

## Chapter 5

# Housing

- ◆ Introduction
- ◆ Housing Stock
- ◆ Housing Condition
- ◆ Housing Costs
- ◆ Housing Programs and Challenges
- ◆ Goals, Objectives, and Policies

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photo by City staff

## Section 1: Introduction

**G**OLDEN Valley's housing stock is largely owner-occupied, detached single-family homes. This chapter of Golden Valley's Comprehensive Plan describes Golden Valley's housing stock and housing costs and states the City's goals, policies, and objectives for maintaining the existing housing stock and adding a variety of new housing units.

### Recent Developments

From 1998 through 2006, there was a net gain of nearly 650 housing units in Golden Valley, the majority of which were multi-family units. However, as a fully developed community, Golden Valley has rather limited land available for housing development, and only 25 additional (net gain) total housing units were produced during 2005 and 2006.

### Current Picture

Currently, residential development accounts for 3,195 acres of land (48 percent of total acres) in Golden Valley. Estimates from the Metropolitan Council indicate there were 8,908 households in 2006. This provides an estimated density of 2.8 households per residential acre.

In the past, Golden Valley has used a variety of tools to allow for higher density housing developments. For example, the use of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) has been implemented for both single- and multi-family developments. The

City also decreased its minimum lot size from 12,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet.

## Proposed Changes

Changes to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map include increasing the amount of land available for higher-density housing by changing the land map designation in two areas of the city.

### I-394 Corridor

The I-394 Corridor Study, conducted during 2005 and 2006, advised that high-density housing would be an important component in the redevelopment of the corridor along I-394 from Hwy 100 to Rhode Island Ave. High-density, multi-family housing will be a future component of the planned Mixed-Use Zoning District. At full build out, the I-394 corridor is expected to contain up to 940 multi-family units.



photo by City staff

*The majority of Golden Valley's housing units are single-family.*

### Hwy 55/Winnetka Ave

In addition, the area from the southeast corner of Hwy 55 and Winnetka Ave (north of Harold Ave and west to Glenwood Ave) has been identified as

an area where increasing the housing density would be appropriate. This area will be designated to include medium-high-density housing. Currently, single-family homes exist on those sites. 🌿



photo by City staff

## Section 2: Housing Stock

**T**HE AMOUNT of available land in Golden Valley that is zoned for housing development is extremely limited and often has challenges such as steep slopes or poor soils. However, the City still expects future increases in housing units as population shifts drive a demand for redevelopment and more medium- to high-density housing options.

### Number of Units and Tenure

As of the 2000 US Census, Golden Valley's housing stock included 8,606 units, with 8,450 of those units being occupied. Owner-occupied units make up 81.4 percent (6,878 units) of the occupied housing stock. The remaining 18.6 percent (1,572 units) are renter-occupied units (see Table 5.2).

Of owner-occupied units, the vast majority (71.1 percent) are detached single-family homes. Other types of housing units in Golden Valley include townhomes, duplexes, apartments, condominiums, group residential facilities, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes.

### Life-Cycle And Inclusionary Housing

The new mixed-use district along the I-394 corridor will facilitate development of additional life-cycle housing options,

Table 5.1: Acres Zoned For Housing

| Housing Type                 | Acreage     |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Residential - Low Density    | 2714        |
| Residential - Medium Density | 241         |
| Residential - High Density   | 60          |
| <b>Total Acreage</b>         | <b>3015</b> |

Table 5.2: Units Per Building: Ownership and Rental Housing

| Building Type                      | Total Units  | Percent of Occupied Housing Units |                                       |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Owner Occupied</b>              |              |                                   | <b>Percent of All Ownership Units</b> |
| 1 unit (eg, single-family home)    | 6,430        | 76.1%                             | 93.5%                                 |
| 2 units (eg, duplex)               | 59           | 0.7%                              | 0.9%                                  |
| 3 to 19 units                      | 108          | 1.3%                              | 1.6%                                  |
| 20 to 49 units                     | 38           | 0.4%                              | 0.6%                                  |
| 50 or more units (eg, condo)       | 230          | 2.7%                              | 3.3%                                  |
| Mobile home, boat, RV, van, etc    | 13           | 0.2%                              | 0.2%                                  |
| <b>Total Owner-Occupied Units</b>  | <b>6,878</b> | <b>81.4%</b>                      | <b>100.0%</b>                         |
| <b>Renter Occupied</b>             |              |                                   | <b>Percent of All Rental Units</b>    |
| 1 unit (eg, single-family home)    | 199          | 2.4%                              | 12.7%                                 |
| 2 units (eg, duplex)               | 56           | 0.7%                              | 3.6%                                  |
| 3 to 9 units                       | 98           | 1.2%                              | 6.2%                                  |
| 10 to 19 units                     | 353          | 4.2%                              | 22.5%                                 |
| 20 to 49 units                     | 286          | 3.4%                              | 18.2%                                 |
| 50 or more (eg, apartment)         | 567          | 6.7%                              | 36.1%                                 |
| Mobile home, boat, RV, van, etc    | 13           | 0.2%                              | 0.8%                                  |
| <b>Total Renter-Occupied Units</b> | <b>1,572</b> | <b>18.6%</b>                      | <b>100.0%</b>                         |
| <b>Total Occupied Units</b>        | <b>8,450</b> | <b>100.0%</b>                     |                                       |

Source: US Census 2000

such as condominiums, residential flats, and apartments. Going forward, the City has a goal of achieving 20% affordable housing, when possible.

Inclusionary housing, sometimes referred to as inclusionary zoning, is a planning concept that requires a given share of new development be devoted to and priced accordingly for those

with low to moderate incomes. These households typically have incomes at or below 80 percent of the area median income level. To qualify for low-income rental housing, a household often must have an income at or below 50 percent of the area median income. The 2007 area median income for the Twin Cities metro area is \$77,600.

## Recent Housing Development

From 2000 to 2006, Golden Valley had three years of increased housing development where 88 or more units were constructed each year (see Table 5.3). Most were due to the development or addition of new multi-family housing. Between 1998 and 2006, an average of 19 single-family homes was built each year.

During the same time frame a few large single-family and townhouse developments were built in Golden Valley, including Hidden Lakes, Wesley Commons, and Valley Square Commons. The Hidden Lakes PUD consists of approximately 150 units of single-family attached and detached homes nestled between Sweeney Lake and Theodore Wirth Regional Park. Wesley Commons consists of 84 townhomes and 48 residential flats just west of City Hall. And Valley Square Commons, to the east of Wesley Commons, includes 25 affordable rental townhomes. The City was instrumental in developing Wesley Commons, using money from the Inclusionary Housing Fund through Livable Communities Act (LCA) to write down the cost of land, and waiving the park dedication fee. The Wesley Commons units are owned and managed by CommonBond Communities and are available to families with low incomes.

Table 5.3: Building Permits Issued

| Year             | Single-Family | Duplex   | Town-house | Multi-Family | Total      | Demolition | Average Single-Family Valuation |
|------------------|---------------|----------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1998             | 13            | 3        | 13         | 0            | 29         | 5          | \$330,131                       |
| 1999             | 35            | 0        | 26         | 20           | 81         | 19         | \$276,275                       |
| 2000             | 26            | 0        | 29         | 88           | 143        | 9          | \$329,274                       |
| 2001             | 17            | 0        | 12         | 135          | 164        | 1          | \$362,450                       |
| 2002             | 8             | 0        | 6          | 25           | 39         | 8          | \$357,200                       |
| 2003             | 20            | 0        | 2          | 0            | 22         | 4          | \$405,602                       |
| 2004             | 15            | 0        | 6          | 172          | 193        | 5          | \$368,379                       |
| 2005             | 33            | 0        | 0          | 0            | 33         | 8          | \$370,075                       |
| 2006             | 4             | 0        | 0          | 0            | 4          | 4          | \$656,786                       |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>171</b>    | <b>3</b> | <b>94</b>  | <b>440</b>   | <b>708</b> | <b>63</b>  |                                 |
| <b>Net Total</b> |               |          |            |              | <b>645</b> |            |                                 |

Source: Golden Valley Dodge Reports

## Future Housing Development

The amount of available land in Golden Valley that is currently planned or zoned for housing development is extremely limited and often has challenges, such as steep slopes or poor soils. This, combined with the recent slow down in the housing market, would predict limited housing growth in Golden Valley. However, in the updated Land Use Plan Map, two sections of the city have been designated for higher density housing development.

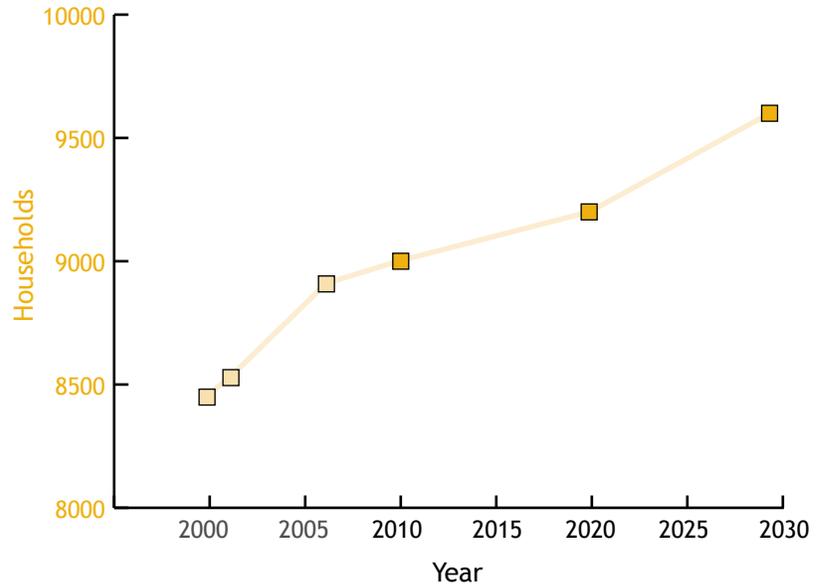
One area previously zoned and planned for single-family, low-density housing (the southeast corner of Hwy 55 and Winnetka Ave, north of Harold Ave and west to Glenwood Ave) is now planned for medium-high-density housing. Another area, located in the I-394 corridor, will be converted from mainly industrial and commercial zoning districts to a mixed-use district that will include a variety of options for mid- and high-density housing development.

As the market allows, these changes from low- to higher-density development could likely lead to an increase in the number of new housing units built in Golden Valley. In addition, these development options could bring Golden Valley a variety of life-cycle housing options.

## Household Forecast

Golden Valley's location and amenities make it a desirable place to live, and the City expects modest but continuous growth in the next 20 years (Figure 1). The community's low vacancy rate, 1.8 percent in 2000, further illustrates its high-demand status.

Figure 5-1: Household Forecast



Source: Metropolitan Council

The population of Golden Valley is aging. The number of homeowners and renters age 75 and older nearly doubled between 1990 and 2000. As of 2000, nearly 20 percent of Golden Valley residents were age 65 or older. This percentage is expected to increase as the large population of baby boomers climbs into the 65+ age group.

Studies have shown that many seniors

prefer to age in place as long as possible. Because of this trend, it is expected that many aging residents will choose to stay in Golden Valley. While the City will investigate ways to help seniors continue living in their homes, it also hopes to increase the amount of senior housing available for those who choose to move from a single-family home to an apartment or condo-style home in Golden Valley. 🏡

*Changes to the land use plan will allow for more higher-density housing in Golden Valley, like these townhomes along Bassett Creek.*

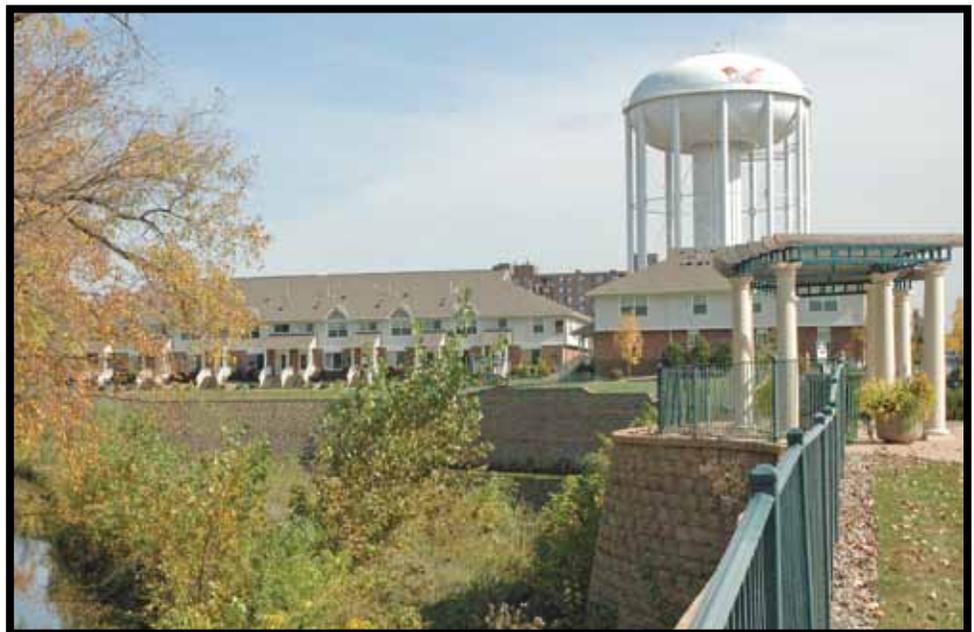


photo by City staff





photo by City staff

## Section 3: Housing Condition

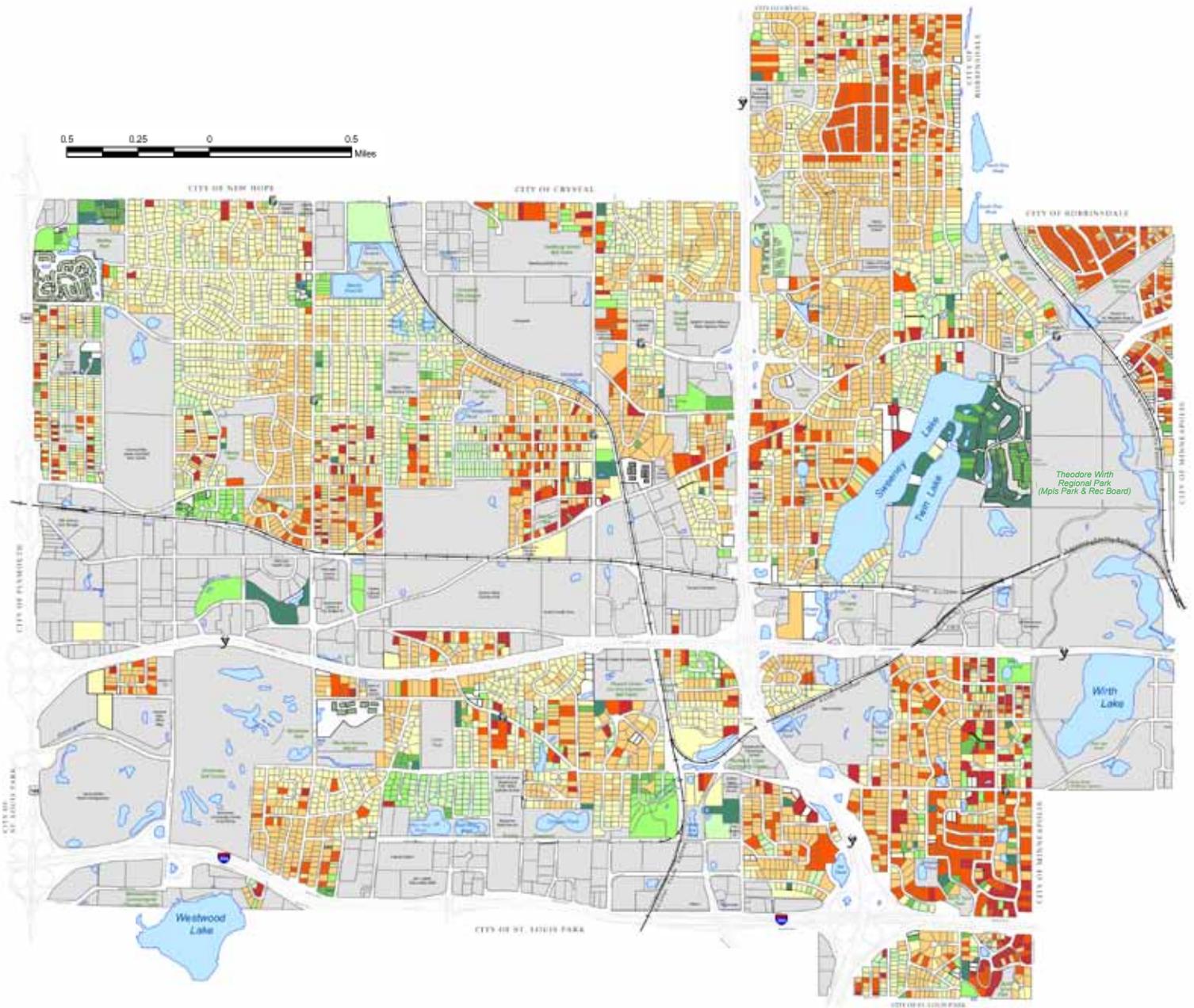
**G**OLDEN VALLEY'S housing stock is aging. According to the 2000 US Census, nearly 67 percent of the units were built before 1970 (see Figure 5.2). To encourage reinvestment in the community and ensure Golden Valley's housing stock remains in good condition, the City implemented property maintenance standards for all housing types.

### Age of Housing Stock

Golden Valley's housing stock is slightly older than that of neighboring Robbinsdale and New Hope and somewhat newer than that of neighboring St Louis Park and Crystal. Since all of these neighboring communities are considered fully developed, the newer housing stock in Robbinsdale and New Hope could indicate that those cities are experiencing more infill and redevelopment than Golden Valley. Some amount of infill is taking place in Golden Valley in the form of new single-family homes; however, it is assumed that most new housing development will be in the form of redevelopment for multi-family homes.

Aging housing stock also indicates an increased need for maintenance and repairs, and both residents and the City are working to ensure that Golden Valley's housing remains high quality.

Figure 5.2: Age Of Housing Stock



**Residential Parcels**

- Built 1939 or earlier
- Built 1940–1949
- Built 1950–1959
- Built 1960–1969
- Built 1970–1979
- Built 1980–1989
- Built 1990–1999
- Built 2000 or later
- Vacant or accessory parcel
- Non-residential parcel
- Water
- +++ Railroad
- Highways

Date: August 23, 2007

Sources: Hennepin County Surveyors Office for Property Lines (2006), City of Golden Valley for all other layers

### Housing Condition Inventory

In 2006, the City conducted a housing condition inventory using a sample of 3,032 single- and multi-family homes (see Figure 5.3 for a summary). Homes were evaluated for overall appearance and for the condition of the structure, driveway(s), and yard. The City also gathered other data, including:

- ♦ driveway material
- ♦ type of housing exterior
- ♦ existence of outdoor storage
- ♦ placement of recreation vehicles, garbage and recycling containers, and shed(s)
- ♦ the presence of junk or garbage

Of homes that had defects, 75 percent had only one or two and 17 percent had more than two. Thirty-six percent of homes had no defects.

The inventory found Golden Valley’s housing stock to be in relatively good condition; however, 64 percent needed some type of repair. With much of the community’s housing stock more than 30 years old, continued maintenance is vital.

### Reinvestment In Housing

Since 2000, Golden Valley housing owners have reinvested more than \$9 million per year in their residential units. In 2006, the total reinvested was \$13,292,817. While the most



Photo by City Staff

*The City inspects all single- and multi-family housing to determine if repairs are needed to the housing unit or property.*

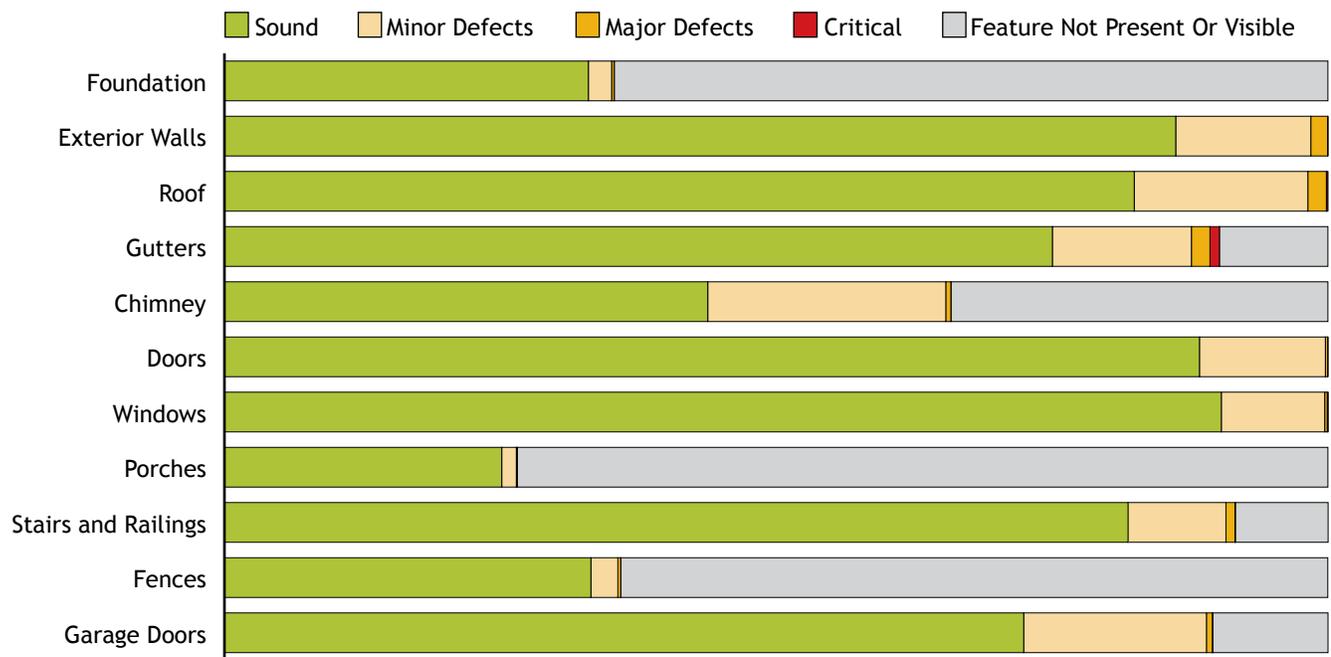
frequent home improvement is re-roofing, the most money seems to be spent on main structure additions, remodels, and repairs. This does not include porch or deck additions.

Table 5.3 shows reinvestment areas such as basement finishes, additions, re-roofing, and residing. Not included are improvements that do not require a permit, such as painting or minor repairs. It also does not account for work done without the required permit.

### Property Maintenance Standards

In 2006 the City implemented a Residential Property Maintenance Code (RPMC). As a result, reinvestment in Golden Valley’s housing stock is expected to increase.

*Figure 5.3: Housing Condition Inventory Results*



**Table 5.3: Residential Housing Reinvestment**

| Permit Type                           | Value of Projects |             |             |             |             |              |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
|                                       | 2002              | 2003        | 2004        | 2005        | 2006        | 2007         |
| Re-roof                               | \$1,565,206       | \$1,231,373 | \$1,949,356 | \$1,392,872 | \$2,198,642 | \$1,939,020  |
| Reside                                | \$728,516         | \$496,518   | \$572,319   | \$857,401   | \$487,346   | \$909,092    |
| Porch                                 | \$270,342         | \$404,407   | \$226,800   | \$537,900   | \$352,447   | \$237,592    |
| Deck                                  | \$476,788         | \$438,856   | \$391,711   | \$384,794   | \$495,850   | \$467,671    |
| Basement Finish                       | \$504,780         | \$433,730   | \$738,934   | \$544,002   | \$699,682   | \$530,562    |
| Main Structure Addition               | \$3,030,488       | \$5,290,493 | \$3,813,775 | \$3,697,516 | \$4,112,277 | \$17,302,771 |
| Main Structure Remodel/Repair/Replace | \$1,697,271       | \$2,352,866 | \$1,251,804 | \$1,735,002 | \$2,085,075 | \$88,569     |
| Pool                                  | \$55,955          | \$71,400    | \$118,940   | \$78,000    | \$123,500   | \$20,626     |
| Other                                 | \$1,897,805       | \$1,511,139 | \$2,869,420 | \$2,484,853 | \$2,737,998 | \$88,596     |

Through the RPMC, the City inspects all single- and multi-family housing to determine if exterior repairs are needed to the housing unit or property. In multi-family ownership developments the common areas are also inspected, and in multi-family rental buildings the common areas as well as at least 10 percent of the rental units are inspected.

If inspectors determine repairs are needed, they give the property owner a notice stating what needs to be repaired and within what time frame. Administrative citations are given to the homeowner if required repairs are not done in the noted time frame. The property owner or occupant also receives a packet including information about the RPMC, the City’s administrative citation process, and assistance available from the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE).

The City contracted with CEE to provide any homeowner in Golden Valley a free consultation and evaluation of needed maintenance or repairs to his or her home. CEE also helps find contractors for the needed work and helps find low-interest loan options for income-qualified homeowners.

The first area inspected in Golden Valley included 1,284 properties bounded by Mendelssohn Ave on the west, Winnetka Ave on the east, Medicine Lake Rd on the north, and the Union Pacific Railroad track on the south. Approximately 3 percent of the properties inspected in this area received written violations; however, this figure is somewhat misleading because inspectors do not always give a written

violation notice. If the homeowner is present, inspectors often just talk with the homeowner and give a verbal notification of violations. Upon re-inspection, staff often found the violation had been corrected. Inspectors estimate that closer to 7 percent of properties were given written and or verbal notification of violations.

By October 2007, the City had begun inspecting a second area of Golden Valley bounded by Winnetka Ave on the west, Douglas Dr on the east, Medicine Lake Rd on the north, and Golden Valley Rd on the south. Inspectors found roughly the same percentage of properties in violation as in the first

*Residents reinvested over \$4 million into their homes through main structure additions in 2006.*



photo by Louis Hall, stock.xchng

inspection area. Staff expects to have a better estimate of what percentage of properties in Golden Valley are in violation of the RPMC after inspections in the second area of the city are completed.

### **Rental Licensing Standards**

In addition to the RPMC, the City implemented the Safer Tenants and Renters (STAR) program in 2006 as part of the multi-family rental licensing program. This program includes incentives for landlords to use screening criteria and conduct background checks on rental applicants. The STAR program also encourages landlords to participate in training and regular meetings with City inspections staff.

By the end of 2007, the City had passed an ordinance to extend the rental licensing program to include single- and

two-family rental homes. Inspections staff had found that a higher percentage of rental properties inspected are in violation of the RPMC than are owner-occupied properties. It is not known exactly how many single-family rental homes currently exist in Golden Valley; however, the City feels it is important to encourage safe and well-maintained rental properties throughout the community.

### **Standards For Vacant Homes**

The recent sub-prime lending and subsequent foreclosure activity has resulted in an increased number of vacant and abandoned homes, and Golden Valley is not immune. An August 2007 count found 45 vacant single-family homes. To address maintenance issues, the City will review the RPMC and make needed amendments to handle problems associated with these homes. 





photo courtesy stock.xchng

## Section 4: Housing Costs

**H**OUSING COSTS in Golden Valley are similar to those in adjacent cities. In 2006, the Metropolitan Council considered a metro area home priced at \$206,800 or below to be affordable. As of May 2007, the median value of a home in Golden Valley was \$262,000. However, Golden Valley does have a large number of affordable homes. The current economic crisis has decreased costs of many housing opportunities in the city.

### Median Home Value

The 2000 US Census showed the average median home value in similar cities adjacent to Golden Valley was \$131,520. Golden Valley's median home value in 2000 was nearly \$30,000 higher, at \$160,300.

In general, home values in Golden Valley rose in the past decade, with the number of homes valued at less than \$150,000 decreasing and the number of homes valued more than \$175,000 increasing substantially (see Figure 5.4). Of the fully developed communities adjacent to Golden Valley, none had a higher median sales price than Golden Valley from 2003 to 2006. As of May 2007, the median home value in Golden Valley was \$262,000. See Figure 5.5 for a map showing the estimated market value of ownership properties in Golden Valley.

## Median Rent

Median gross rent in Golden Valley in 2000 was \$669 a month, ranking just below the average rent of \$672.80 for Golden Valley, St Louis Park, Robbinsdale, New Hope, and Crystal. Of these similar surrounding communities, only St Louis Park had a higher median gross rent at \$716.

A 2007 survey of a sample of multi-family rental properties shows that monthly rents in Golden Valley range from \$345 to \$650 for a studio unit, \$550 to \$1,445 for a one bedroom, \$675 to \$2,295 for a two bedroom, and \$850 to \$2,395 for a three bedroom.

## Housing Affordability

Using the Metropolitan Council’s standard and estimated market value from Hennepin County assessor’s data from May 2007, there are approximately

1,530 affordable owner units in Golden Valley. This represents roughly 17 percent of the owner-occupied housing stock.

Many of Golden Valley’s affordable ownership units are located in the northwest corner of the city. Several affordable single-family units are also located along Winnetka Ave and Douglas Dr. A pocket of aging affordable condo units exists in the southwest corner of the city near the General Mills Nature Preserve. Figure 5.6 shows the location of affordable ownership housing in Golden Valley. Because the location of all single- and two-family home rental units is not known, single- and two-family units are considered owner-occupied units on the map. Also, they could become owner-occupied units at any time.

## Rental Affordability

Affordable rental units are located throughout the city. A survey of multi-family rental properties, done in 2007 by City Staff, indicates that 17.2 percent of the market rate multi-family rental units are considered affordable to households at 50 percent of the area median income. One-third of the multi-family rental property representatives who responded to the survey also noted that Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers were accepted at those properties.

In addition, there are four primary subsidized affordable rental housing properties located in Golden Valley for households with low incomes. Renters at these properties typically pay 30 percent of their adjusted gross income for rent. Dover Hills consists of 234 Section 42, Section 236, and project-based Section 8 units in a variety of affordable rental options for singles, families, and seniors. Calvary Center has 80 one-bedroom units supported by Section 202 and Section 8 funding that provides income-based rent for seniors. Medley Park Townhomes provides an affordable rental option for families. This development includes 30 two-, three-, and four-bedroom townhomes with income-based rents under the project-based Section 8 program. CommonBond Housing, specializing in transitional housing opportunities, has a presence in downtown Golden Valley.

The combination of affordable market rate and subsidized affordable rental units in Golden Valley is estimated to be 6 percent of the total occupied housing stock in the city (see Figure 5.7 for the location of known rental properties in Golden Valley and those that include affordable units). It is as-

Figure 5.4: Value of Owner-Occupied Units (2000/2002)

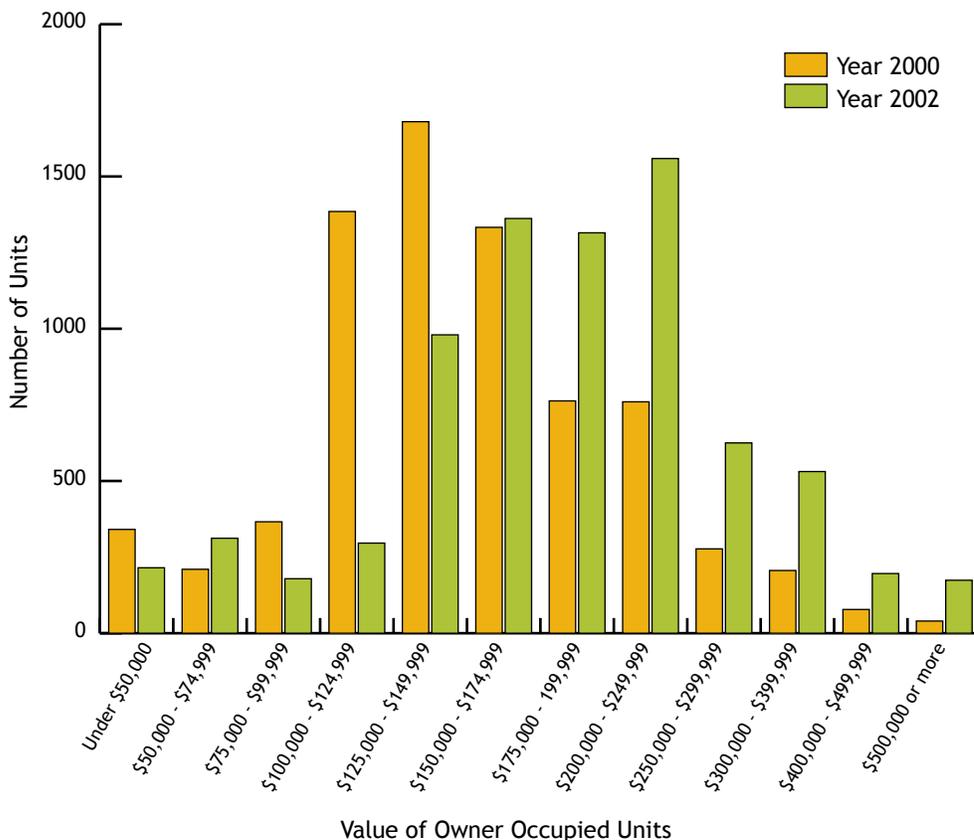
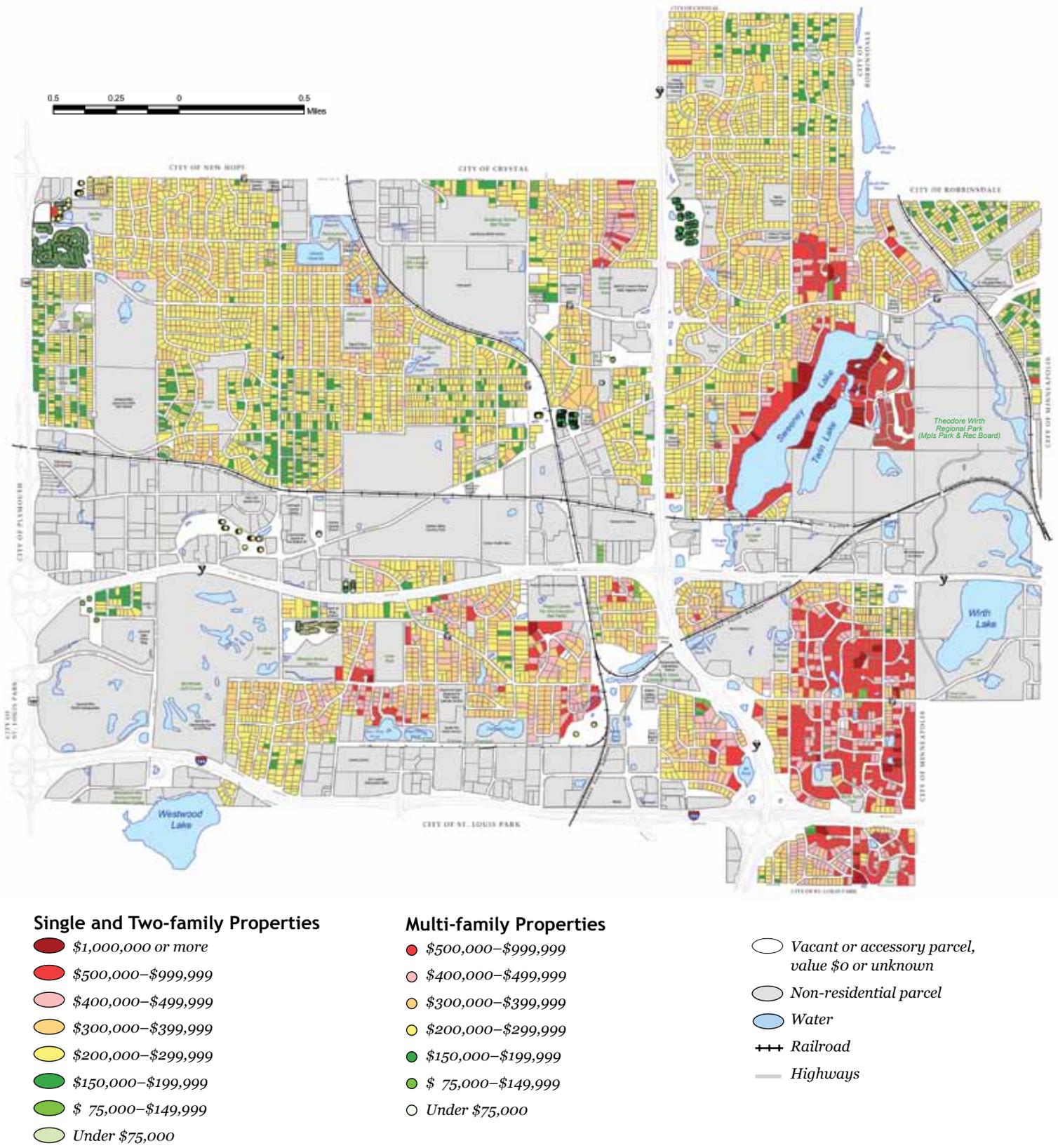


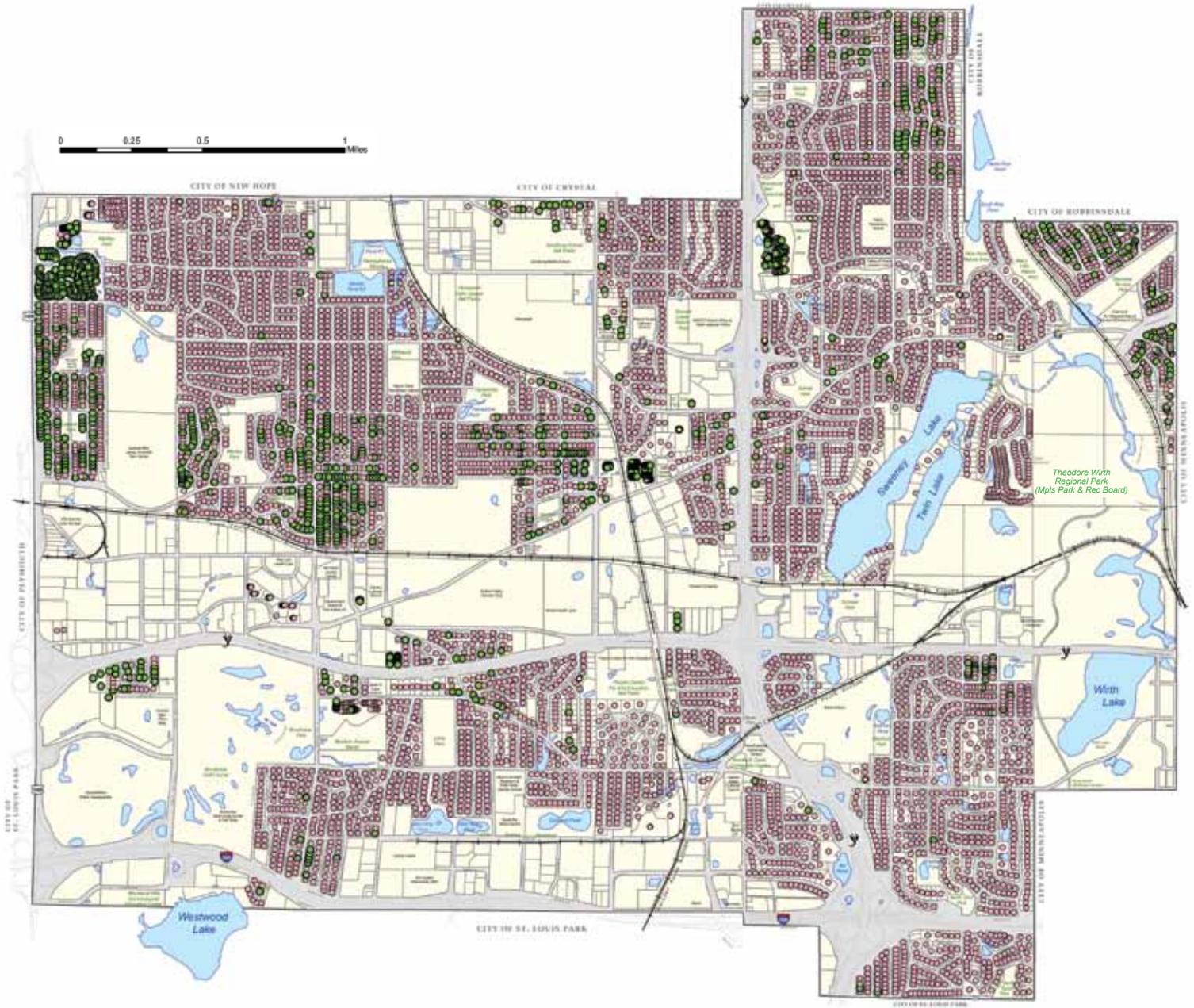
Figure 5.5: Estimated Market Value Of Ownership Properties



Date: August 26, 2007

Sources: Hennepin County Surveyors Office for Property Lines (2006), City of Golden Valley for all other layers

Figure 5.6: Affordability Of Residential Owner Units



**Owner-occupied Units**

- Affordability Unknown
- Affordable Units\*
- Other Owner-occupied Units

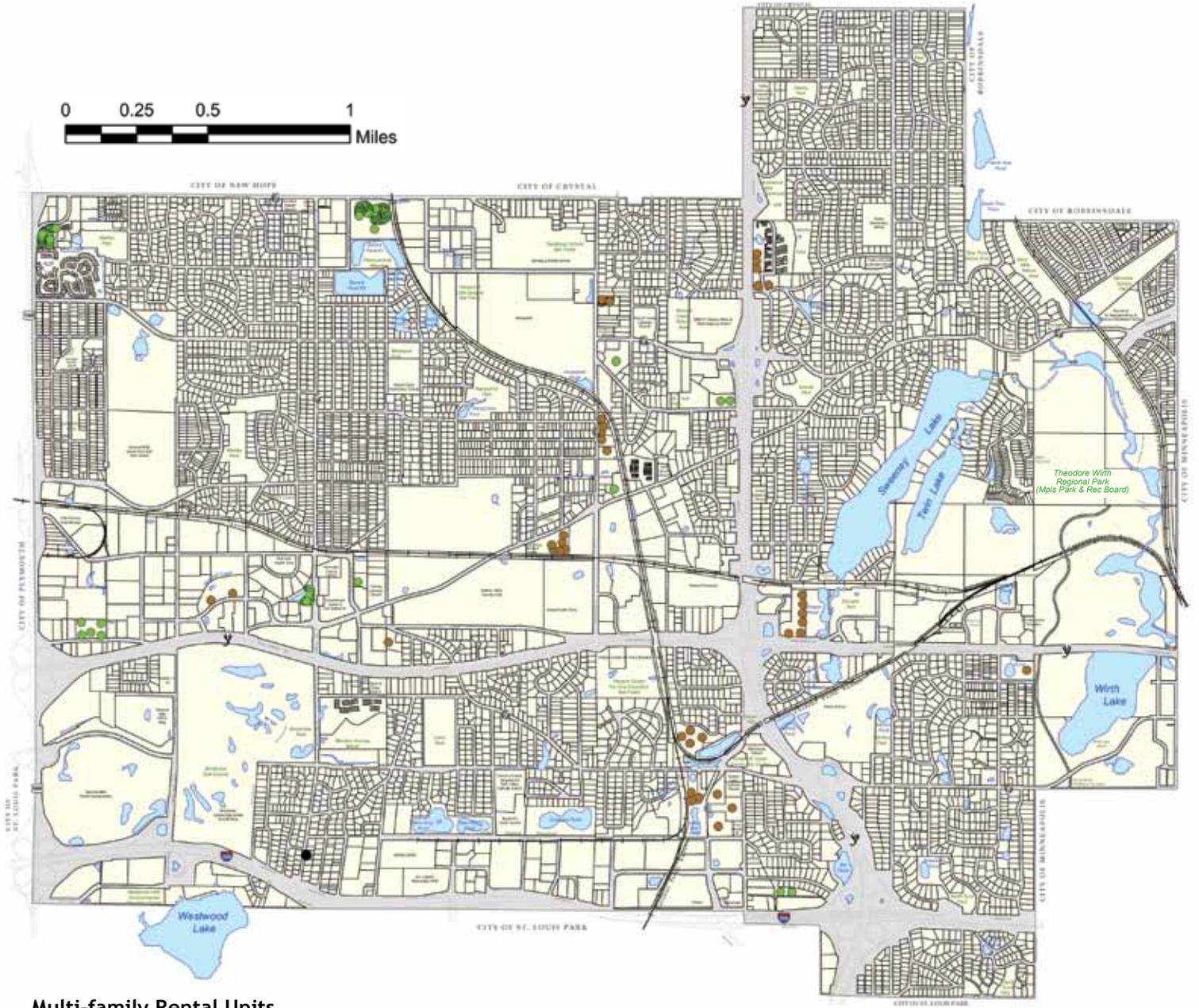
- Parcel
- City Limit
- Water
- +++ Railroad
- Highways

\*Affordable = Estimated Market Value \$206,800 or less, affordable to households with median incomes 80 percent of the area median income. (Metropolitan Council 2007)

Date: August 27, 2007

Sources: Hennepin County Parcel Data (March 2007), City of Golden Valley for all other layers

Figure 5.7: Affordability Of Multi-Family Rental Units



**Multi-family Rental Units**

- Buildings with Affordable Rental Units
- Other Rental Units

- Parcel
- City Limit
- Water
- ⚡ Railroad
- Highways

\*Affordable = Properties with rents affordable to households at 50 percent of the area median income.

- 0 bedroom < \$687
- 1 bedroom < \$736
- 2 bedroom < \$883
- 3 bedroom < \$1,020

\*Only rental properties in Golden Valley where rents are known are represented on this map.

Date: August 22, 2007  
 Sources: Hennepin County Parcel Data (March 2007), City of Golden Valley for all other layers



Photo by City Staff

*Medley Park is one of three primary subsidized rental housing properties currently in Golden Valley. There is still a need for additional affordable housing options.*

sumed that additional affordable rentals exist in the city. However, not all data is available because some multi-family rental properties surveyed did not respond and very little is known about the number of single-family rental units or the rents charged for these units.

Data collected and or reviewed by the City shows that approximately 23 percent of the City’s occupied housing stock is considered affordable by Metropolitan Council Standards (see Table 5.4). Even with the amount of affordable housing options, there is still a need for additional affordable housing.

## Cost Burden

Cost burden is typically defined as paying 30 percent or more of gross income on gross rent or housing costs.

In 1999, 15.1 percent of Golden Valley homeowners paid 30 percent or more of gross income for housing costs. In similar adjacent communities the number was slightly higher at 16.2 percent. Percentages of people paying 30 percent or more of gross income for gross rent was higher still—28.3 percent in Golden Valley and an average of 36 percent in the same adjacent cities. The median gross rent as a percentage of household income in Golden Valley in 1999 was 23.7 percent.

The areas of Golden Valley with higher concentrations of affordable housing seem to have households with the greatest cost burden. With recent housing market conditions and the number of families feeling the pressure of increased housing costs, many more families are likely to be experiencing a cost burden than before. The Metropolitan Council indicates that Golden Valley should plan for an additional 104 units of affordable housing over the next 10 years. 🌟



photo by City staff

## Section 5: Housing Challenges and Programs

**A**GING COMMUNITIES like Golden Valley face a number of challenges when it comes to developing new and maintaining existing housing. To help meet or overcome those challenges, the City uses a variety of programs and official controls that ultimately address the needs of current and future residents.

### Housing Challenges

When it comes to developing new and maintaining existing housing, the City of Golden Valley faces a number of challenges. Aging properties, decreased property values, and maintenance issues are challenges that Golden Valley will continue to face into the future.

#### Land Costs

Even with the City reducing maximum lot size to create more affordable lots, it is still relatively expensive to purchase land in Golden Valley. And smaller lots do not necessarily mean smaller, less expensive homes. Large homes that are not affordable to many prospective home buyers are being built on the smaller lots.

#### Non-Owner-Occupied Housing

The City is facing challenges that result when property is purchased and used for investment purposes. Two examples are the increase in rental housing and group-living facilities. To address maintenance and nuisance concerns attributed to these housing areas, the City has enacted a licensing policy for

single-family rental properties. Owner-occupied housing is necessary for the longevity and prosperity of Golden Valley neighborhoods.

### Blight

The City is also concerned with aging housing along high-traffic minor arterial roads and collector streets as well as sections of town with large amounts of housing more than 40 years old. Blighting conditions can be found in some of these areas, and maintenance and upgrades are needed to prevent the spread of blight and keep these homes attractive to future buyers. Inspections staff has observed increased maintenance problems in areas where one or more properties becomes improperly maintained. The City's Residential Property Maintenance Code (RPMC) will be key in helping ensure that aging housing stock is well maintained. Increasing foreclosure rates also contribute to the existence of blight.

### Programs

The City uses many programs and official controls to address the housing needs of current and future residents. For example, the City:

- ♦ has received and will continue to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and LCA grants to help residents, developers, and property owners obtain or develop new housing
- ♦ worked with West Hennepin Affordable Land Trust Homes Within Reach program, using CDBG funds to write down land costs
- ♦ encourages subsidized housing providers such as Medley Park, Dover Hills, CommonBond, and Calvary Center to maintain its housing appearance
- ♦ adopted a resolution supporting first-time home buyer loan programs at local participating banks
- ♦ has used and will consider future use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to underwrite project costs for developments that include affordable housing
- ♦ will maintain the reduced minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet to increase density and create additional in-fill opportunities



*Properties about to be inspected through the City's RPMC program receive notice in the mail. The postcard tells homeowners what to expect from the inspection and invites them to take a proactive approach to their homes' maintenance.*



photo by City staff

#### *Blighted housing conditions could increase as homes age.*

- ♦ has waived or reduced fees for development projects that include affordable housing and will consider doing so in the future as appropriate
- ♦ has and will continue to use the PUD process to allow increased densities, decreases in parking requirements, and other considerations to create innovative developments that meet the needs of a variety of residents
- ♦ began a partnership with Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) to help homeowners maintain their homes
- ♦ uses its RPMC to inspect all single- and multi-family housing to determine if repairs are needed, then provides a time frame in which to make repairs and information about assistance available from the CEE
- ♦ implemented a Safer Tenants and Renters (STAR) program (part of the multi-family rental licensing program) to provide incentives for landlords to conduct background checks on rental applicants and participate in training and regular meetings with City inspections staff
- ♦ is drafting an ordinance to extend the rental licensing program to include single- and two-family rental homes to ensure they comply with the City's property maintenance standards



photo by Craig Knutson, 2003 Views of the Valley

## Section 6: Housing Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**T**HE FOUNDATION of Golden Valley's Housing Plan rests on five goal statements. Policies and objectives build upon this foundation. The City has included housing programs and standards within policy and objective statements rather than listing them separately.

## Goal 1: Housing Quality

*A high-quality living environment, the preservation of stable residential neighborhoods, and where necessary, improvement of the condition of existing housing stock in the City (supports Livable Communities principles 4 and 5)*

### Objectives

- ♦ Ensure all housing meets or exceeds the quality standards established in City ordinances.
- ♦ Identify and remove substandard housing units that are economically unfeasible to rehabilitate.
- ♦ Eliminate or appropriately buffer blighting influences such as unkempt yards, glaring lights, unscreened storage, noise, and inappropriate vehicle storage on residential properties.

### Policies

The City will use the Residential Property Maintenance Code (RPMC) and other quality standards established in the Golden Valley City Code to determine whether a house is substandard or in need of repair, except where a particular funding program or regulation specifies an alternate definition.

The City will routinely evaluate the RPMC and amend it as necessary to maintain or improve the quality of the City's housing stock. A study will be conducted to investigate including in the RPMC processes for handling problems associated with vacant or abandoned residential properties or those residential properties for which the owner can not be contacted or does not make necessary improvements to the property.

The City and the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will work with property owners to ensure that all housing units are of high quality construction. The City will ensure that all housing units adhere to applicable City Maintenance Codes, which work to enhance the quality and visual appearance of the property.

The City will, if necessary, use its legal authority to remove substandard housing for which rehabilitation has been determined to be economically unfeasible.

The City will continue enforcing the Lighting Ordinance to promote resident safety and appropriate lighting in residential neighborhoods.



photo courtesy stockxchng

The City will help protect the quality of its housing stock by promoting to real estate agents and prospective home buyers or sellers the practice of contracting for private home inspections before purchase of any Golden Valley home. Promotional efforts may include but shall not be limited to periodic educational items in City publications and information made available to the public by City staff.

The City will establish a list of qualifying criteria to serve as a selection standard when targeting Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The City will give high priority to rehabilitating its aging housing stock when determining the appropriate use of CDBG funds.

The City will seek out or develop financial assistance programs to help low- and moderate- income property owners address deteriorating housing problems.

The City will continue its relationship with Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) or similar agencies to help residents locate resources and financial assistance for home rehabilitation.

The City will continue to work with owners and managers of multi-family housing using the rental licensing and Safer Tenants and Rentals (STAR) programs. The City will consider developing a similar program to cover single- and two-family rental housing to ensure that housing quality standards are met for all rental units.

The City will investigate and promote resources to help aging and disabled residents safely remain in their homes as desired.

## Goal 2: Housing Variety

*A variety of housing types and designs to allow all people a housing choice (supports Livable Communities principles 1 and 3)*

### Objectives

- ♦ Strive for at least 10 percent of the city's housing supply is designed for, or designated exclusively for, seniors.
- ♦ Strive for variety in housing styles.

### Policies

The City will continue to offer the flexibility of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) option to housing developers who demonstrate an ability to successfully apply contemporary design philosophies.

The City will guide for infill areas and redevelopment sites for single-family attached and multiple-family residential uses along major streets and adjacent to commercial or other high activity areas that help meet the City's senior and multiple family housing objectives.

The City will assist in attempts to obtain applicable funds for City approved development proposals designed to maximize the opportunity of providing a variety of housing types, costs, and densities that meet City objectives. Sources may include, but are not limited to, federal programs such as the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) or Section 202 financing for senior housing, state aid such as the Low Income Tax Credit Program or the Low/Moderate Income Rental Program, Metro Council funds such as the Local Housing Investment Account, or nonprofit assistance such as the Family Housing Fund or Habitat For Humanity.

The City will reconsider the low-density residential Land Use Plan Map designations currently applied to the area west of Douglas Dr along Medicine Lake Rd to determine whether it might be suitable for designation for higher density residential use. This concern is being addressed through the Douglas Drive Corridor Study.

The City will amend the Land Use Plan Map to include mixed-use development sites, including along the I-394 Corridor, which may include housing in the form of town homes, residential flats, condominiums, apartment homes, and other multiple-family homes.



photo by City staff

The City will identify underused nonresidential sites where the vacant area may be suitable for higher density residential use.

The City will work with appropriate legislative agencies to establish more specific rules regarding placement of legally protected residential facilities to ensure the appropriate integration of these facilities in to neighborhoods.

The City will research techniques used in alternative dispute resolution processes, such as mediation, for assistance in formulating citizen involvement guidelines that channel discussion of housing development proposals along a productive course.

The City will encourage owner-occupied, multi-family housing whenever possible to provide an alternative for those who are unable or unwilling to maintain a traditional single-family type property.

### Goal 3: Affordability

*Housing opportunities at a cost low- and moderate-income households can afford without compromising essential needs (supports Livable Communities principles 1 and 6)*

#### Objectives

- ♦ Monitor the City’s housing supply to ensure quality low-income options are available.

#### Policies

The City will annually reapply for reservation of funds through the Minnesota City Participation Program, providing low-interest mortgages to qualifying first-time home buyers.

The City will consider any potential housing affordability impact before adopting or amending any development-related or construction-related regulation. Negative impacts will be balanced against concerns for the general public health,

safety, or welfare. Where possible, strategies for mitigating negative affordability impacts will be identified.

The City will use the Livable Communities definition of affordable housing, except where a particular program specifies an alternate, as the standard for defining modest-cost or affordable housing: owner-occupied housing should cost no more than 30 percent of the income of a household earning 80% of the median income level as estimated annually by HUD, and rental housing should cost no more than 30 percent of the income of a household earning 50 percent of the median income in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

Currently, affordable housing options exist in the city. To help meet its affordability objectives as outlined in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, the City will consider that at least a percentage of each new housing development of more than 30 units contain affordable units. The City may consider payments in lieu of actual units so the City can use such payments to make units affordable in other housing developments.

For any new development or redevelopment proposal, the City will consider and attempt to reasonably mitigate the loss of or impact on affordability and quality of the existing supply of modest-cost single-family homes. This includes proposals that would require removal of modest-cost homes or would significantly increase traffic, noise, or other negative characteristics near those homes. However, such considerations will not necessarily override other legitimate development concerns.



photo courtesy mortgage file



photo courtesy stock.xchng

## Goal 4: Sustainability

*Housing development maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment. Housing Development meets current needs while leaving future generations as many options for resource use and development as possible.*

### Objectives

- ♦ Ensure new housing developments meet or exceed energy efficiency standards and implement sustainable design features where possible.
- ♦ Ensure improvements to existing housing meet or exceed energy efficiency standards and implement sustainable design features where possible.

### Policies

The City will encourage energy efficient and sustainable development that meets standards established by programs such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Mayors Climate Initiative, MN GreenStar, and Energy Star.

The City will encourage development that saves or increases green spaces, parks, and trails.

The City will review new housing development projects for adequate public or private park, open, and recreational space.

The City will strive to accommodate energy conserving technologies and construction techniques, including active and passive solar energy features, by advocating their use in application for new residential development and by amending City Code or City policies as appropriate to allow residents to take advantage of new approaches.



## Goal 5: Nondiscrimination

*Equal opportunity in home ownership and renting (supports Livable Communities principles 1, 2, and 3)*

### Objectives

- ♦ Strive for non-discrimination against persons seeking housing based on age, religion, race, ethnic origin, sexual preference, gender, or disability.

### Policies

The City's Human Rights Commission (HRC) will continue its role as a forum for discussion of discrimination issues and will remain available to participate in the grievance process of the Minnesota Department of Human Services as requested, so that any allegations of housing discrimination can be promptly addressed at the local level.

The City's HRC will conduct ongoing education efforts as necessary to promote equal availability of housing opportunities and fair treatment of all renters and buyers regardless of age, gender, income level, ethnic background, or religion.

The City will work with appropriate legislative agencies to reform regulations regarding the location of residential facilities.

The City will establish a process for early citizen involvement in the siting of new subsidized housing developments.

For as long as the City remains in the Livable Communities program, a Livable Communities impact evaluation shall be included as part of the consideration of any housing-related development application. Potential impacts on all Livable Communities benchmark areas shall be considered, but those areas need not be weighed equally, nor will this evaluation necessarily take precedence over other concerns that may be voiced in connection with the application. 🌟