

2010 INVER GROVE HEIGHTS HOUSING TASK FORCE
HOUSING ACTION PLAN
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

July 12, 2010

On June 22, 2009, the Inver Grove Heights City Council appointed a Housing Task Force consisting of 12 members with a goal of recommending a housing action plan by July 2010.

The need for a task force is derived from 1) the goals of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan which established housing as an integral part of the City and 2) the desire to maintain the quality of housing stock in the City and 3) concerns from workforce housing advocates that approached the City and requested that action be taken to address housing issues in the City.

The Task Force conducted its first meeting on July 20, 2009 and has conducted monthly meetings with the objective of meeting the timeline deadline and presenting a housing action plan to the City.

Over this period of time, a number of different groups have spoken to the Task Force to provide them with background on various issues. The list of speakers included two sessions with the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) to discuss their various programs on housing issues and foreclosures, Inver Glen Senior Housing to discuss housing needs for the elderly, a speaker from the group Isaiah discussing workforce housing, and a speaker from the Builders Association of the Twin Cities to discuss workforce or affordable housing.

Beginning with the March meeting, the Task Force began discussing the issues they wanted to bring forward to the City Council. Three main issues were

decided upon which are; 1) Housing Education 2) Senior Housing and 3) Affordable Housing.

This report provides to the council, a recommendation for each of the three main topics and suggested goals to achieve the recommendation. A summary page (attachment A) is included at the end of the report which summarizes all of the discussion topics under the three main headings.

HOUSING EDUCATION

Creation of a Housing Committee

The Housing Taskforce recommends that a permanent and voluntary Housing Committee be established by the Council. This committee would address, research and make recommendations relative to housing issues that may be of interest to the City. This group should meet at least quarterly and be diverse, yet small enough to remain effective and efficient. The members of this committee would be expected to keep up on all issues that could be of interest or benefit to the City to know about. This committee would report to and be under the guidance of the City Planner or other appropriate staff person.

Suggested Topics for a Housing Committee to Address:

1. MARKET STUDY UPDATE: Encourage the City to partner with the Dakota County CDA to commission (with Maxfield Research Group or an equal) an updated IGH Housing Market Study to better meet and manage Inver Grove Heights' future housing needs. The last study was completed in 2000.
2. RENTAL HOUSING LICENSING: Research rental housing licensing policies of other cities in the metro and provide recommendations for a possible Inver Grove Heights licensing program/policy/ordinance.

The purpose of such a program would be to conduct rental housing inspections approximately every five years and ensure a minimum quality of housing is provided for all rental units in the City.

3. FORECLOSURES: Monitor foreclosure policies and programs of other Cities and ensure Inver Grove Heights is acting in a proactive way with Dakota County.
4. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE: Review existing property maintenance practices of Inver Grove Heights and other metro cities and recommend best practices for future consideration.

Suggested Education Programs:

1. CDA LIAISON: Establish a CDA liaison (Volunteer or Staff) that works with, follows and compliments educational efforts and programs at the County level in an effort to help Inver Grove Heights residents utilize available resources that benefit the entire Inver Grove Heights housing stock.
2. INFORMATION TO PUBLIC: Provide a stand or kiosk for CDA literature at City Hall for residents. Also provide a well placed web site link from the City's web page to Dakota County's CDA web site. Also add educational information to the City's Quarterly "Insights" newsletters.

It is important for a large City like Inver Grove Heights to stay current on housing issues that impact the City. It is not practical to add this responsibility onto a current position or to finance additional employees, so an interested volunteer committee is the best way to accomplish this goal.

SENIOR HOUSING

The Housing Task Force recommends that Inver Grove Heights encourage research into the many facets of Senior Housing. This could be done through staff recommendations to the City Council, or in conjunction with a specially formed permanent Housing Committee. The areas researched should include:

1. **ACCESSORY HOUSING:** Different forms of accessory housing including “Mother-in-law apartments” which would allow families to modify existing housing or construct new housing which would allow several generations of the same family to live together in order to assist senior members of the family to “age in place”.
2. **CDA ASSISTANCE:** Ways to work closely with the CDA to assess the need for more senior housing in IGH, determine methods the city could use to partner with the CDA in providing this housing, and educate the citizens of IGH about the different types of senior housing available.
3. **AVAILABILITY STUDY:** A study of all existing senior housing in IGH, including the number of units available, criteria for residency in those units, and the cost of living in those units, whether it is market rate or affordable. This study should also include types of senior housing that are not currently available in IGH, (i.e. cottage style senior housing), whether there is a need for other forms of senior housing, and how that need could be addressed.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Housing Task Force recommends that the City of Inver Grove Heights adopt proactive policies that insure the building and maintenance of affordable housing. Specifically the city needs to meet its identified affordable housing need of 871

units between 2011 and 2020. This should include rental units, owner occupied homes and senior housing. To fulfill this recommendation the Housing Task Force recommends:

1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCENTIVES: Identify and adopt incentives the City can provide to developers (density bonuses, accelerated permits and review processes, fee waivers, other regulatory relief) which can be provided in exchange for developers to include affordable units in market rate developments. See attachment B: Minnesota Toolbox
2. MULTI CITY JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT: develop a multi-city joint powers agreement with its bordering neighbor cities that create and adopt zoning policies which promote fairness and equity in establishing and building affordable housing. These policies should include a variety of tools (Urban Land Institute-Minnesota tool box) that will be used to implement these zoning policies.
3. FLEXIBLE HOUSING STANDARDS: adopt flexible performance standards to attract development that will take advantage of future transit oriented plans.
4. RENOVATION OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK: research effective programs and adopt development policies that create and maintain affordable housing within areas where housing stock is being renovated. The City needs to be proactive in identifying and acquiring degraded properties, renovate the structures and resell them.
5. CDA PARTNERING: The City should look for ways to fund projects in partnership with the CDA and other organizations that help insure affordable housing. This may also include the creation of land trusts to help maintain a long-term affordability.

The premise for these recommendations is contained within the Comprehensive plan. The City has fallen short of its established goal for the past decade. An editorial in the Minneapolis Star/Tribune three years ago says in part, “good plans aren’t enough, you have to act”. The City needs to be proactive in identifying developers who have the interest and will to include affordable housing in their developments. The City needs to engage with its neighbors to create a level playing field that insures developers do not try to ‘play-off’ one against another. Affordable housing is a regional obligation as much as it is an individual city’s obligation.

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

2010 HOUSING TASK FORCE



	HOUSING COMMITTEE	AFFORDABLE HOUSING	SENIOR HOUSING	EDUCATION
ESTABLISH IGH HOUSING COMMITTEE	X	X	X	X
Market Study Update (Partner with CDA)	X			
Study Affordable Housing Supply & Future Needs		X		
Study Senior Housing Supply & Future Needs			X	
Evaluate Senior Housing Criteria, Costs, Types Available & Needed			X	
Rental Housing Licensing Policies	X	X	X	
Foreclosure Policy Monitoring	X			
Property Maintenance Policy Review	X			
Provide Information Stand (at Bldg Dept.)				X
Provide CDA web link on City Web Site				X
Add Info to City's "Insights" Quarterly Newsletter				X
Establish CDA Liaison (Volunteer or Staff)				X
Encourage Renovation of Housing Stock to Affordable Housing	X	X		
Acquire Properties, Renovate & Resell as Affordable (with CDA)		X		
Focus on 2020 Affordable Housing Goals & Deficit per Comp Plan		X		
Provide Incentives to Developers to Encourage Affordable Units		X		
Promote Equity in Establishing & Building Affordable Housing		X		
Adopt Flexible Standards to Attract Transit Oriented Development		X	X	
Work with CDA to Fund Affordable Housing Programs	X	X		
Research Successful Senior Housing Programs	X		X	
Research Successful Affordable Housing Programs	X	X		
Consider Allowing "In-Law" Apartments & Multi-Generational Family Policies	X	X	X	
Educate Residents on How to Stay and Age in IGH			X	X
Partner with CDA to Maintain Adequate Senior Housing in IGH			X	

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Market Study Update (Partner with CDA)	X			
Study Affordable Housing Supply & Future Needs		X		
Study Senior Housing Supply & Future Needs			X	
Evaluate Senior Housing Criteria, Costs, Types Available & Needed			X	
Rental Housing Licensing Policies	X	X	X	
Foreclosure Policy Monitoring	X			
Property Maintenance Policy Review	X			
Provide Information Stand (at Bldg Dept.)				X
Provide CDA web link on City Web Site				X
Add Info to City's "Insights" Quarterly Newsletter				X
Establish CDA Liaison (Volunteer or Staff)				X
Encourage Renovation of Housing Stock to Affordable Housing	X	X		
Acquire Properties, Renovate & Resell as Affordable (with CDA)		X		
Focus on 2020 Affordable Housing Goals & Deficit per Comp Plan		X		
Provide Incentives to Developers to Encourage Affordable Units		X		
Promote Equity in Establishing & Building Affordable Housing		X		
Adopt Flexible Standards to Attract Transit Oriented Development		X	X	
Work with CDA to Fund Affordable Housing Programs	X	X		
Research Successful Senior Housing Programs	X		X	
Research Successful Affordable Housing Programs	X	X		
Consider Allowing "In-Law" Apartments & Multi-Generational Family Policies	X	X	X	
Educate Residents on How to Stay and Age in IGH			X	X
Partner with CDA to Maintain Adequate Senior Housing in IGH			X	

Attachment B

List of all Roles and Policies in the Minnesota Toolbox

In the Minnesota Toolbox of HousingPolicy.org you will find a wide array of information on the many ways that states and localities can increase the availability of homes for working families. Scroll down to see our complete list of roles for states and communities, and the policies associated with each of these roles.

Please **Contact Us** if you have suggestions for additional roles and policies you would like to see covered.

Special Section: Leadership for Improving the Community

Building Better Communities

Public Participation

Generate Capital for Housing Options

Utilize Tax Increment Financing to Fund a Mix of Housing

Stimulate Construction or Rehab Through Tax Abatements

Adopt Tax Levies in Support of Housing Strategies

Create or Expand Dedicated Housing Trust Funds

Expand and Support Use of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit

Provide Pre-Development and Acquisition Financing

Support Housing Bond Issues

Use Cross-Subsidies to Support Mixed-Income Communities

Preserve Existing Housing and Neighborhoods

Preserve Rental Options

Preserve Ownership Housing Options

Strengthen and Promote Existing Neighborhoods

Support and Expand Housing Improvement Areas for Common Interest Properties

Encourage Energy Efficiency

Expand Opportunities for New Housing

Expand the Supply of Homes through Rezoning and Regulatory Tools

Make Publicly-Owned Land Available for Affordable Workforce Homes

Redevelop Brownfield Sites for New Housing

Facilitate Reuse of Abandoned, Vacant, and Tax-Delinquent Properties

Encourage Green Building Techniques and Policies

Adopt Local Policies in Support of Housing Choice

Provide Efficient Use of Local Development Tools

Ensure Land Use and Zoning Policies Support a Diversity of Housing Types

Adopt Expedited Permitting and Review Policies

Help Residents Succeed

Expand Homeownership Education and Counseling

Create and Expand Downpayment Assistance

Prevent Foreclosures and Help Affected Renters and Owners
Reduce Household Energy Costs
Create and Expand Homeowner Renovation Assistance
Encourage Employers' Commitment to Affordable Homes for Workers
Provide Access to Specialized Housing Services

Support of Connected, Livable Communities

Link Transportation Policies and Land Use
Promote Sustainable Development Patterns
Support Active and Healthy Living