by the ABAG Board.

SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS

In addition to the general housing needs of the population, cities and counties must plan for the special housing needs of certain groups. For the Housing Element, Government Code (65583(a)(6)) requires that several populations with special housing needs be addressed: people who are homeless; people with disabilities; female-headed households; large households; seniors; overcrowded households; farmworker households; and first-time homebuyers.¹⁵ The Housing Resident Survey results underscored the importance of serving these groups; for example, respondents rated housing assistance for seniors and disabled residents as the most important out of a list of 13 housing programs. To meet the needs of these groups, Concord must be creative and look to new ways of increasing the supply, diversity, and affordability of this specialized housing stock.

Homeless Families and Individuals

Homeless individuals and families have perhaps the most immediate housing needs of any group. They also have one of the most difficult sets of housing needs to meet, due to both the diversity and complexity of the factors that lead to homelessness, and to community opposition to the siting of housing that serves homeless clients.

According to Contra Costa County's 2004 plan "Ending Homelessness in Ten Years.", the most common reasons for homelessness in the County are: the inability to find a job because of lack of education or skills, high housing costs in comparison to incomes, and family disputes. For some, homelessness may also be the result of chronic health problems, physical disabilities, or substance abuse. While the reasons that lead to homelessness are diverse, there are generally three categories of homelessness:

- **Chronically Homeless:** This category is estimated to consist of about 40 percent of the Contra Costa County homeless population that is homeless on any given night, and more than 10 percent of those who experience homelessness over the course of a year. Most are either severely disabled with a mental health condition, physical illness, or substance abuse problem. Though a small percentage of the overall yearly homeless population, the chronically homeless use the majority of resources within the homeless service system and are costly to tax payers. Unfortunately, this high service does not translate into long-term gains in stability because most in the group are either unable to leave their homeless situation or content to stay in their current state.
- **Discharged into Homelessness:** This category consists of people who are released from public institutions such as jails, mental health programs, drug and alcohol programs, and hospitals directly to the streets or shelters. Too often these systems do not engage in pre-release permanent housing planning to facilitate the transition back into society. Individuals who have serious disabilities without receiving the appropriate assistance often become part of the chronic homeless population.

¹⁵ Government Code (65583(a)(6)) does not require cities to plan for first-time homebuyers. It is added here because the City has a history of planning for and assisting this group.

- **Transitionally Homeless:** Almost 90 percent of those who experience homelessness each year belong to the Transitionally Homeless group. These are first or second time homeless persons who lack permanent housing for less than a year. Typically a job loss, injury, or eviction causes these families and individuals to become homeless. Most are able to find new homes with minimal assistance from the County or non-profit organizations.

The population of homeless individuals or families is difficult to quantify because a large portion of them are transitory in nature. The City of Concord’s 2007 ‘Homelessness in the Concord Naval Weapons Station Study Area’ report estimates approximately 2,542 people in Concord experience homelessness at any point during the year, and over 3,100 very low-income households are at high risk of becoming homeless. A citywide point-in-time homeless count on January 30, 2007 from the same report, found 874 homeless persons. Of those individuals, 276 were found living outdoors and the rest in shelters, transitional housing, soup kitchens, or other programs serving the homeless.

Table 25. Population of Homeless Persons in Concord

	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Homeless Individuals	83	291	276	650
Persons in Homeless Families with Children	10	214	0	224
Total	93	505	276	874

Source: ‘Homelessness in the Concord Naval Weapons Station Study Area’ Report, Katherine Gale Consulting, 2007.

The Contra Costa County Consortium is the primary planning agency charged with providing affordable housing and supporting the homeless in Concord. Formed by a partnership of four cities (Concord, Antioch, Pittsburg, and Walnut Creek) and the County, the Consortium receives funds each year from the federal government for housing and community development activities. According to the Contra Costa Consortium 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan, in total, an estimated 15,000 people experience homelessness in Contra Costa County at any point during the year. Of the people living in shelters, one-third were members of homeless families, 5,200 were single adults, and 162 were youth under the age of 21. In addition, many others are at risk of becoming homeless, especially low- and very low-income families paying more than 30 percent of their income for rent (see preceding section on Overpayment). Based on the current best estimate of the homeless population, the County as a whole has an unmet need for emergency shelters for the homeless. The Contra Costa Consortium plans to address this need through increasing the inventory of homeless services as well as through homeless prevention policies. Although there is no exact information on the distribution of the homeless within the Consortium area, there are some cities or subareas in which a larger population of homeless live. One of these areas is the Pacheco area near Concord.

Besides the Contra Costa County Consortium, homeless service is provided by a number of public, private, and non-profit agencies in Contra Costa County. These include the Contra Costa County Public Health Division, Shelter Inc., and the San Ramon Valley Ecumenical Homeless Ministry (SRVEHM). The Contra Costa County Public Health Division offers a

variety of homeless programs such as the Shelter Plus Care (S+C) Program; Project HOPE; Project Coming Home; Health, Housing and Integrated Services Network (HHISN); and other programs. They are made available to all Contra Costa residents, including those in Concord.

Shelter, Inc. is a non-profit organization whose stated goals are to assist troubled families and prevent homelessness in Contra Costa County. It provides an array of homeless prevention services to individuals and families, including rental assistance, rental subsidies linked with case management, financial assistance with rent and mortgage arrears, assistance with move-in costs, landlord/tenant counseling, and short-term housing linked to support services and assistance in locating permanent housing. In 2007, Shelter Inc. had a budget of over \$5.5 million and helped more than 3,000 individuals who applied for assistance.

The North Concord Homeless Shelter (NCHS) is the sole emergency shelter in Concord. It is located on Arnold Industrial Way and provides emergency shelter services for people in need of help. The NCHS is a mixed male and female facility with 75 beds and provides meals and lodging to homeless individuals. The facility is currently at maximum capacity, but expects to expand with grant funding by the end of 2008. This will add 21 more beds to the NCHS. The project also includes moving the ANKA Homeless Daytime Drop-In Center from the Monument Corridor to the North Concord location.¹⁶ In addition, Loaves and Fishes, a non-profit organization that provides services to feed the hungry in Contra Costa County, will also move their Concord dining room to that location.

A survey conducted in early 2008 for the Housing Element Update suggested that city residents do not place a high priority on creating additional emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families. The need for emergency shelters based on annual and seasonal need may be reduced by supportive housing units or identification of zoning districts that allow emergency shelters. In the event that the City proposes or entertains a proposal for an additional emergency shelter or transitional housing project, such facilities are expected to be permitted by right in specified zones in the updated zoning ordinance. Conditions required for approval will be typical of other housing types, including design compatibility with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, site screening, and required site development standards. Suitable sites for emergency or transitional housing would likely be close to arterial roads with public transit services to offer convenient access to shopping, employment, and service centers.

While the current Housing Element supports the creation of emergency shelters and programs conducted by homeless service providers, it recognizes that the best strategy to deal with homelessness is to prevent it from happening in the first place. This involves keeping housing costs low, increasing the supply of affordable housing, growing the local economy, and creating job opportunities for residents.

¹⁶ Phone conversation with Teri House, Community Service Manager, City of Concord, March 21, 2008.

People with Disabilities

Housing needs for people with disabilities vary greatly depending on the type of disability, personal preference, and lifestyle. However, commonly, people with disabilities often require special housing that provides additional accessibility and barrier-free design, health care options, and proximity to services. Some residents may also suffer from disabilities that require living in a group home or other supportive environment.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines three types of disability: work disability, physical disability, and self-care limitation. A work disability is defined as a condition lasting over six months that prevents an individual from working full-time due to that disability. A physical disability is defined as a physical condition lasting over six months that prevents an individual from going outside the home alone. A self-care limitation is defined as a physical or mental condition lasting over six months that prevents an individual from taking care of one’s personal needs.¹⁷

The 2000 Census found that approximately 18.7 percent (15,130 persons) of the city’s working age (between 16 and 64 years old) population had a work disability. An additional 6 percent of the population age 16 and up had a physical disability or self-care limitation. In 2006, the percentage of the working population with a work disability had dropped to 10.7 percent (8,990 persons). However, the percent of those age 16 and up with a physical disability or self-care limitation had risen to 14.7 percent. This latter trend is consistent with that of an aging population.

Table 26. Population with Disability

<i>Disability Type</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2006</i>
Work Disability ¹	5360	15,130	8,990
Percent of Total Working Population	7.1%	18.7%	10.7%
Physical Disability and Self-care Limitation ²	4,110	5,570	14,385
Percent of Adult Population	4.8%	5.9%	14.7%

¹ Measured only for working population between 16 and 64 years old

² In the 1990 Census, this category was called Mobility and Self Care. Measured for all adult population above 16 years old

Source: Census 1990, Census 2000, American Community Survey, 2006.

As Concord’s population continues to age, there will be a greater need for disabled and senior housing. Housing options for this population should include accessible housing units with ramps and other accessibility devices, group home facilities with varying degrees of medical or nursing care, and special care homes in close proximity to public services and commercial

¹⁷ Census Bureau’s definition of “disability” has changed over the years, between 1990, 2000 and 2006. The term “mobility limitation” for example, was dropped in 2000. But it is used once more in the 2006 ACS. For this working paper, the term “physical disability” (used in 2000 Census) is selected. It includes “mobility limitation” or “mobility disability” used in the 1990 and 2006 surveys. For further details, please refer to http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/disab_defn.html#00census

centers. Additionally, non-seniors with disabilities will require special accommodations tailored to their specific needs. While some can count on their parents or other family members to care for them, there are also those who require public assistance, particularly those with long term impairments, for medical and financial help. Because many disabled people are unable to work as a result of their disability, the availability of housing affordable to Very Low, Low and Moderate income households is also an important factor.

In 2002, State law was amended to require localities to include in their Housing Element an analysis of potential and actual constraints upon the development, maintenance, and improvement of housing for persons with disabilities; as well as to demonstrate local efforts to remove government constraints that hinder the locality from meeting the need for housing for persons with disabilities. The Housing Element Update will need to have policies and programs that remove constraints or provide reasonable accommodations for housing designed for persons with disabilities.

According to the latest Contra Costa County Consortium Consolidated Plan, Concord had 80 licensed care facilities in 2004; these included 61 elderly care residential homes, four adult care centers and nine group homes. Local housing policies promote barrier-free design in all new housing development, as well as accessibility in the street network and public buildings. As part of this effort, the City's Accessibility Assistance Program now offers grants up to \$1,500 to low-income elderly and disabled homeowners to make their homes more accessible. Accessibility improvements funded through the program include providing grab bars and railings in baths and hallways and building ramps for easier access. In addition, some homeowners who applied for the City's Single-Family Repair Loan Program or the Multifamily Rehabilitation Loan Program also used portions of their funding for accessibility improvements.¹⁸

The City's Public Works Department and Parks and Facilities Maintenance Division updated its ADA Transition Plan in 2005 to ensure new buildings are designed to meet stringent accessibility standards.¹⁹ Additionally, transportation services for seniors to the Senior Center's Nutrition Program are made available through the County Connection's LINK services.

The City also supports a number of private or nonprofit projects designed to assist people with disabilities. They include:

- Concord Residential Club, a 20-unit apartment complex for very-low and low-income people with developmental disabilities;
- Respite Inn, a facility that offers care to developmentally disabled teenagers and adults; and
- Las Trampas, a single-family home that provides supportive living for up to four individuals with developmental disabilities.

¹⁸ The Multifamily Rehabilitation Loan Program utilizes City of Concord funds, but the program is now administered by the County.

¹⁹ Building, Engineering and Neighborhood Services Memorandum, August 6, 2007.

Information on housing resources for people with disabilities is readily available from the City’s Housing Division. The City also provides information through its website and at community centers.

Female-Headed Households

A female-headed household is defined by the U.S. Census as a household that is headed by a female with at least one dependent, which could include a child, an elderly parent, or a non-related child. As shown in Table 27, the Census in 2000 found 5,305 female-headed households of all family households in the city (not including single person households or households with unrelated individuals). Of these, 735 or 14 percent were living below poverty level. By 2006, the number of female-headed households dropped to 5,092 of all family-households.

The decrease in the number of female-headed households is not surprising, considering the number of family-households also decreased from 30,637 to 27,945 over this same time period. Set against this backdrop, the percentage of female-headed households actually increased from 17 to 18 percent of all family households.

Table 27. Female-Headed Households and Poverty Status

	2000			2006		
	Number	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty	Number	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty
Female-Headed Households	5,305	735	13.9%	5,092	556	10.9%
Other Families	25,332	866	3.4%	22,853	1,353	5.9%
Total Families	30,637	1,601	5.2%	27,945	1,909	6.8%

Note: Does not include non-family households.
 Source: Census 2000, American Community Survey, 2006.

A large share of female-headed households with children is economically disadvantaged. Table 28 shows that nearly 30 percent of all households below the poverty level with children were headed by a female (primarily single mothers) in 2006. There were approximately three times more impoverished female-headed households than male-headed households. Although the percentage of all Concord households below the poverty level was fairly low, the fact that so many of them are headed by a single parent is significant. Due to lower incomes, households headed by a single female or male often have more difficulties finding adequate, affordable housing than families with two adults. Also, single-headed households with small children may need to pay for childcare, which further reduces disposable income. This special needs group will greatly benefit from expanded affordable housing opportunities. They will also need access to childcare services and youth services. Innovative shared living arrangements that might include congregate cooking and childcare facilities would also be suitable.

Table 28. Households below Poverty Level with Children under 18 Years, 2006

<i>Family Type</i>	<i>Households</i>	<i>Percent of Households</i>
Married couple family. With children under 18 years	1,188	62.2%
Male householder, no wife present: With children under 18 years	165	8.6
Female householder, no husband present: With children under 18 years	556	29.1
All households with children under 18 years (Total)	1,909	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006.

Concord responds to the needs of its female-headed households through its Fair Housing Program, administered through Housing Rights, Inc. One of the goals of the program is to eliminate discrimination against female-headed households, as well as provide on-going support for childcare programs for lower income families. The City implements a fee on new construction and tenant improvements to help fund the development of childcare. According to City staff, from 2003 to 2007, \$249,000 was invested to create 858 child care slots in Concord by supporting the creation of family-home childcare homes.²⁰

Large Households

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a large family as one having five or more members. Large families typically face greater difficulties in renting or purchasing housing as housing units with five or more rooms are more difficult to find, and when available, are rarely affordable.

According to the ACS, 12 percent of the total number of households in Concord contained five or more people in 2006. Of these large households, approximately 57 percent were owner-occupied and 43 percent were renter-occupied (see Table 29), indicating that large households are more likely to be owners. Applying the proportion of large households to ABAG’s year 2015 housing unit projection, Concord is expected to have a total of approximately 5,800 large households in the year 2015.

²⁰ “City Progress Report: Evaluating Accomplishments Since 2002”, staff report developed for this Housing Element Update.

Table 29. Large Households by Tenure in Concord, 2006

	<i>Households <4 Persons</i>	<i>Households ≥5 Persons</i>	<i>Percent of Large Households</i>	<i>Total Households</i>
Households	37,770	5,240	100.0%	43,010
Owner	23,480	3,000	57.3%	26,480
Renter	14,290	2,240	42.7%	16,530
Percent of Total	87.8%	12.2%	-	100.0%

Note: Items may not sum to total due to rounding

Source: American Community Survey, 2006.

While it is certainly a positive indication that more large households own rather than rent, there are still a substantial number of large households who rent and may live in multifamily housing. To maintain affordability, multifamily housing is generally developed with one or two bedrooms only. Finding rental housing with more than four bedrooms is a typical problem for large families. In Concord, fewer than 14 percent of rental units had five or more bedrooms in 2006, and only 8 percent had 6 or more bedrooms. This situation may explain why rental units experience greater rates of overcrowding than owner-occupied units.

The City’s Fair Housing Program, contracted through Housing Rights, Inc. provides comprehensive counseling and referral services for large families that need assistance in finding housing. The topics they cover include rent increase issues, harassment and discrimination, and other tenant/landlord services.

Seniors

Senior households have special needs because seniors are more prone to sickness, require medical attention, or have mobility issues.²¹ They are also likely to have less disposable income. This is especially so for seniors who do not live with their children – a common practice for white families as opposed to Hispanic and Asian families which tend to be multigenerational.

As shown on **Table 30**, seniors constituted 12 percent of Concord’s population in 2006. This represented a slightly older population than in 1990, when 9 percent of Concord’s population was 65 and older. To separate seniors who live alone (who often require more assistance) from those who live with their children (who often need less assistance), it is fruitful to look at the Census category “Households with a Senior Householder.” Although this category may also include adult children who live with a senior householder, it is the closest approximation available from the Census to estimate the population of seniors who live alone. **Table 30**

²¹ The Census Bureau generally defines seniors as people age 65 and older, and their survey data are usually grouped in five year increments. HCD’s Housing and Policy Development’s Housing Element samples follow the Census Bureau in grouping seniors in the 65 and older age group. The State’s Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) General Plan Guidelines (2003), however, defines them as 62 years and older. The Civil Code also defines “senior citizen” as “a person 62 years or older, or 55 years or older in a senior citizen housing development”. For this Housing Element update, the Census and HCD definition are used. However, for land use and development purposes, senior citizen housing developments can use 55 years of age and granny flats (second units) can use 62.

compares senior householders by tenure. The data suggests that although seniors often have limited income, a substantial portion have home equity. In 2006, nearly 78 percent (6,060) of those who lived in a senior householder household own their homes, compared to just 58 percent of households headed by a non-senior householder.

Table 30. Households with a Senior Householder by Tenure, 2006

	Householder 15-64 yrs	Householder >65 yrs	Percent of Senior Householders	Total Households
Households	35,240	7,780	100.0%	43,020
Owner	20,420	6,060	77.9%	26,480
Renter	14,820	1,720	22.1%	16,540
Percent of Total	81.9%	18.1%	N/A	100.0%

Note: Items may not sum to total due to rounding

Source: American Community Survey, 2006.

Table 31 shows senior households by income category in 2000. Overall, there were about 3,030 households with one or more seniors in them in the very low-income category (below 50 percent of area median income), and 1,440 households with one or more seniors in the low-income category. Together, they make up about 56 percent of all senior households in the city. Because seniors typically need more medical care, very low- and low-income households with seniors may face greater financial difficulties than other households. While the City does not specifically assist lower income seniors with housing, it does help them through its many affordable housing programs aimed at very low- and low- income households.

Table 31. Senior Households by Tenure and Income, 2000

	Below 50% AMI	51% to 80% AMI	Above 81% AMI	Total Households
Senior Households	3,030	1,440	3,560	8,030
Owner	1,850	1,170	3,350	6,370
Renter	1,180	270	210	1,660
Percent of Total	37.7%	17.9%	44.3%	100.0%

AMI: Area Median Income.

Source: CHAS Data, Housing Problems, Housing and Urban Development Board, 2000.

The number one issue facing seniors is lack of availability of barrier-free housing. The City encourages barrier-free design in all developments and requires new multifamily housing developments to include accessible units in accordance with State law.²² All multifamily units on the lowest floor in buildings without elevators are required to be accessible to persons with disabilities. In multifamily units in buildings with elevators, all units are required to be

²² Certain exceptions apply to multistory units, or smaller buildings such as single or duplex units. This requirement is codified in California Building Standards Code (Title 24), which is used by Concord.

located on an accessible route. The City also supports the development of senior housing near shopping and other services. Since 2002, the City has approved two senior housing developments that are located on transit routes, near shopping areas or in Downtown. They include Oakmont Senior Living and Vintage Brook Senior Apartments.

Because the proportion of people having physical disabilities or self-care limitations in Concord has increased over the last six years (see discussion in Table 26), it is imperative that Concord continue to promote barrier-free housing with close access to transit, community, and shopping facilities.

Overcrowding

Overcrowded housing is defined by the U.S. Census as units with more than one inhabitant per room, excluding kitchen and bathrooms. Overcrowding usually occurs as a result of high housing costs, such that families double-up or reside in smaller units to devote income to other basic necessities such as food and medical fees. Table 32 compares the incidence of overcrowding in Concord and Contra Costa County from years 1990 to 2006. According to the 2000 Census, over 9.3 percent of housing units were considered overcrowded in Concord. Most cases of overcrowding were found in rental-occupied units, where lower-income families commonly reside. The overcrowding situation improved in 2006, dropping by half to 4.9 percent. However, the ACS 2006 data still showed Concord with a more severe overcrowding situation than the county as a whole. This suggests that the City must continue with policies that promote housing development for lower-income households to alleviate the issue of overcrowding.

Table 32. Overcrowded Housing Units

Year	1990	2000	2006
Concord			
Occupied Units	41,940	43,949	43,015
Overcrowded Units	2,192	4,080	2,116
% Overcrowded	5.2%	9.3%	4.9%
Contra Costa County			
Occupied Units	300,288	344,129	359,371
Overcrowded Units	15,441	25,477	11,745
% Overcrowded	5.1%	7.4%	3.3%

Note: Data for 2006 from the Census Bureaus' American Community Survey. ACS may have a larger margin of error than the ten year census because it has a smaller sample.

Source: Census 1990, Census 2000, American Community Survey, 2006.

Farmworkers

Farmworkers are traditionally defined as persons whose primary incomes are earned through permanent or seasonal agricultural labor. Permanent farmworkers work in fields, processing plants, or support activities and generally live in the vicinity. Temporary workers are hired during harvest periods and travel from one location to another. Thus, cities with strong farming traditions can expect a sudden influx of temporary workers during certain periods of

the year. If housing is not provided by their employers, temporary workers will have to find housing in the city. This places a temporary strain on the housing supply, particularly multifamily rental units.

The provision of adequate housing for farmworkers is a rising concern because farmworkers tend to have difficulty securing safe, decent and affordable housing. Additionally, farmworker households tend to have high rates of poverty, often high rates of overcrowding, and live disproportionately in housing which is in poor condition. In 1999, the State legislature amended housing element law to mandate jurisdictions address housing for agricultural workers.

Agriculture has been a declining industry in Concord. In 2000, ABAG estimates there were only 220 workers in the “Agriculture and Natural Resources” industry – a mere 0.3 percent of total employment in the city. This category includes workers in the mining industry and those working in nursery and greenhouses. Hence the actual number of farmworkers may be even lower. ABAG estimates that by 2030, the number of workers in this category will drop further to 180, or just 0.2 percent of the total employed population.

Table 33 shows available farm-related data in Concord. According to the 2002 Census of Agriculture, there were 17 farms in the city. Eight of those farms had only one operator (no employees). Although data at the city level are not as complete as the county level, it can be inferred from the census that there are very few farms in Concord. Almost all (15 out of 17) of them had an output of less than \$50,000. This suggests that they are likely to be family businesses (as opposed to large commercial farms) with the majority of the farmworker population consisting of resident-households requiring permanent, affordable housing rather than temporary workers requiring seasonal housing.

Table 33. Farm Data in Concord

<i>Farms</i>	<i>Number¹</i>
Farms with one operator	8
Farms with multiple operators	6
Value of products sold under \$50,000	15
Total Farm Operations	17
<i>Type of Land</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Grazing Land	10,299
Farmland of Local Importance	466
Unique Farmland	28
Total Farmland Acreage	10,793

¹ Queried through zip codes 94518, 94519, 94520, 94521. Totals do not add up to 17 because some data are withheld for smaller farms. Farm counts for these are included in the "State Total" category.

Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture Statistic Service, 2002. Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2007.

Under the 2030 General Plan, there are few opportunities for large-scale agricultural development. The City allows orchards and tree farms, and field crops in the rural districts. Farm housing is also permitted in some of these districts.

First-Time Homebuyers

There are many young families and individuals who work in Concord or who have grown up here who would like to invest in the community as a first-time homebuyer. However, local wages and salaries in comparison to local housing prices make it difficult for these families and individuals to buy homes. For most first-time homebuyers, the only alternative is to seek housing in less expensive locations at the urban fringe.

To assist first-time homebuyers purchase their first home, the City participates in first-time homebuyer assistance programs offered in Contra Costa County, including the Mortgage Credit Certificate program administered by Contra Costa County's Community Development Department and the lease-purchase program administered by East Bay-Delta Housing & Finance Agency. The City also has a First-Time Homebuyer (FTHB) program to assist qualified low- and moderate- income individuals with the purchase of their first home. FTHB loan funds are intended to assist with down payment and/ or closing costs by providing a maximum loan amount of up to 20 percent of the home sale price. During fiscal year 2006-07, Housing Division staff received 720 requests for information and brochures regarding the program. A total of 192 clients were deemed income-eligible for assistance, and a total of 20 clients became first-time homebuyers under the program. Of these 20 clients, 14 purchased below market rate units at La Terazza Condominiums and six received \$25,000 down payment loan assistance to purchase their first homes.

In addition to financial assistance, the City also conducts annual First-Time Homebuyer Workshops – a HUD certified basic homebuyer education program. In fiscal year 2006-07, a total of 106 people attended the workshops, with 93 clients taught in English and 13 in Spanish.

Recently, the City helped establish the Mt. Diablo Housing Opportunity Center, a one-stop shop for housing information. The center provides pre-purchase counseling and homeownership education and other services useful to first-time homebuyers.

HOUSING CONSTRAINTS

This section discusses potential governmental, market, and environmental constraints related to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing in Concord.

GOVERNMENT CONSTRAINTS ON HOUSING PRODUCTION

It is in the public interest for the government to regulate land use and building standards to protect the general welfare of the community. On the other hand, stringent regulations, processing fees and lengthy procedures can potentially deter private enterprise from developing housing. The City of Concord regulates the use of land within the City limits through the General Plan, Redevelopment Area Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Ordinance, and building codes and standards.

Land Use Regulations

The land use categories in the 2030 General Plan provide for residential growth at various density levels and will not constrain housing development. Under the Zoning Ordinance that will implement the 2030 General Plan, multifamily apartments are proposed to be allowed by-right subject to limitations in the Medium Density Residential (RM) and High Density Residential (RH) zoning districts. In addition to these residential base districts, multifamily apartments are proposed to be allowed with discretionary review, subject to specified limitations, in the Downtown Pedestrian (DP) and Downtown Mixed Use (DMX) districts, and allowed, subject to Zoning Administrator review, in the Commercial Mixed Use (CMX) district.

A variety of other housing types, such as group housing and service-enriched housing will also be allowed, subject to a use-permit, in some of the districts described above. The Zoning Ordinance being prepared for the City also includes density bonuses and other incentives, consistent with Government Code 65915 and General Plan policies, to provide incentives for affordable housing, housing for senior and disabled persons, as well as childcare facilities.

Planned Development

The purpose of the Planned Development (PD) District in the draft Zoning Ordinance is to allow development that does not meet predefined development standards, in exchange for a mixture of land uses, densities, and/or types of design that produce a vibrant, multi-functional environment. Developers can seek approval for development plans that respond to General Plan goals, objectives and policies, and offer superior design over what can be achieved through base zoning standards. Proposed changes to parkland dedication standards, infill subdivision standards, parking standards, density bonus units, and other requirements will reduce developer costs and help to encourage this type of development.

Parking Standards

The proposed parking requirements for residential districts vary by housing type, the number of units, and parking needs. Table 34 outlines the specific parking requirements for different housing types in the draft Zoning Ordinance prepared for the City. Single-family units are required to have two spaces per dwelling if there are three or fewer bedrooms. The number of spaces required increases proportionately when the number of bedrooms increases.

The number of parking spaces for multifamily apartment units and condominiums ranges from one space per studio unit to two spaces for units with two bedrooms, and increases by 0.5 spaces for every additional bedroom. To accommodate guests, an additional one space is required for every three units. Residential lots that contain second units are required to have 1 space for each bedroom in that unit, in required parking for the primary residence. State law requires cities to allow parking for secondary units to be provided in tandem *or* within setback areas.

While the City recognizes that these parking provisions add to the costs of housing development, it also recognizes that parking is a critical amenity of residential development.

Table 34. Parking Requirements

<i>Residential Use</i>	<i>Required Parking Spaces</i>
Single-Family	
3 or fewer bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling.
4 to 5 bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling.
6 bedrooms or more	4 spaces per dwelling.
Two-Family (Duplex)	
Studio	1.5 space per studio unit.
One-bedroom	1.5 space per one-bedroom unit.
Two or more bedrooms	2 spaces per 2 bedroom unit. Additional bedrooms above 2: 0.5 space per bedroom.
Multifamily Unit¹	
Studio	1 space per studio unit.
One-bedroom	1.5 spaces per one-bedroom unit.
Two or more bedrooms	2 spaces per 2 bedroom unit. Additional bedrooms above 2: 0.5 space per bedroom.
Mobile Home	2 off-street spaces per dwelling.
Second Unit	1 space for each bedroom.
Group Housing ²	1 space per bed, bedroom, or dwelling unit, whichever is greatest, plus 1 guess parking per 3 units.
Residential Care, Limited ³	None.
Family Day Care	
Small	None.
Large	1 space per non-resident employee. 1 passenger loading space.

¹ One additional guest parking space must be provided for every 3 units.

² Where a site is located on a bus route or within 1/2 mile of a BART station, reduced parking *may* be allowed, under the new Zoning Ordinance.

³ Residential Care, Limited is defined as a facility that require a State license or are State licensed and provide 24-hour primarily non-medical care and supervision for six or fewer persons in need of personal services, supervision, protection, or assistance for daily living.

Source: City of Concord, 2008.

The City remains open to potential alterations to these standards and responds to specific cases through the Planned Development process. The City may allow reduced parking standards as part of its concessions and incentives for affordable housing, including reduced parking spaces, space dimensions, driveway width, location and setback spaces. Furthermore, the City allows parking reductions for Group Housing close to the BART station to facilitate transit oriented developments, as well as parking reductions for housing projects designed for residents with special needs.

Second Unit Standards

Second units – mostly one-bedroom attached apartments or detached cottages – are allowed on single-family zoning districts and in single-family residential areas zoned PD (Planned District), subject to administrative approval. From 2002 to 2006, there were 21 new second units developed legally in the city.

To further encourage this type of development and to ensure standards comply with State law, Government Code Section 65852.2, the updated Zoning Ordinance is expected to permit second units in all R residential zones as of right, upon satisfaction of standards consistent with State law.

Licensed Care Facilities

Licensed residential or community care facilities with six or fewer beds are allowed by right, consistent with State law. According to the Contra Costa County Consortium, a total of 80 licensed community care facilities with over 930 beds were located in the city in 2004. Table 35 shows the breakdown of licensed care facilities and their capacity.

Table 35. Licensed Care Facilities in Concord, 2004

<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Capacity</i>
Single-Family Home	2	10
Group Home	9	68
Elderly Care Residential	61	606
Adult Day Care	4	194
Social Rehabilitation	1	16
Community Treatment	1	20
Transitional Housing	1	15
Foster Family Sub-agency	1	8
Total	80	937

Source: Contra Costa County Consortium, 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan.

Regional Policies and Programs

- **Contra Costa County Measure C – 1988**

This initiative, approved by voters in 1988, required the City to adopt a Growth Management Element as part of the General Plan, and required new development to meet performance standards for roadways, water, sewer, storm drainage, schools, parks, police and fire, libraries, and administrative facilities. This Measure does not present a constraint to housing development unless traffic level of service standards are violated.

- **Contra Costa County Measure C – 1990**

This initiative, approved by county voters in 1990 and unrelated to the 1988 Measure C, limits urban development to within an Urban Limit Line (ULL), which expires in 2010. The ULL limited urban development to no more than 35 percent of the land in the County and required that at least 65 percent be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses. While this land use control may limit the area in which housing can be developed, it also prevents sprawl and addresses the issue of job/housing balance. Therefore, this Measure does not present a constraint to housing development.

- **Contra Costa County Measure J – 2004**

This initiative, approved by county voters in 2004, provides for the continuation of the County’s half-cent transportation sales tax for 25 more years. In addition, Measure J includes revisions to the County’s existing Growth Management Program to encourage the provision of more housing in some communities. It includes a requirement that any new ULL must be established by mutual agreement by both the County and cities. It also includes a “Transportation for Livable Communities” component, to encourage more transit-oriented, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly communities, and more affordable housing. Since one of the intents of the Measure is to increase the availability of affordable housing, Measure J is not considered a constraint.

- **Contra Costa County Measure L – 2006**

This initiative, approved by county voters in 2006, extends the term of the County’s ULL to the year 2026 and requires voter approval to expand the line by more than 30 acres. In November 2007, the City of Concord adopted the County’s ULL by resolution of the City Council, with a provision that would allow the City to periodically review the ULL every five years to determine if there is a need to adopt a different ULL by a citywide voter ballot initiative. The adoption of the County’s ULL will have a positive fiscal impact on the City as it provides “Measure J” Return to Source monies of approximately \$1.5 million per year to Concord in 2009.²³ Measure L is not considered a constraint to housing since the City can review and change the

²³ City of Concord Urban Limit Line Staff Report, November 13, 2007.

ULL by voter initiative when a need arises in the future (for example, to include a portion of the CNWS tidal area once it becomes available to the City).

Building Codes and Enforcement Standards

The City has adopted the California Building Code, in addition to Fire, Mechanical, Plumbing, Electrical, and Uniform Codes as the basis for its building standards. The City has also adopted the Uniform Code for the Abatement of Dangerous Buildings. Permits are required for all electrical and plumbing work, and other major home improvements and modifications.

Concord has made several administrative changes to the standard California Codes, including setting the City's own fees and applicable penalties for violations. However, these codes represent basic standards and do not vary much from city to city. They do not place an undue burden on the construction or rehabilitation of housing. For older housing that was constructed under less stringent codes, the City has a rehabilitation loan program to assist developers who remodel or rehabilitate housing and bring it into compliance with the current codes. The City also has the Multifamily Housing Inspection and the Multifamily Housing Maintenance programs that provide regular, periodic inspections to apartment buildings with more than four units. The inspections are conducted on a tri-annual basis and inspections are designed to identify and abate existing and potential health and safety code violations, as well as overall maintenance of the properties. Once identified, the City works closely with building owners to address issues. In 2005, Neighborhood Services commenced tracking the number of violations that have been identified and corrected during the course of these inspections. Since that time, more than 8,000 building code violations have been identified and corrected.

In general, Concord's building codes and enforcement procedures do not appear to create an undue constraint on housing development.

Fees and Exactions

The City has established fees for building permits, planning, and engineering services for all residential developments. The most common fees charged to new residential developments are shown in the table below. Other City fees for specific types of developments (e.g. hillside) may also apply. A full listing of the City's fees is available online from the City's website or from the City's Permit Center.

Fees are collected by the City's Planning Division, Public Works Department, and Building Division through the Permit Center. The manner and amount of fees charged to new residential development depends on the number of units and size of the project. Of all the fees, the highest fee charged for a conventional single-family subdivision is the park in-lieu fee. However, this fee can be reduced or waived by providing on-site open space and recreational facilities. The City's current regulations require dedication of 697 square feet per unit for residential development in very low- and low-density zones, 479 square feet per unit for medium density zones, and 414 square feet per unit for high density zones, or the payment of in-lieu fees equal to those established by the City. According to the City's Municipal Code, Section 78-94, the park in-lieu fee would not apply to units awarded as

density bonuses as part of an affordable housing project, and all affordable housing projects are given a 50 percent credit for payment of in-lieu fees.

Table 36. Planning, Engineering, and Building Fees, 2007

<i>Permit Center Fees</i>	<i>Planning</i>	<i>Engineering</i>	<i>Building</i>
Plan Review Fee (Express Review)	\$158	\$158	BPV ¹
Major Project Review			
- Four units or less	\$158	\$158	BPV
- Five to 24 units	\$1,580	\$158	BPV
- All other	\$2,040	\$158	BPV
Building Permit	BPV	NA	NA
Design Review			
- Four units or less	\$790	\$316	NA
- Five to 24 units	\$1,580	\$316	NA
- All other	\$3,160	\$316	NA
Initial Environmental Impact Analysis	\$3,318	\$948	NA
Negative Declaration	\$1,580	\$158	NA
General Plan/Redevelopment Plan Amendment	\$5,688	\$790	NA
Tentative Maps			
- Minor Subdivision Application	\$4,740	\$1,580	NA
- Minor Subdivision plus per lot	\$316	\$158	NA
- Minor Subdivision Amendments	\$790	\$474	NA
- Major Subdivision Application	\$7,900	\$2,528	NA
- Major Subdivision plus per lot	\$316	\$158	NA
- Major Subdivision Amendments	\$2,212	\$948	NA
Lot Line Adjustment	\$948	\$790	NA
Use Permit Application			
- Four units or less	\$3,476	\$1,580	NA
- Five to 24 units	\$5,530	\$3,160	NA
- All other	\$6,320	\$3,160	NA
Zoning Administrator Permit			
- Four units or less	\$1,422	\$632	NA
- Five to 24 units	\$2,212	\$1,106	NA
- All other	\$3,634	\$1,580	NA
Variances			
- Four a single-family home	\$1,580	\$316	NA
- All other	\$3,160	\$316	NA
Rezoning			
- Preliminary Dev. Plan (PD District)	\$4,631	\$2,370	NA
- Significant Amendment	\$2,547	\$1,580	NA
- Minor Amendment	\$1,274	\$790	NA
Rezoning Application	\$5,789	NA	NA

Table 36. Planning, Engineering, and Building Fees, 2007

<i>Permit Center Fees</i>	<i>Planning</i>	<i>Engineering</i>	<i>Building</i>
Impact Fees			
Sewer Connection (single-family home)	NA	\$4,305	NA
Drainage Impact Fee	NA	DOL ²	NA
Park Dedication Fee			
- Rural residential and low density residential	NA	\$13,504	NA
- Medium density residential	NA	\$9,271	NA
- high density residential	NA	\$8,009	NA
- Senior housing, special needs housing and downtown	NA	\$5,924	NA
CC Water District Fee ³	-	\$19,050	-

¹ BPV - Based on Permit Valuation.

² DOL - Depends on location, ranging from \$360 to \$1,240.

³ Charged by the Water District and not the City of Concord.

Source: *Fee and Charges for Various Municipal Services, Concord, 2007. Contra Costa Water District, 2008.*

These fees provide the City with a necessary source of income to fund basic services and are reviewed each year by the Finance Department to ensure they are compatible with the cost of doing business. The City is sensitive to comparable costs in other jurisdictions and endeavors to ensure its fee structure do not become a barrier to housing development.

Processing and Permit Procedures

Costs associated with the time it takes to go through development review may become significant for developers because of overhead and financing as well as start-up costs. Generally, the time taken is directly proportional to the magnitude and complexity of the development proposal. Other factors that can affect the length of development review include a rezoning or General Plan amendment requirement, public meetings required for Planning Commission or City Council review, or a required Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Generally, all projects undergo a development review process through the Planning Division to ensure development compatibility throughout the city. Permits and approvals from the City’s Building Department are also required.

The City of Concord has taken significant steps to ensure that the development review process is streamlined and that any additional costs resulting from review times are minimized to negligible levels. Since 1995, the Building, Planning and Public Works Divisions have been reorganized to provide a “one-stop” building permit procedure. For other land use permits, lines of communication and review have been strengthened between Divisions to shorten permit review timelines. Minor subdivisions are normally processed in 3 to 5 weeks. Planning and design review for a multi-family development typically takes 2 to 4 months.

The Planning Division offers pre-application conferences with prospective applicants and explanatory materials have been prepared on the application and review process to further streamline permit processing. The City has also established a formal Pre-Application Review

process that provides applicants with early feedback regarding project feasibility. This review is intended for large or complex projects and projects that are potentially controversial.

The following analysis of planning permit procedures for new residential development includes properties designated in the General Plan as Low Density Residential and Medium Density Residential and other zones as noted below.

Zoning for Single-Family Housing Development

Single-Family Zoning Districts - A new single-family house located in a single-family zoning district that complies with setbacks, lot coverage, parking requirements, and compliance with other applicable municipal code requirements only requires review and approval of a building permit. A subdivision is subject to discretionary review under the City's Subdivision Regulations.

Hillside Development - The permit procedure for a new single-family house on a hillside property (average slope of 15 percent or greater) requires a Hillside Development Plan (HDP). Hillside Development requires the review of grading and building design by the Design Review Board.

Zoning for Multi-Family Housing Development

Multi-family Zoning Districts - The permit procedures for multi-family development in the low, medium, and high density residential districts cover apartment houses, cluster developments, townhouses, row houses, and other attached single-family ownership projects. These housing types are subject to discretionary review and approval of the Design Review Board, and then subject to review and approval of a building permit. Additionally, attached residential projects are subject to approval of either minor or major subdivision maps by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission, respectively.

Zoning for Mixed-Use Development

Mixed-Use Zoning Districts - Permit review procedures are currently being developed as part of the new Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning for Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing

Permit procedures for emergency shelter/transitional housing are currently being revised to comply with new State law.

Environmental Review

The City follows procedures set forth in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and requires developers provide an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for all large projects and those that have potential environmental impacts. Sites on hills that may be used for housing, for example, will be subject to environmental protection requirements, including the landslide prevention measures and protection of natural species. The additional review and protections needed may add time to the development process and require additional expense to mitigate environmental impacts.

Nonetheless, many projects are “categorically exempt” from CEQA because of their size or nature, or because there is no reasonable possibility that they will significantly effect the environment. Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines lists the types of projects that are normally exempt; they include replacement or rehabilitation of existing facilities, construction or conversion of small structures, and minor alterations to existing land. Additionally, certain residential projects providing affordable urban, agriculture, or urban infill housing that meets specified acreage and unit criteria are also exempt from CEQA by statutory law.²⁴ Since the requirements for an EIR, public hearings, and local review are not particular to Concord alone, they present little or no constraint to housing development in the city.

Infrastructure Availability

The provision of on-site improvements to streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, landscaping, drainage, water, and sewer infrastructure, are standard conditions of development approval. Infrastructure availability does not represent a significant constraint to development as policies and programs are in place to assure that infrastructure and services will adequately serve new and infill development. No major fees are charged for infrastructure, except a fee in the form of an “Off-Site Street Improvement Program” (at \$2,851 for a single-family home and \$2,300 for a multifamily unit). The City does not levy any additional fee for major drainage improvements or regional traffic mitigation. These savings are especially significant for small affordable housing projects which do not have off-site impacts.

The Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) is the regional agency with the responsibility of providing water services throughout the city. Developers are required to pay fees for service hook-ups and/or for their proportionate share of new water infrastructure. The present hook-up fee costs around \$19,000 including water line, new meter, and other service charges. Sewer services are provided by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) which maintains a treatment plant located northeast of I-680 in unincorporated Martinez. The CCCSD charges a one-time sewerage hook-up fee of \$5,000 and up per unit, depending on size, location, and height of ground. Both the water and sewerage connection fees may be a disincentive and constraint for the construction of new housing units.

CONSTRAINTS TO HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS GROUP

Single-family homes, which comprise 60 percent of the housing stock in Concord, are often too expensive for low-income persons and others with special needs. Therefore, it is necessary for the City to establish policies and processes that facilitate other housing types. This section addresses policy constraints and opportunities that affect special needs groups, including seniors, people with disabilities, the homeless, large families, female-headed households and low-income individuals and families.

²⁴ The CEQA exemption for certain types of affordable housing was introduced by SB 1925 (2002, Sher) to amend Section 21080.10 of, to add Sections 21061.0.5, 21064.3, 21065.3, 21071, and 21072 to the Public Resource Code.

As described in the zoning section earlier in this chapter, the City has adopted several stipulations options to encourage alternative housing types.

Constraints to Housing for Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, and Supportive Housing

In January 2008, Senate Bill 2 (SB 2) went into effect, requiring that every jurisdiction in the State identify one or more zoning districts that allow emergency shelters and transitional housing without discretionary review (such as a conditional use permit). The law requires that the identified zones contain sufficient capacity to provide shelter for homeless persons that have unmet housing needs. SB 2 further requires that transitional housing and supportive housing be treated as a multi-family use. The updated zoning ordinance will comply with SB 2 by identifying and allowing their use by right in specified zoning districts. SB 2 also indicates that cities may partner with each other to provide emergency shelter and transitional housing services; this requirement will be addressed in the program section of this Housing Element.

Constraints to Housing for Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) Units

SROs represent another affordable housing alternative. The updated zoning ordinance will categorize single-room occupancy (SRO) units under the 'Group Housing' use category, which includes transitional housing but also longer term accommodations such as rooming and boarding houses, private residential clubs, and residential hotels intended for long-term (30 day or more) occupancy. The updated zoning ordinance will identify zones where Group Housing is allowed. In general, the City views SROs as single-room apartments without full kitchen facilities (although often they have a microwave in each room and/or shared kitchen facilities). They are subsidized by federal, City and RDA funds, as well as non-profit groups and are counted as part of the city's affordable housing stock.

Constraints to Housing for Mobile Homes

City policies regulate the location of mobile homes. Mobile homes are considered single-family homes and therefore are permitted in all residential zones, as long as they comply with requirements within that zone, are placed on a permanent foundation, and are approved by a zoning administrator. Mobile Home Parks are permitted with a conditional use permit in Medium Density Residential Districts. The City believes that mobile homes are an important source of affordable housing and implements a number of policies to keep them viable. It has a Mobile Home Conversion Ordinance to discourage the conversion of existing mobile home parks to other uses and a mobile home repair loan program to help mobile home owners maintain their homes in good condition. Recently, the City approved amendments to the rent stabilization division of the Mobile Home Ordinance to allow park owners to pass on some of the park-related expenses to tenants. The intent of these changes are to promote reinvestment in capital improvements and park maintenance, discourage the flight of capital and the conversion of existing parks to other uses.

Constraints to Housing for Large Families and Female Headed Households

Large families and female-headed households may require more traditional housing types; the SROs, mobile homes and shelters described above are not well-suited for families. In 2006,

approximately 18 percent of households in Concord were female-headed households and 12 percent were large families (defined as five or more persons per household). These populations are described in more detail in the earlier section.

Multifamily housing is a more affordable housing option compared with single-family housing for large families and female-headed households. This form of housing is permitted in all Medium Density Residential and High Density Residential Districts as well as the North Todos Santos District, and Commercial Mixed Use District. Multi-family housing is also permitted in the Downtown Pedestrian District and Downtown Mixed Use District with a conditional use permit.

Although the zoning code does not restrict the number of bedrooms per unit, the market often does. To remain affordable, multifamily housing is often developed with one or two bedrooms only. This poses a problem for large families who may need five or more rooms. Nonetheless, overcrowding is a declining problem in Concord, as only 4.9 percent of all occupied units were judged overcrowded in 2006, compared with 9.3 percent in 2000.

Constraints to Housing for Persons with Disabilities

As noted in the Special Needs section earlier, persons with physical disabilities have a number of housing needs related to accessibility of dwelling units; access to transportation; employment, and commercial services; and alternative living arrangements that include on-site or nearby supportive living services.

The City ensures that new housing developments comply with California building standards (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) and federal (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements for accessibility. The City also permits educational, residential, health care, and other supportive services (defined as institutional services in the zoning code) of the type that could benefit persons with physical disabilities in residential zones. Most of the sites zoned for multifamily use, Commercial Mixed Use, Downtown Pedestrian and Downtown Mixed Use, which all permit mixed-use developments, are located along major streets and transportation corridors to facilitate access for persons with disabilities.

Seniors-only housing currently in Concord provides many of the features that meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The City's development standards permitting mixed-use developments will allow a wide variety of housing types that could meet the needs of, and provide accessibility to services and transportation to, seniors with disabilities.

In light of current planning policies and zoning regulations, the City believes that it has mitigated any potential constraints to the availability of housing for persons with physical disabilities.

Procedures for Ensuring Reasonable Accommodations

The City has established procedures to ensure that reasonable accommodations to provide an alternative means of granting relief from city codes are made for persons with disabilities. In the updated zoning ordinance, any person with a disability may submit an application for an

adjustment in development standards that would be a reasonable accommodation from the requirements of zoning that otherwise would apply.

Efforts to Remove Regulatory Constraints for Persons with Disabilities

The State of California has removed City discretion for review of small group home projects (six or fewer residents). The City cannot impose additional zoning, building code, or permitting procedures other than those allowed by state law. As a consequence, there are no City-initiated constraints on housing for persons with disabilities.

The City allows residential retrofitting to increase the suitability of homes for persons with disabilities in compliance with ADA requirements. Such retrofitting is permitted under Chapter 11 of the 1998 version of the California Code. 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. The City's updated zoning ordinance is in compliance with ADA and Chapter 11 requirements.

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

The City implements and enforces Chapter 11 of the California Code, which is very similar to ADA. The City provides information to applicants or those inquiring of City regulations regarding accommodations in zoning, permit processes, and application of building codes for persons with disabilities. It also provides referrals to independent living centers and other resources on inquiry.

Zoning and Other Land Use Regulations

One of the programs of the 2002 Housing Element was to conduct a comprehensive review of zoning laws, policies, and practices in Concord for compliance with fair housing law. 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. Examples of the ways in which the City facilitates housing for persons with disabilities through its regulatory and permitting processes are:

- As required by State law, the City's updated zoning ordinance permits non-medical residential care facilities of six or fewer people in all residential districts and in the North Todos Santos District by right as long as they satisfy density and other requirements. Similar homes serving seven or more persons are permitted with a use permit in the Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, North Todos District, Neighborhood Commercial, Commercial Mixed Use, Community Office and Public and Semi-Public Districts, subject to a conditional use permit. The large number of zoning districts allowing such facilities does not limit their development to any single area of the city.
- The City permits housing for special needs groups, including for individuals with disabilities, without regard to distances between such uses or the number of such uses in any part of the City. The Land Use Element of the General Plan does not restrict the siting of special needs housing.

Permits and Processing

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 fairly simple and straight forward.

As discussed above, the City allows non-medical residential care facilities of six or fewer persons by right in all residential districts and in the North Todos Santos District. No conditional use permit or other special permitting requirements apply to such homes. For similar facilities greater than six persons, the City does not impose special requirements other than application for a use permit. This requirement is considered a normal procedure to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses.

The City does not impose special occupancy permit requirements for the establishment or retrofitting of structures for residential use by persons with disabilities. If structural improvements are required for a group home or residential care facility, a building permit is required.

All projects for which a building or zoning permit is required will require design review. The hearing process is the same for group homes and special needs housing for persons with disabilities as for other projects. The City conducts a hearing and accepts written and verbal testimony.

Building Codes

The City provides reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in the enforcement of building codes and issuance of building permits through its flexible approaches to retrofitting or converting existing buildings and construction of new buildings that meet the shelter needs of persons with disabilities. The City has adopted and implements the 2007 California Uniform Building Code.

MARKET CONSTRAINTS ON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Land Costs

Over the last twenty years, housing costs have risen at a much faster rate than household income. Contributing factors are the cost of land, materials, labor, financing, fees and associated development requirements, sales commissions, and developer profits. Another major factor is the increasing use of housing as a commodity for speculation. This has played a huge role in driving up housing prices in the Bay Area. From 2000 to 2006 alone, the costs for single-family homes in Concord rose 110 percent, while income rose less than 10 percent. Only with the mortgage crisis in 2007-2008, did housing costs fall to lower levels.

The cost of land has generally risen or fallen in tandem with housing costs. In 2007, vacant residential land in Concord averaged roughly \$29 per square foot or \$126,000 per acre.²⁵

²⁵ For unentitled property.

Multi-family land costs are typically higher than single-family land costs and may range from \$20 per square feet in the suburbs to \$150 per square feet in the Downtown Business district. According to Keller Williams Realty, residential land costs are also typically higher for owner-occupied multifamily housing than renter-occupied multifamily housing.²⁶ This leads developers to prefer the development of owner-occupied, rather than rental housing in Concord.

In general, the high cost of land is a constraint to housing development. Land costs are expected to decline due to a depressed housing market which will make it more affordable for multifamily or affordable housing development.

Construction Costs

Construction cost is a very large factor in determining the costs of housing or home improvement. While construction costs are generally more stable than land costs because they are not open to speculation, construction costs are still influenced by market forces. This includes “hard costs” such as labor, raw materials, and shipping; and “soft costs” such as architectural fees, environmental studies, taxes, and other services required to bring a project to completion. Additionally, the choice of construction, such as a timber frame building or masonry building; and the quality of finishing materials, such as windows, kitchen cabinets, and floor finishes, will also affect the final cost.

According to data from building permits issued by the City in 2006, the average construction costs for single-family housing in Concord was \$278,900 per unit. The cost per square foot can range from \$160 to \$200 or more, depending on location and quality of finishes. This does not include financing, permit/fees, developer profit or marketing costs. Construction cost has increased significantly since the mid-1990s and is one of the reasons why housing costs are so high in Concord.

The average construction cost for multifamily housing was \$101,600 per unit in 2006. Although construction costs are lower for multifamily housing, developers do not necessary prefer multifamily development because single-family homes traditionally generate higher profit margins. Multifamily developments are also harder to execute because they are subject to stringent State and local building standards. Additionally, today’s renters and buyers are demanding more from new multifamily projects, such as swimming pools, landscaped features and other amenities.²⁷ All these factors have the effect of driving up construction costs and consequently the selling price. Without subsidies, new for-profit multifamily housing may be unaffordable to very low- and low-income households. In certain cases, greater density can increase the affordability of residential projects by reducing costs. Reduced parking requirements can also make housing more affordable. Developers also can reduce costs by using better, newer construction methodology such as modular construction, off-site manufacturing and prefabrication. Many of these techniques help save time, control quality, eliminate waste and labor costs – thereby keeping costs to a minimum.

²⁶ Phone conversation with Eric Haggins, Keller Williams Realty, February 2008.

²⁷ “High Rise Multifamily Apartments”, Real Estate Issues, Summer 2004.

Availability of Financing

Given the current weak housing market and sub-prime lending problems, residential developers throughout the Bay Area are encountering difficulty in obtaining financing for projects. Homeowners also face increasingly stringent audit checks.

Current interest rates for home loans are between five and six percent, depending on the terms of down payment. In general, credit-worthy buyers in Concord have not had difficulty obtaining loans. Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data for 2006 indicate that Concord residents were able to obtain approximately the same percentage of loans as residents in selected peer cities (Table 37). As long as buyers are able to provide the necessary down payment and have middle- or high-incomes, banks and financial institutions have provided credit. A recent government decision to raise the mortgage limits for loans guaranteed by the Federal Housing Administration to \$729,750 in Contra Costa County will facilitate approval of larger mortgages.²⁸

Table 37. Average Home Purchase Loans Compared for Single-Family Homes, 2006

	Average Sale Prices	Average Conventional Home Purchase Loans	Percent Loan of Sale Price
Concord	\$604,800	\$306,100	51%
Martinez	\$615,800	\$287,500	47%
Pleasant Hill	\$703,300	\$378,600	54%
Walnut Creek	\$926,400	\$466,500	50%

Note: City boundaries are derived from census tracts which are slightly different from City borders

Source: Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, 2008.

Lower-income households and buyers without capital or equity, however, may face difficulty obtaining quality financing. Up until 2006, prospective buyers had been able to purchase homes with small down payments, or even no money down, borrowing more than the house was worth. After the 2007 subprime mortgage crisis, such lending is less common. Few lower income households will be able to afford a 20 percent down payment for a home. To address this problem, the Concord First-Time Homebuyer (FTHB) program aims to assist qualified low- and moderate- income individuals with the purchase of their first home. The City provides a maximum loan amount up to 20 percent of the home sales price, or \$15,000 to \$25,000 based on household income and household size. The loan is a zero-interest, 45-year loan and is due only when the house is sold or at the end of the 45 year period. The City also manages an Inclusionary Housing Program with the goal of providing an increased number of owner-occupied housing units affordable to lower income households.

²⁸ For further information on FHA Mortgage Limits, refer to a news article on <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/03/06/BUJBVEACQ.DTL>

Bay Area Housing Crisis

From the mid-1990s until early 2007, the cost of housing in Concord was consistently outpacing wages. The phenomenon was primarily driven by a booming Bay Area economy, which attracted workers from all around the country to settle in the region. The internet and stock market boom in the early 90s also helped create sudden wealth for many people, which they invested in real estate. This pushed housing prices to new heights.

The housing cost increases reached an inevitable end. With housing prices going higher every year, home buyers took on more loans, and banks lent them regardless of the borrower's ability to repay them. When the economy and real estate market took a turn for the worse in 2007, many home owners found themselves caught in a home they could not afford. The number of foreclosures rose, and resale homes flooded the market. This further brought down housing prices, and the number of new housing units dropped to the lowest level in a decade.

Most economic forecasts predict that the housing market will continue to be weak throughout 2008, with the number of foreclosures in the Bay Area peaking late this year. Following a nine percent drop in 2007, housing prices in Concord are expected to drop another 10 percent in tandem with other Bay Area cities. Beyond 2008, housing prices will either continue to fall, or stabilize depending on the performance of the national economy. In the short to mid-term, the housing crisis will have a number of effects on Concord residents. The most common effect will likely be higher repayment costs for those with existing mortgages. This effect is perhaps felt most acutely by very low- and low-income families who may not be able to pay increased housing costs. Many will be forced to sell their properties or see their properties foreclosed upon. Many residents will find renting cheaper than owning, and consequently, this will put increased pressure on the rental market to provide adequate housing. Thus, rents could go up, in response.

On a positive note, credit-worthy buyers who do not yet own homes may be able to buy homes with reduced price-tags. The crisis may also reduce housing speculation and bring long-term housing prices to a realistic level in tune with wages. With lower construction and development costs, developers may be encouraged to construct more multifamily and affordable housing. This would be beneficial to the city's lower income population.

To assist home owners in Concord caught by the crisis, the City provided \$50,000 in RDA Housing Set-aside funds in 2007 to help establish the Mt. Diablo Housing Opportunity Center, a one-stop shop for housing resources. The goal of the center is to provide counseling and housing assistance services, such as homeownership education and pre-purchase counseling, financial education, foreclosure prevention, and reverse mortgage counseling.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS ON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Environmental factors such as topography, soils, landslides and seismic hazards, and noise, are constraints to housing development in the city. The General Plan has taken these factors into account in establishing policies for residential and mixed use development in the Land

Use Element. Where development is planned, the constraints can be mitigated through appropriate design and environmental planning.

Noise

A portion of the city is exposed to noise from vehicular traffic, specifically from SR-242, SR-4 and I-680. Other noise sources include overhead aircraft noise related to Buchanan Field Airport and rail noise associated with the BART train tracks. All of these noise sources will have an impact on adjacent residential areas. Under the 2030 General Plan noise standards, maximum noise levels from 60 decibels (dB) to 65 dB are considered “normally acceptable” for unshielded residential development. Noise levels from 60 to 75 are considered “conditionally acceptable,” while noise levels above 70dB to 80 dB are considered “normally unacceptable”. CNEL levels above 80 dB are “clearly unacceptable” and may prohibit new residential development or redevelopment. In all, only 1.5 percent of the total planning area is exposed to noise above 65 dB. **Figures 7-2 and 7-3** of the General Plan show land use areas that would be affected by future noise levels over 65 dB. These areas are mainly situated within very close distance of BART train tracks and the Buchanan Airport.

The 2030 General Plan has included a number of policies to reduce the impact of noise on housing development adjacent to noise sources. These policies include: Requiring a noise study and mitigation measures for all projects that have a noise exposure greater than 70dB, requiring noise attenuation measures in new homes located on an arterial street, and requiring noise sources to use best available control technology (BACT) to minimize noise emissions. Refer to pages 7-22 to 7-24 of the Safety and Noise Element for details on all noise policies.

Geologic and Seismic Hazards

Geologic hazards, including landslides, mudslides, and erosion, can be related to seismic activity but can also occur independently. The highest potential for future landslides exists in the upland areas along the flanks of Mt. Diablo, at the east and southern edges of the planning area. Pockets of high potential areas also exist in sloping terrain, such as the intersection of Port Chicago Way and SR-4.

Like most Bay Area cities, Concord is also susceptible to earthquakes as a number of regional faults and local faults are close-to or within the planning area. The Concord fault runs in a northwesterly to southeasterly direction through the city, and the Hayward fault is located approximately 15 miles to the west. In general, the western portion of Concord is more susceptible to earthquakes than the eastern portion due to underlying soils and seismicity. To mitigate potential impacts from an earthquake, General Plan policies require a thorough evaluation of geologic and soil conditions as part of the development review process and all development to meet applicable state and local building standards. It sets specific requirements for development on hillsides and forbids development on hillsides with slopes over 30 percent to reduce the risk of landslides. The impacts from Geologic and seismic hazards are considered to be less than significant after the implementation of mitigation policies. Refer to pages 7-24 to 7-27 of the Safety and Noise Element for details on all geologic and seismic safety policies.

Flood

Flood-prone areas in Concord are generally located in low-lying areas and in areas close to shorelines, streams and creeks. According to flood zone maps provided by the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA), the areas north of Mallard Reservoir to Suisun Bay, along Pacheco Creek and near Buchanan Field Airport, lie on a 100-year flood plain. These areas are located north of SR-4 and are currently zoned for Business Park use. Hence, they pose no danger to residential housing. However, there are many creeks in the city near residential areas that could flood after heavy storms. This is especially so if these storms occur during high tides which could reduce the ability of the storm drains to conduct water.

To address this problem, the City has adopted a Flood Management Ordinance and a Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance to manage storm water runoff. General Plan policies require adequate building setbacks for development adjacent to creek banks and calls for establishing engineering standards to construct a storm drainage system to protect against flooding. Various other policies are also in place to reduce the potential impacts associated with stormwater runoff due to new or increased intensity of urban land uses. Refer to pages 7-27 to 7-28 of the Safety and Noise Element and page 8-11 of the Public Facilities and Utilities Element for details on all flood risk reduction policies.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION

Under State law, the Housing Element must include an analysis of the opportunities for energy conservation in residential development (Government Code Section 65583 (a)(7)). Planning for energy conservation is important for a number of reasons, but mainly because of the environmental costs and financial costs involved in energy use. This section of the report will discuss both factors briefly before moving on to discuss City programs and strategies to reduce energy use.

GREENHOUSE GASSES

Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions is an important priority in the 2030 General Plan. GHG consists of a number of gasses, including carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane. They are produced as by-products in the combustion of fossil fuels in power stations as well as cars. GHGs are widely considered to be harmful to the environment. In large quantities, GHGs may also be detrimental to human health.

In 2006, the Governor of California signed into law the California Climate Solutions Act, which requires the reduction of statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. Under the Statute, the requirement will be enforced through a statewide cap which comes into effect in 2012. To date, the State has not imposed any requirements on local agencies to help achieve the cap. It has, however, adopted several so-called early action GHG reduction measures that will help to reduce GHG emissions arising from local land use decisions. Policies in the Concord 2030 General Plan were written with this in mind. One of the major goals of the Plan was to support land use decisions that will lead to reduced reliance on cars. Another major goal is to promote compact development. Examples of Plan policies are listed in the Energy Conservation section below. Besides implementing Plan policies, the City will

coordinate with regional agencies to ensure its transportation plans, programs, and projects conform to the most recent air quality and GHG requirements.

UTILITY COSTS

In addition to reducing GHG, planning for energy conservation can reduce utility and maintenance costs, which in turn, leads to housing affordability. This is particularly important to lower income households with less disposable income to pay for utilities. Depending on the age and condition of the home and the number and type of appliances, energy costs can represent more than 25 percent of overall monthly housing costs. As such, the incorporation of energy saving features, energy saving materials and efficient systems in new as well as remodeled homes is an important consideration.

In the past 20 years, rapidly increasing energy costs have contributed to the deterioration of housing affordability. Since 1970, energy costs to consumers have increased over 100 percent above the price of inflation. More recently, crude oil prices have increased to over 100 dollars a barrel. It is therefore prudent for city governments like Concord to find ways and means to reduce energy consumption to reduce energy costs.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

The City works to promote energy conservation in a number of ways. The Concord 2030 General Plan provide policy direction and a framework under which city regulations, programs, and projects work in unison to ensure land use, transportation, and other aspects City operations conform to energy conservation goals. Specifically for housing development, the issue of energy conservation is addressed at three levels: when new development is proposed, when old buildings are rehabilitated, and through continuous public education.

New Construction

City building codes and recycling requirements support energy efficient systems and the use of energy conserving materials. Concord's Building Division enforces Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations (Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings) through its permit process. These regulations were most recently updated in 2005 in response to State Bills passed in 2000 and 2001 on building energy efficiency and outdoor lighting standards, in addition to existing regulations for wall, ceiling, and floor insulation, maximum glazing area, minimum glazing U-values, and air-conditioner and water heating system efficiencies. All new construction must comply with the standards in effect on the date a building permit application is made.

Aside from the building permit process, energy conservation is also addressed through the environmental review process. Environmental review documents for new development projects identify energy impacts, and require mitigation measures when necessary. The City's 2030 General Plan also contains a number of energy saving policies that affect new construction. These policies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Support higher density and mixed use development in Downtown and near transit centers and corridors.

- Promote transit-oriented development and activities that take advantage of nearby transit services, such as BART, bus services, and the Buchanan Field Airport.
- Upgrade the quality of new and existing multi-family housing by requiring high-quality design.
- Encourage provisions for compatible live/work arrangements and telecommuting in residential areas.
- Encourage sustainable building practices for new development and the remodeling of existing homes.
- Promote pedestrian-oriented urban design.

Besides housing-related policies, the 2030 General Plan contains numerous transportation-related and land use-related policies that reduces energy use and green house gas emissions. At every opportunity, the City encourages new development to incorporate active and passive power and adopt housing designs that conserve energy. The Centre Point Residential Subdivision is a case in point. When completed, the project will have solar/electrical systems installed in all homes.

Rehabilitation

In general, houses built before 1975 use twice as much energy as those built after that year due to less stringent codes. Many of these older homes also require repair, rehabilitation or conservation due to their age. City staff regularly inspects Concord's existing housing stock to identify dilapidated housing. The Neighborhood Services Division has continued to proactively monitor housing conditions through ongoing housing inspections and code enforcement activities. From 2000 to 2006, more than 26,785 separate cases of code violations had been identified and abated. Additionally, the City offers a Single Family Repair Loan Program and a Multifamily Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program to assist lower income households in rehabilitating their properties.²⁹ For seniors age 60 and over or disabled persons, the City offers a Weatherization Program that can help defray the costs of weatherization repair such as adding insulation for attic and walls and obtaining more energy-efficient windows. Through low interest loans or grants, these programs help to rehabilitate older properties and bring them into compliance with current Building Code requirements.

Public Outreach

The City of Concord promotes energy conservation through contact with residents, including public outreach through the City newsletter, its website, and personal contact during permit applications and other City events. Efforts at public outreach include advising residents and developers on adopting energy efficient designs and features, choosing appliances that save energy, installing solar panels, recycling batteries and other e-wastes and the use of

²⁹ The Multifamily Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is now administered by the County. It is still a City program in that the City contributes City funds it.

fluorescent light bulbs. In recognition of its efforts in promoting energy conservation, Concord was named one of 'America's 50 Greenest Cities' by the Popular Science Magazine in 2008.

The City has initiated a number of green initiatives in the last few years, including convening a 'Green Ribbon Task Force' to develop recommendations to improve the environment by decreasing the city's production of greenhouse gasses, lowering the city's energy usage, and reducing the overall environmental footprint. Many of the Task Force suggestions have since been implemented. At the end of last year, the city took delivery of its first all-electric utility vehicle, which replaced a gas-powered vehicle. In December 2007, City staff gave away 500 strings of energy efficient LED lights to residents who traded in strings of traditional lights. This summer, 80 gas-powered golf carts at the city's Diablo Creek Golf Course will be replaced with electric carts.

NEXT STEPS

The next step is to hold a study session with the City Council and Planning Commission to discuss housing policies. City Staff and Dyett & Bhatia will continue to collect and organize information as it relates to Concord's needs and current programs.